

Inspection of Alderbrook Primary School

Oldridge Road, Balham, London SW12 8PP

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in this friendly primary school, which has a strong community feel. The school aims for pupils to strive towards becoming curious, tenacious and collaborative. Pupils understand and share these goals. They learn how to achieve them through a carefully designed curriculum, which includes a focus on how to stick at learning even when it is difficult. Across subjects, pupils achieve well.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They said that bullying is rare and quickly resolved if it happens. If they have any concerns, they feel confident to talk to an adult. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities. Everyone has swimming lessons in Reception and Year 1 to develop water confidence. The music curriculum includes learning to play the recorder and the ukelele. Even at this young age, pupils learn about future careers and academic study, including a visit to Cambridge University.

The school puts a strong emphasis on learning about and valuing diversity in the local community. Pupils speak about feeling a sense of belonging, with one summing this up by commenting, 'We all have a close connection'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has designed an ambitious, broad and engaging curriculum. This enables pupils to build up their knowledge and understanding of important ideas over their time in the school. For example, in Reception, children deepen their understanding of counting by rolling dice and making the correct number of jumps along a line on the floor. This helps them to see the difference between bigger and smaller numbers. Older pupils build on this secure understanding of number as they learn about addition. They can recall their number bonds fluently and know that whichever way round they add numbers, the result does not change. These secure foundations mean that pupils successfully grapple with more complex mathematical ideas, such as learning about scale and making comparisons in Year 5. Pupils are eager to say how much they enjoy mathematics.

Similarly, the school's work to help pupils learn to read is effective. Teachers ensure that pupils learn and practise their sounds. The curriculum is ambitious, and nearly all pupils progress through it briskly. Where pupils need any extra help, this is provided quickly and effectively. As a result, any gaps in their knowledge are quickly addressed, and their fluency improves.

In each subject, pupils return to the important knowledge regularly so that they remember it. Pupils revisit important concepts, like 'civilisation', to deepen their understanding. However, there are occasions when some pupils are asked to tackle work that is too difficult for them. This means that the curriculum is not implemented as well in a small number of subjects. As a result, there are instances when pupils do not progress as well through the curriculum as intended. This is

because they have gaps in their knowledge or because their misconceptions are not quickly corrected.

In early years, children benefit from warm, caring interactions with adults, and through teaching, which helps them learn to share, take turns and follow routines. This positive culture continues through the school. Pupils live up to the school's high standards of behaviour. They learn how to reflect and make amends if ever their behaviour falls short of the school's expectations. As a result, pupils are nearly always focused and sensible in class. They move around the school in an orderly way. Staff help any pupil who needs individual support to concentrate on their work or manage their emotions. Leaders stress the importance of good attendance. They work effectively with any families who need support. This leads to high levels of attendance.

The school quickly identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils generally receive the help they need so that they are included in learning. However, there are occasions when adaptations to teaching are not fully effective for some pupils with SEND. When pupils move on to working on an activity before their understanding is secure, gaps in their knowledge are not identified and addressed.

The school's approach to personal development teaches pupils about safe and healthy relationships. Pupils are also taught how to become more effective in their learning by, for instance, planning the steps they will take to tackle a difficult task and resisting distractions. They take part in many educational visits, including several residential trips. Pupils in leadership roles are proud of their responsibilities in the school.

Leaders and governors work very effectively together. For example, they improved the school's approach to promoting good behaviour by working thoughtfully with external agencies and consulting with staff, pupils and parents. They checked carefully at each stage whether they were achieving the impact they intended. By clearly setting out strong, shared values and clear procedures to back them up, they have secured improvements in behaviour.

Parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school's work. As one parent said: 'It is a lovely and nurturing environment. My children literally run into the school gates in the morning.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, the activities chosen to achieve curricular objectives are too difficult for pupils, including pupils with SEND. This happens when checks on pupils' knowledge are not used effectively. As a result, pupils' misconceptions or gaps in their knowledge are not identified and addressed. The school should continue to refine its approaches to teaching the curriculum so that teachers can ensure that pupils make progress through the curriculum as intended.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100995
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10293210
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs of governing body	Serge Sergiou and Nigel Brook
Headteacher	Carly Foulkes
Website	www.alderbrookprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed to the post in January 2024, after being acting headteacher since September 2023.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils

about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with members of the support staff team and governing body. He held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including records related to attendance, behaviour and pupil movement.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, staff and pupils, including through the responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Julian Grenier, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Farrow	Ofsted Inspector
Alex Hayes	Ofsted Inspector
Karim Ismail	His Majesty's Inspector

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