

Inspection of Almeley Primary School

Almeley, Hereford, Herefordshire HR3 6LH

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 April 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy life at Almeley Primary School. The staff work well with parents, providing good information to help them support pupils' learning. The school is very much part of the local community. For example, school lunches come from the neighbouring village and parents visit the school to talk about their jobs.

The school is ambitious for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils get off to a strong start in the early years. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum, and pupils quickly become fluent and enthusiastic readers. However, sometimes learning in the classroom is not building successfully on what pupils already know. In some foundation subjects, learning sequences lack sufficient detail.

There are high expectations for behaviour. Pupils feel safe and play happily at social times. Pupils know that there are always adults to talk to and that any disagreements will be resolved straight away.

The school has increased the programme of educational visits. For instance, older pupils have made a residential visit to York to inform their learning in history. Pupils make very good use of extracurricular clubs, such as gardening, art or baking. They enjoy sports fixtures against other schools.

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

When children start in the early years, staff form positive relationships with them and their parents. Children quickly settle into clear routines and become confident, happy learners. Staff are skilled at developing children's language so that their vocabulary and understanding of the world grow rapidly.

Leaders have made learning to read a top priority. Children start their reading promptly in the Reception Year. The school has introduced a structured programme that introduces pupils to letters and sounds in a logical order. The staff have been well trained in the teaching of phonics and implement the scheme well. They use resources effectively. Staff provide good extra support for those at risk of falling behind. The school ensures that pupils have books to read at home that match their phonics knowledge.

Pupils study all the subjects in the national curriculum. Computing is a particular strength of the school. Leaders have set out a curriculum in each subject in which pupils' learning builds up over time. In general, pupils learn the intended topics. Teachers use resources to good effect, for example in physical education (PE) and mathematics. However, at key stage 2, pupils' learning in foundation subjects is often missing coherence and detail. This means that pupils fail to achieve the depth of knowledge the school expects of them.

Teachers check on what pupils have learned, for example by asking questions in class or by looking at their workbooks. However, they sometimes do not use this information to plan future learning. As a result, the work set for pupils is sometimes too easy or, more commonly, too difficult. For example, in key stage 2 mathematics, pupils struggle to add decimals, because their understanding of place value is not secure.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND effectively. Staff draw on guidance to ensure that pupils' needs are met. As a result, pupils with SEND are able to make good progress through the full curriculum.

This academic year, the school has implemented a new policy for pupils' behaviour, centred on helping pupils manage their emotions. Incidents of poor behaviour have fallen significantly, and the school is calm and purposeful. Pupils behave well in lessons, and disruption is rare. They demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning and generally take pride in their work. The school works diligently with the families of those few pupils whose attendance is cause for concern.

Pupils follow a planned programme of social and personal education. This teaches pupils about healthy relationships, physical and mental health and how to keep themselves safe. Pupils learn about diversity and to respect others, including those who differ from themselves. Children in the early years learn about a range of festivals, but older pupils' knowledge of different cultures and traditions is less secure.

Pupils have good opportunities to take positions of leadership and responsibility. They elect representatives to the school parliament and so learn something about democracy. The school listens to pupils' views, for instance in choosing the charity for which they raise funds.

For the last year, the school has relied on temporary leadership arrangements and temporary staff. In the interim, the acting headteacher has secured the confidence of the whole school community, and staff know that she will listen to their views. She has tackled the issues facing the school with good judgement and commendable determination.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teaching sometimes fails to provide sufficient detail, and to link up different areas of knowledge in some subjects at key stage 2. As a result, pupils' understanding can be disconnected and lack depth. The school should ensure that the planned

curriculum is delivered as intended so that pupils acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to deepen their understanding.

- Information about gaps in pupils' prior learning is sometimes not used effectively to adapt plans for future learning. As a result, the tasks set are not well matched to what pupils can already do. The school should ensure that teachers use their formative assessment to ensure that the work that pupils do addresses any misconceptions and deepens their existing knowledge.
- The school's provision for the teaching of different cultures and traditions is limited. This means that some pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of this aspect of life in modern Britain. The school should make sure that all pupils benefit from opportunities to learn about the richness of cultures and traditions in the world.

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	116645
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10294515
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carey Glyn-Jones
Headteacher	Jo Keeble (Acting Headteacher)
Website	www.almeley.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Almeley Primary School is smaller than the average-size primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. There is considerable variation in the number of pupils in each year group.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The acting headteacher joined the school in January 2023 and took up her current post in March 2023.

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 the impact of the pandemic with the

school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher, with the special educational needs coordinator and with curriculum leaders. They also spoke with staff about their experience of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair, vice-chair and three other governors. He spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority and with a school adviser.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils at social times and with groups of pupils more formally.
- 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.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents. These included self-evaluation and information about pupils' behaviour and attendance and the school's curriculum. The school's website was also checked.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments. The lead inspector met with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection. He also considered some correspondence from parents and responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and pupils.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics computing and PE. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Wayne Simner

His Majesty's Inspector

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