

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Alsagers Bank Primary Academy

The Drive, Alsagers Bank, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST7 8BB

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 November 2024

Outcome

Alsagers Bank Primary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Lisa Chell. This school is part of The Societas Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jon Lovatt, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Carol Dudson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Alsagers Bank Primary Academy is a happy and welcoming school where all pupils work hard to achieve their best. The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well and enjoy a broad range of subjects and wider opportunities.

Pupils are highly motivated and have very positive attitudes towards their learning. They build positive relationships with staff and each other. This creates a culture of care and mutual respect.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe at school. Pupils are confident staff will help them with any worries or concerns. Pupils say bullying is rare, and staff 'sort out things very quickly'. Any pupils who need help in managing their emotions are well supported by the caring nurture team.

Through a wide variety of pupil leadership roles, pupils are able to make a positive contribution to their school and local community. For example, 'Eco-Leaders' collect litter around the school and local area. They promote recycling and plant trees and flowers to 'make the air cleaner'.

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

There is a broad and ambitious curriculum in place. This supports all pupils to secure key

knowledge and skills before moving on in their learning. This starts in the early years, where key learning, vocabulary and skills are clearly set out. As a result, pupils progress well through the curriculum. They are well prepared for their next stages.

The school's inclusive ethos enables pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as their peers. Staff provide well-chosen resources and make effective adaptations. These enable pupils with SEND to access the learning. For example, teachers pre-teach vocabulary and use mixed-ability pairing. Interventions are also in place, which further strengthen this offer in English and mathematics.

The trust delivers high-quality training and support for all staff. This ensures that the curriculum is taught clearly and consistently. Assessment and adaptations tend to be used well. Teachers regularly check what pupils have understood and remembered. They plan lots of opportunities for pupils to practise and build on what they have learned. Reading is a high priority. There is a rigorous and sequential approach to reading. Any pupils who fall behind are provided with the extra help they need to become fluent readers. Staff carefully consider the books pupils read, ensuring they experience a range of books that promote diversity and equality. The texts available throughout the day, and to take home, foster a love of books and reading. These choices promote new language and genres. This is developed further through, for example, World Book Day, songs and drama. Pupils take great pride in these opportunities. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about performing Shakespeare's King Lear at the local theatre.

Securing early mathematics skills is also prioritised. Staff expertly develop pupils' understanding of number. They use effective resources and visual representations to support this.

In the wider curriculum, a minority of pupils struggle to recall their learning or vocabulary. They find it difficult to remember key knowledge. For example, in science, pupils remembered the 'material monsters' but not the properties of the materials. Adaptations are in place to support these pupils. However, they are not always ready for the new learning taking place.

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and conduct. Learning behaviours are deliberately taught from Nursery and supported through the behaviour policy. This is carefully adapted to meet the needs of pupils with additional needs. As a result, pupils behave well. There is a clear culture of learning and respect across the school.

Pupils' personal development is well considered. The curriculum promotes physical and mental health. It also develops an understanding of equality of opportunity and diversity. For example, in history and assemblies, pupils learn about key historical figures, including Emmeline Pankhurst and Martin Luther King.

Pupils have many leadership opportunities. These include 'RUGS' (the trust-wide student council), school council and sports leaders. Together, these support pupils in becoming active and responsible citizens. Pupils enjoy and value these roles and their contribution to the life of the school.

Trust leaders have established a clear culture of collaboration. Leaders work closely to improve all aspects of the school's work. Staff benefit from an extensive professional development programme. They value the support they receive from the trust and school leaders and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of pupils have not yet secured prior learning or vocabulary in the foundation subjects. This means they find it difficult to recall the key knowledge they need for new learning to take place. The school should support pupils to learn this content securely to help them progress through the wider curriculum as successfully as they do in English and mathematics.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, The Richard Heathcote Community Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in February 2017.

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	148720
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344183
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Carol Dudson
CEO of the trust	Jon Lovatt
Headteacher	Lisa Chell
Website	www.alsagersbank.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- There is a new headteacher since the last inspection.
- The school is part of The Societas Trust.
- An external provider runs a wraparound provision at the school. This includes breakfast, after-school and holiday club provision.
- The school is not using any alternative provision at this time.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and other school leaders.

- The lead inspector met with the CEO and other leaders from the trust. She also met with trustees.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited other lessons, including some in the early years.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. She considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including comments submitted via the free-text facility. The inspector also spoke to some parents in person.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.

Inspection team

Rachel King, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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