

Inspection of a good school: Alexandra Primary School

Western Road, London N22 6UH

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 March 2022

Outcome

Alexandra Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils value being active members of this diverse school community. They are proud of their school and their friendships. Positive relationships between pupils and staff are based on respect for each other. They enjoy learning together. For example, staff and pupils made a display of poppies. This was in memory of people across the world who have died at war.

Pupils try hard in everything they do. Staff keep them safe and make them feel looked after. Pupils said there is no bullying. Staff are quick to deal with any poor behaviour or friendship issues. Pupils are kind to one another. They behave well in the playground and in lessons. They speak positively about the kindness all around them and say that adults are always there for them.

Staff share leaders' vision for each child to 'aspire, achieve and enjoy'. Pupils learn a wide range of subjects and find their lessons fun. Pupils join in lots of activities that leaders plan for them. For example, recently they celebrated artists from different backgrounds. Pupils painted their own pictures for display in the nearby castle. Leaders also organise whole-school creative writing projects so that pupils can enjoy seeing their work published.

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

School leaders and governors set high expectations for all pupils and an ambition for them all to succeed. They provide a broad curriculum that realises their vision. Leaders provide opportunities to help pupils develop personally and academically. Overall, pupils achieve well. Teachers use expert subject knowledge to explain new learning clearly to pupils.

Children in the early years start to develop knowledge and skills to prepare them for Year 1 and beyond. For example, children in Reception showed their knowledge of different materials. They explained why they were using cardboard rather than tissue to build

bridges. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 talked about why their design and technology projects worked, using technical language. This showed their understanding of what makes a good design and how to make it work.

Leaders and teachers place high priority on daily reading across the school. There is a consistent approach to reading. Right from the start, children in the early years are immersed in books and language. They develop confidence in reading books that match the sounds they are learning. Staff are well trained to teach phonics effectively. Leaders make sure that pupils who struggle to read get extra support so that they can catch up quickly. Teachers carefully choose books to read to their class. Pupils love listening to these stories. Older pupils spoke about how much they enjoy reading. They read a wide range of books by different authors.

Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to revisit and apply previous learning. In mathematics, this leads to pupils developing fluency and reasoning. Pupils showed their ability to recall their learning of fractions to answer more difficult problems. In most subjects, leaders have consistently organised subject content into manageable steps for pupils to learn. This helps them build up their knowledge and skills as they progress through the school. This includes understanding essential concepts before moving on to more-complex learning. However, aspects of curriculum thinking are not as well thought out in all subjects. This is typically where leaders are less experienced. Sometimes, pupils struggle to tackle challenging learning because they have not been taught essential skills first. In geography, for example, pupils are not confident in using an atlas. This creates some barriers in learning about countries and where they are in the world.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and all aspects of school life. Staff identify pupils for specialist support through careful observations and monitoring. Teachers adapt their teaching in line with pupils' needs and select suitable resources to support pupils' learning.

Leaders work closely with staff in the school. Staff value the support given by leaders. They recognise that their workload is more manageable as they have time to work and plan lessons together. Staff enjoy working at the school.

Pupils learn without any disruption. A calm and purposeful atmosphere is found in classrooms and around the school. Pupils' social and emotional needs are well supported. This has helped pupils to deal with the pandemic.

Activities beyond the classroom also help pupils to develop personally and build character. Pupils spoke with excitement about their experiences. They are proud to be part of a school where rights are respected. Theme weeks provide pupils with the experience of applying their knowledge and learning across a variety of subjects. For example, during the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) week, the theme was 'We are engineers.' Pupils continued in lessons to learn about female black scientists who have become engineers. They were able to discuss racism and equality in the most respectful way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their safeguarding responsibilities well. They work closely with outside agencies to meet pupils' needs and keep them safe. Robust systems are in place to record and monitor concerns. Staff receive regular training. They know how to identify and report any concerns. Leaders follow these up in a timely manner so that pupils and their families get the right help. Governors are well trained to support and challenge leaders' work in safeguarding.

Pupils are well looked after in school and know to speak to an adult if they have any concerns. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some inconsistencies in curriculum planning, in foundation subjects under new leadership. Leaders with less experience have not broken down subject content into components of learning. This means that pupils do not build up as effectively the knowledge and skills they need for complex learning. Leaders need to ensure that new leaders continue to refine their curriculum thinking.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 130358 |
| Local authority | Haringey |
| Inspection number | 10211179 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 388 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Caroline Schloss |
| Headteacher | Manjit Dulay |
| Website | https://www.alexandraprimaryschool.co.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than usual is much higher than average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, geography and design & technology. As part of the deep dives, the inspector met with leaders to discuss curriculum plans, visited lessons with senior leaders, looked at pupils' work and met with teachers. Other subjects were also considered. The inspector observed a number of pupils reading to adults.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits and around the school.
- The effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements was considered through discussions with leaders, staff and pupils. The inspector also looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks on staff.
- The inspector spoke to a range of staff about their workload and well-being. Responses from staff and parents to Ofsted's surveys were also considered.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including the school improvement plan, school self-evaluation, curriculum documentation and school policies.

Inspection team

Janice Howkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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