

Inspection of Alderley Edge Community Primary School

Church Lane, Alderley Edge, Cheshire SK9 7UZ

Inspection dates:	17 and 18 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since March 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a happy, welcoming and inclusive learning community. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), support each other and feel comfortable being themselves. They value their respectful and caring relationships with staff. The school brings out the best in pupils and enables them to thrive.

From the start of the Reception Year, staff have exceptionally high expectations for pupils' learning and their wider development. Pupils typically relish the opportunity to live up to these expectations. They work hard consistently and fully immerse themselves in the wider life of the school.

Pupils play a key role in maintaining the school's harmonious and purposeful culture. They embrace the school's insistence on being kind, safe and responsible. They contribute to school-wide improvements through their roles as safety ambassadors and members of the school council.

The school nurtures pupils' talents through a diverse enrichment programme involving a vast array of sporting, creative and technical activities. Pupils benefit from a rich and varied set of experiences that broaden their horizons, such as residential trips and fundraising events. During their time at the school, pupils develop into responsible, mature and well-rounded citizens.

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

From the moment they join the Reception class, pupils learn an ambitious and thoughtfully sequenced curriculum. Leaders are precise in their curriculum thinking. They have thought deeply about the vocabulary pupils should learn in each subject. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and a sound understanding of the subject curriculums they teach. They deliver the curriculum as intended, so pupils typically learn a coherent body of knowledge. Children in the early years make exceptional progress in their learning during their time in the Reception class. Pupils attain highly in national tests at the end of Year 6.

Teachers typically deliver the curriculum effectively. They explain new concepts clearly and model new skills well. The school uses training to enhance teaching in areas such as mathematics and reading. The school typically uses checks on pupils' learning over time to identify pupils who need more help in specific areas. Despite this, there are times when the school does not systematically check pupils' learning during lessons. When this is the case, teachers miss opportunities to build on what pupils already know and to address gaps pupils might have in their learning. In some cases, this limits the amount pupils learn in some parts of the curriculum.

Reading is the lifeblood of the school. The teaching of early reading is a real strength. Staff are experts in early reading. They help almost all pupils to become accurate and speedy readers. Alongside this, staff help pupils gain the essential writing and spelling knowledge that underpins their future success. Pupils value and enjoy reading. Many

pupils animatedly share their enthusiasm for their favourite books, authors and genres. Those who fall behind in their reading receive appropriate support. The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check last year was very high.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. From the start of the early years, they follow clear routines. This ensures that no time is wasted. Pupils concentrate well and become absorbed in their work. They are keen to participate in lessons. Pupils cooperate, take turns and look out for each other. Their conduct reflects the school's commitment to include all.

Pupils rarely miss school. Staff go to great lengths to help families and pupils, including those with SEND, to avoid absence except when it is necessary. This ensures that pupils seldom miss out on valuable learning.

The school identifies when a pupil may have SEND. Staff work with a range of external services, such as speech and language therapists, to assess pupils' needs and provide appropriate support.

Leaders have meticulously designed a vibrant and sequential programme to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils have a deep understanding of healthy relationships, including concepts such as consent. Pupils know about the harm that prejudice and discrimination can cause, and they are able to compare and contrast famous figures from history such as Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King.

Leaders are relentless in their pursuit of the school's mission to create an inclusive community that inspires a lifelong love of learning. Governors guide the school capably. They ensure that the school uses its resources shrewdly to provide the best opportunities for pupils. Leaders are mindful of the pressures on staff. Over time, they have enacted a wide-ranging strategy to reduce staff workload and support their well-being. Staff appreciate this greatly and particularly value the support to develop the curriculum.

Staff work in partnership with parents, carers and the wider community. The way that staff in the early years induct families into the school community is exemplary.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, the school does not check how well pupils learn new content as effectively as it could. As a result, the school is sometimes unclear on what pupils know and whether they have gaps in their learning. Consequently, some pupils do not build secure knowledge over time. The school should ensure that it checks pupils'

understanding systematically so it can adapt its approach to address any gaps in learning or misconceptions that pupils might have.

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	111008
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10348045
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Davies
Headteacher	Lindsey Walsh
Website	www.aecps.org
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 March 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision for the education of pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 met with the headteacher and other leaders. They also met with a representative of the local authority and the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors discussed the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the governing body, including its chair.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Will Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nicky Parkinson

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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