

Inspection of Alumwell Junior School

Primley Avenue, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 9UP

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

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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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly and happy school. Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, and this enables them to achieve well.

Pupils have good relationships with each other and adults. They feel safe in school and say that bullying is rare. If it happens, pupils know who they can talk to and that it will be dealt with. Pupils' behaviour in and around school is calm and considerate. Staff ensure that all pupils reflect on their behaviour and choices. Pupils value this and know that 'how they behave matters'. As a result, mutual respect and kindness are part of everyday life.

Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn to look through 'windows and mirrors' when learning about other faiths and cultures. This helps them to look at other people's beliefs, experiences and perspectives and then reflect on their own. As a result, pupils understand the need to treat everyone equally and value each other's differences.

Pupils attend a variety of clubs in school, such as singing, board games and multi-sports. Others enjoy learning to play a musical instrument. These activities help to build character and develop pupils' talents.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. In mathematics, reading and science, leaders have identified the knowledge they want pupils to remember. However, this is not the case in some of the other subjects. Leaders have not clearly identified the knowledge and concepts that teachers must teach to the pupils. As a result, pupils do not learn well enough or in sufficient depth in these subjects.

In some subjects, leaders have checked the quality of education in their curriculum areas. This helps them to identify what is working well and what needs to be developed further. However, in a few subjects, leadership is in the early stages of development. These leaders do not routinely check on how well the curriculum is being delivered by staff. Therefore, they do not reliably know how well teachers are helping pupils to learn and remember the planned content.

In most subjects, teachers design lessons that build on what pupils already know. As a result, they have a good understanding of what to teach. They explain content clearly and use questions to extend pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions that pupils may have.

Leaders are passionate about reading and have prioritised developing a love of reading. The reading curriculum is well sequenced and identifies the key vocabulary leaders want pupils to know and remember. Leaders have also put systems in place to support pupils to read fluently. Staff check that pupils are on track with their

reading. If pupils fall behind, they receive support to help them catch up. As a result, pupils enjoy reading and quickly learn to read with confidence. Leaders make sure that pupils access a broad range of books, both in the school and class library areas. Pupils enjoy choosing and reading books. They talk confidently about their favourite authors. One pupil explained that they like the way the author uses the blurb on the back of the book to 'hook them into the story'.

There is a systematic and consistent behaviour approach across the school. This help pupils to behave well. They rarely disrupt the learning of their peers. Leaders make sure that pupils with additional needs are identified quickly. These pupils achieve well because staff demonstrate a good understanding of their individual needs and provide them with appropriate help to learn alongside their classmates.

Leaders have a well-planned and thoughtful approach to pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught effectively about healthy relationships and learn to express their thoughts and feelings. As a result, pupils develop personally and become more prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors bring skills and expertise from a range of backgrounds. They support and challenge leaders effectively. Staff comment that leaders and governors are considerate of their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a strong understanding of current safeguarding issues. Staff are well trained in all aspects of keeping children safe. They know how to identify and report any concerns about pupils. Leaders and staff know pupils and families well. They liaise closely with families and a range of agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate support. Leaders ensure that adults who work at the school are safe to do so.

The family support worker supports pupils with their emotional well-being. Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe, including learning about online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not clearly identified the components of knowledge they want pupils to know and remember over time. This means teachers are not clear about the key knowledge pupils need to learn and build upon. Senior leaders should continue to support subject leaders to enable them

to successfully design their curriculum and evaluate its implementation to identify where it can be improved further.

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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	104142
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10278834
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roland Roberts
Co-Headteachers	Kerry Boam / Lisa Upton
Website	www.alumwelljuniorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 and 24 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- New co-headteachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school is part of the Cadmus Federation.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector met with the co-headteachers and four members of the governing board, including the chair.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of leaders, staff and pupils about safeguarding. Inspectors examined safeguarding records and documentation. They scrutinised the checks made on staff before they start working at the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents expressed in the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and by talking to parents at the school gate. Inspectors also looked at the responses to surveys completed by staff and by pupils.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gail Peyton	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Potter	Ofsted Inspector

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