

Inspection of a good school: Alverton Primary School

Mount Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 1RB

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 April 2024

Outcome

Alverton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Alverton Primary School is nurturing and aspirational. The school provides an ambitious curriculum and several opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons. The school has high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have developed a curriculum that is ambitious and prepares pupils for their next stage of learning. Most pupils achieve well.

The school has a higher-than-average proportion of pupils with SEND. This is an important and celebrated characteristic of the school. The targeted mainstream provision, The Hive, provides carefully tailored education and support for the pupils who attend.

Pupils are safe in school. They confidently discuss the many ways they are taught to stay safe online. The curriculum helps pupils identify risks and harmful behaviours. There is a breadth of extra-curricular activities to extend pupils' experiences. The school provides a range of leadership opportunities for pupils, such as digital leaders and reading warriors. The school's recent efforts to improve attendance are beginning to have an impact.

This is an inclusive school. Pupils' individuality is celebrated. Relationships between staff and pupils are highly positive throughout school, particularly in The Hive. Pupils' behaviour varies during different times of the day. While pupils meet the expectations of good conduct in lessons, this is not as well embedded during playtimes.

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

Pupils benefit from the broad and ambitious curriculum in school. Most pupils achieve well. Teachers' subject expertise is well developed. Staff work well together to plan engaging lessons. The school has introduced ways to help pupils remember their learning in the long term. Many lessons provide regular opportunities to reflect on previous learning and revisit important vocabulary. In subjects where this regularly happens, pupils

discuss their learning with confidence. In most subjects, teachers use effective systems to check what pupils know and remember. However, in some foundation subjects, these systems are not as well embedded. In these subjects, the assessment systems are not closely matched to the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. As a result, in some foundation subjects, the school does not recognise where pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

Early reading is a priority. In recent years, the school has embedded a new phonics scheme. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Staff are well trained and deliver phonics effectively. Children learn to read quickly and fluently. There are high expectations for reading for all pupils, including those with SEND. Pupils in The Hive receive daily, engaging phonics sessions. Some older pupils have not benefited from such a strong foundation in reading. These pupils are well supported with targeted interventions with appropriate resources. The school has introduced whole-school incentives to promote a love of reading, such as the 'bedtime story' day with pupils and their family members. The recent 'bedtime story' day helped teachers to share storytelling tips with pupils and their families.

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusion. They engage with external specialists to identify pupils' needs and provide the timely support they need. Most pupils with SEND work towards the same end points as their peers. They benefit from the precise strategies and support in lessons. This helps them to be successful in their learning.

Children in the early years make a strong start. The early years environment provides an engaging and nurturing space. Children benefit from the well-planned learning opportunities. Children are taught to be independent and help their peers. Staff model language well. Children are confident and talk about their learning with their peers. This includes, for example, when discussing their findings from minibeast hunts and outdoor explorations. Children benefit from a wealth of early mathematics opportunities. They enjoy daily opportunities to develop their understanding of number, for example through games and creative opportunities. Children progress well. Staff collaborate well to ensure children are ready for their next stage in learning.

The school has recently introduced a new behaviour management approach. This is already having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and conduct in lessons. However, there are inconsistencies in pupils' behaviour during unstructured times of the day. Sometimes, behaviour is less than good at playtimes. Some pupils, staff and parents feel that behaviour could be improved. The school has begun to introduce systems to address this, but these are not yet embedded.

The school offers a range of opportunities to broaden pupils' development beyond the curriculum. Pupils benefit from a variety of educational visits and focused days. For example, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) days help to spark curiosity and raise career aspirations. Initiatives like 'Imaginosity' develop pupils' collaboration, creativity and resilience skills. The school prioritises the health and well-being of pupils.

The newly formed leadership team demonstrates a commitment to curriculum improvements and staff well-being. Governors understand their statutory duties and are committed to the improvement journey of the school. Staff are proud to work in this school. Workload is well considered by leaders. As a result, this is not a concern for staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, some of the assessment systems are not closely matched to the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. As a result, sometimes, the school does not recognise where pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The school should review how they check what pupils know and can remember.
- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. These pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. The school must continue to develop their processes to improve pupils' attendance.
- The new systems to manage behaviour are not embedded during unstructured times of the day. Sometimes, behaviour is less than good during outdoor playtimes. The school should ensure that there is consistency in behaviour expectations throughout the day and that pupils, staff and parents understand the new systems in place.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 school to be good in September 2018.

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 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	121368
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10297312
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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jean Stewart
Headteacher	Lee Matravers
Website	www.alverton.n-yorks.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with communication & interaction needs.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for SEND is above the national average.
- The headteacher joined the school in April 2023.

Information about this inspection

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.

- The inspector spoke to senior leaders, including members of the governing body and the local authority school improvement partner.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, 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 a range of pupils read from different year groups.
- 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. The inspector also spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector analysed the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and staff survey. They reviewed answers from the online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.

Inspection team

Georgina Chinaka, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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