

Inspection of Alderman Payne Primary School

9 Main Road, Parson Drove, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 4JA

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong family feel at this small village school. Pupils love coming here. They feel safe and play happily, mixing across the age groups. Bullying is not tolerated, and any unkind behaviour is dealt with swiftly by caring adults.

Pupils are curious and show a willingness to learn. They respect each other's achievements and enjoy celebrating these in the weekly family assemblies. They know the adults have high expectations of them and try hard to meet these.

Pupils behave extremely well around the school. They are very polite and respectful to each other and to adults. In lessons, pupils concentrate very well.

There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills. Librarians look after the books in the school's library bus. Referees keep order during lunchtime football games. Mental health ambassadors support those pupils who may be feeling sad.

Trips enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with experiences of the world beyond their village. For example, key stage 2 pupils recently enjoyed watching a ballet at the Royal Opera House in London. Mindful Mondays prepare pupils for the week ahead and 'What went well?' Fridays ensure they end the week on a high.

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

Leaders have designed the curriculum carefully to meet the needs of mixed classes. The curriculum sets out the small steps of learning and the order in which these should be taught. This means that the knowledge that pupils should achieve is clearly identified across year groups. The curriculum starts in the early years, and at each stage it prepares pupils well for what comes next.

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are well supported and integrated in all aspects of school life. There is a clear system for identifying their needs and ensuring that teachers know how to support them to access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers.

Reading is prioritised in the curriculum. Pupils are proud of the school's library bus and enjoy their weekly class trips to it. They appreciate the range of books available there and in their class reading corners. They read widely and talk enthusiastically about their favourite genres. Children in Reception start learning to read soon after they join the school. Staff deliver the school's chosen phonics programme confidently and consistently. Regular assessments ensure that pupils who need additional support in phonics are spotted quickly. They get the help they need to progress.

Teachers are confident about the subjects they teach. Leaders support them with training where this is needed. Teachers present information clearly and revisit learning often, including the vocabulary needed for each new topic or project. Pupils use this knowledge and vocabulary adeptly when talking about their learning. This includes the youngest children. For example, in Reception, where children talk excitedly about slithering snakes, having read the story 'Rumble in the Jungle'.

In the classroom, teachers often use an appropriate range of ways to check what pupils know and can do. They use this information to adjust their teaching to address any gaps they notice, often in the moment. However, assessment is less well developed in some subjects. In these subjects, leaders do not know enough about what pupils know and can do.

In all classrooms pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they are highly focused on the learning. Pupils are keen to participate and share what they know. This includes children in the early years, who thrive on the well-established routines of school.

Leaders are determined to give pupils aspirations and skills for their future lives. They have identified 'five fabulous foundations': reading, respect, perseverance and resilience, the wider world, inquisitiveness. Pupils consider how they can demonstrate these values every time they start a new topic. Pupils get opportunities to develop their sporting abilities through a range of extra-curricular clubs. They learn to play different musical instruments and perform in front of an audience. Pupils learn about other cultures and world religions. They are very accepting of difference.

The school's governors are committed to its success. They provide support and challenge to leaders. They share leaders' ambitious vision for the school. Most parents are very positive about the quality of provision and support for their children. Leaders prioritise staff development as they know this will lead to the best possible outcomes for pupils. Staff feel valued and they enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding systems are robust at all levels. Staff are well trained. They are alert to any signs that a pupil may be at risk. They report concerns promptly, using an electronic logging system. Staff are confident that leaders will act quickly to put support in place if this is needed.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they have worries about themselves or their friends. They are particularly knowledgeable about online safety.

The system for carrying out and recording vetting checks on those who work or volunteer at the school is rigorous.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The approach to assessment in some subjects is not yet fully developed. This means that sometimes gaps in pupils' learning are not identified or addressed. Leaders should continue their focus on developing an effective and consistent approach to assessment, ensuring this is not burdensome for teachers, but provides accurate information on what pupils know and can do.

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	110644
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10255084
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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Stratford
Headteacher	Sue Blyth
Website	www.aldermanpayne.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school offers childcare before school at a breakfast club run by school staff and managed by leaders.
- At the time of the inspection, leaders were not using any alternative provision.

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 these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also looked at a sample of books from other subjects across all year groups.

- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to review records. An inspector scrutinised the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of other school documentation and policies, including the school development plan, external reviews of the school and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from different year groups during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents. This included speaking with parents at the end of the school day and reviewing the 41 responses and 19 free-text responses submitted to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors gathered the views of staff by speaking with many of them and reviewing the 22 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Wayne Jarvis

His Majesty's Inspector

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