

Inspection of a good school: Alperton Community School

Stanley Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 4JE

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2021

Outcome

Alperton Community School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to school and they enjoy their lessons. Pupils know that teachers expect them to be ready, respectful, responsible and resilient in their learning. Pupils can focus because they feel safe. They said that they feel safe everywhere in school. Staff escort pupils when they move between the two sites. They also ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.

Leaders' expectations of all pupils are high. They have ensured that pupils study a broad range of subjects. For example, pupils study two languages from French, Spanish and Gujarati in Year 7 and all pupils study drama. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study the same range of subjects. Leaders ensure that these pupils are supported to learn well.

Pupils behave well in school. They focus on their learning in lessons. Pupils follow teachers' instructions and listen to one another. Pupils said that bullying rarely happens. If it does, they know whom to speak to and they trust it will be dealt with quickly. There is a strong pastoral team that works alongside the safeguarding and mental well-being teams to keep pupils safe.

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

Leaders ensure that all pupils study a wide range of subjects from Year 7 to Year 9. This gives pupils a good foundation from which to make their choice of GCSE subjects. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and encourage them to choose courses in Year 10 that are part of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) range of subjects. The number of pupils choosing a modern foreign language this year in Year 9 has increased. In the sixth form, there are courses to suit the needs and aspirations of all students.

Subject leaders have thought about the order in which they teach subject content so that pupils can build on previous knowledge. Subject plans identify ways for pupils to apply and deepen their learning. For example, in English, pupils use their knowledge of the Second World War to help them understand books that are set during this period of history, such as 'Private Peaceful'.

Teaching includes specific opportunities for pupils to recall key knowledge that they need to remember. Teachers check if pupils can remember essential learning taught during recent lessons. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and confidently correct pupils' misconceptions. They also help pupils to make links between ideas and concepts that they have studied.

However, assessment is not used consistently across all subjects, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Sometimes, checks on pupils' learning do not focus sharply on finding out exactly what subject content pupils know and understand securely. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan for and fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Assessment in the sixth form supports the delivery of the curriculum more effectively, as it is more closely matched to the key knowledge that students need to remember.

Leaders have thought carefully about how they can support the development of pupils' character. Personal, social, health and economic education is well established across the school from Year 7 to Year 13. Leaders would like pupils to develop their self-confidence, especially in their use of spoken language. All staff have contributed to the planning of next year's programme to address this. In the sixth form, there is a clear focus on helping students to mature into young adults. Students enjoy opportunities to be leaders for subject areas and for well-being.

Pupils focus well in lessons, with very little disruption from others. Pupils respond to teachers' questions and are keen to show what they have remembered from previous learning. Pupils commented that this was typical of behaviour in the school.

Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of activities beyond the classroom. Pupils attend clubs such as boxing, archery and chess. Subject leaders also plan trips and visits to complement the curriculum. For example, pupils can take part in trips overseas or go to the theatre. These activities have been reduced due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, but where possible, they have restarted.

Pupils with SEND study the full range of subjects. Leaders are ambitious for these pupils. Teaching assistants work with subject teachers to adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Leaders, including trustees, know the school's strengths and development areas. They have an accurate understanding of the school's work and use this to make appropriate improvement plans. Staff are happy and typically feel well supported by leaders, including with their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders perform the necessary checks on new staff recruited to the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They complete additional online training in key areas, such as peer-on-peer abuse and radicalisation. There are clear procedures for reporting concerns and staff know how to use these.

Leaders are reflective and review their practice to strengthen safeguarding arrangements as necessary.

Leaders quickly identify pupils who may need support and they make timely referrals to their in-house professionals as well as outside agencies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- When assessing pupils, sometimes subject leaders and teachers are not always clear about what knowledge they are measuring. In some instances, checks are not as helpful as they could be in pinpointing what subject content pupils need to revisit and practise. Leaders should ensure that teachers are given training and guidance on how to accurately assess what pupils have learned.

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. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2016.

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 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 [here](#).

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	138610
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10195689
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1741
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mona Shah
Headteacher	Gerard McKenna
Website	www.alperton.brent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 July 2016, under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, three deputy headteachers and other senior leaders. They met with the chair of the trust and three other trustees.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: English, art, computing and psychology. They visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers.

- Through discussions with leaders, trustees, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. They also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of pre-employment checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- Inspectors spoke to staff, including newly qualified teachers, about behaviour and their workload in school.
- Pupils in Year 11 and Year 13 were not attending on site during the visit on 13 and 14 July. Year 11 pupils have completed a five-day programme to prepare them for starting in the sixth form in September. Year 13 students have completed life skills workshops, followed by a virtual transition programme for university and apprenticeships.
- Inspectors looked at 90 staff responses, 23 parent responses and 260 pupil responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

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