

Inspection of Allington Primary School

Hildenborough Crescent, London Road, Maidstone Kent ME16 0PG

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this inclusive and nurturing school. Staff are united in their ambition for every pupil to achieve their full potential. This means that pupils enjoy coming to school. There is a purposeful buzz of learning in every classroom. This positivity spills out into breaktimes where pupils enjoy being with their friends. They appreciate the freedom of the spacious field and play imaginative games on the climbing structures.

Leaders' expectations are high, and this is reflected in pupils' exemplary behaviour and respectful attitudes. Pupils enjoy their learning, and they are proud of their high-quality work which is displayed around the school. Academic, musical, and sporting talents are all valued and celebrated. Individual pupils are supported to develop their own talents and interests. For example, pupils of all ages are encouraged to play their musical instruments during assemblies.

The school's 'THINC' values underpin the curriculum. Over time pupils develop the ability to wisely reflect on issues such as equality of opportunity. Older pupils intelligently discuss the qualities needed for healthy relationships.

Bullying is rare, and if needed leaders take robust and sensitive action. Kind and caring relationships exist among pupils, and adults are trusted to deal with any worries quickly.

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

Pupils at this school are valued as unique individuals who have the right to succeed. Leaders, staff and governors share a limitless ambition for all pupils to have the very best education. Leaders have designed a rich curriculum that includes carefully sequenced knowledge that pupils need to learn. They provide excellent opportunities for pupils to learn a wide range of subjects. Independence is promoted at every opportunity, and pupils develop a determination to succeed at all they set their minds to. As soon as children start in Reception, they are encouraged to develop curious attitudes. This continues as pupils move through the school, and as a result pupils are well prepared for their next steps in learning.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum, and leaders steadfastly prioritise teaching pupils to read. Staff are well trained to teach phonics using an effective systematic programme. This begins without delay when children start in Reception. Books are carefully matched to the sounds pupils know and this helps them to practise their reading and grow in confidence. Pupils who fall behind or need extra support are identified quickly and given prompt help by highly trained staff. Daily story times, opportunities to attend book clubs and a library full of inspiring books help pupils develop a love of reading.

This school is remarkably inclusive, and staff are relentlessly ambitious for every pupil, irrespective of their differing needs. The curriculum has been carefully constructed to ensure all pupils learn alongside their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are welcomed into the school, and they receive expert support. Leaders identify where pupils need additional help, and when appropriate, tailored and bespoke programmes are skilfully implemented. This means that pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

When children start in Reception, staff find out what makes each child unique. This knowledge is used to tailor activities which maximise engagement and progress. Indoor and outdoor areas are well organised with activities that help children develop enquiring minds and practise their learning. This means that children achieve exceptionally well and are confident to move on to Year 1.

The wider personal development curriculum is a strength in this school. Leaders take their responsibility for preparing pupils for success in the wider, diverse world very seriously. They plan meaningful opportunities for pupils to interact with and learn from people from a broad range of backgrounds. Commonalities and differences are identified and celebrated. For example, a recent 'heritage day' enabled pupils to share and celebrate their own cultural backgrounds. Special assemblies provide stimulating opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of what respect, tolerance and individual liberty mean. This helps prepare pupils well for their next stage of learning.

Pupils behave exceptionally well across the school and live up to the high expectations leaders have. There is a strong sense of belonging and togetherness. This is demonstrated in the genuine care pupils show towards each other.

There is a strong culture of mutual support and teamwork among the staff. They are overwhelmingly positive about the support and consideration they receive from school leaders. Local governors who report to trustees are extremely knowledgeable about the school. They have high expectations of leaders and check on their work robustly. They are committed to the success of every pupil.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the pupils well and receive regular training to understand the risks and potential dangers pupils may face. Clear processes are in place so that staff can report concerns. Leaders work proactively with other agencies and are relentless in getting extra support in place for pupils who need it. A strong culture of safeguarding is well embedded.

Pupils feel very safe in school. The thoughtful curriculum teaches them how to stay safe. Pupils know how to report concerns and are confident there is always a trusted adult they can talk to.

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.

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.

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	139096
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10242293
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	466
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dr Nigel Smetham
Headteacher	Carolyn Howson
Website	www.allington.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Orchard Academy Trust.
- The school runs its own morning breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the inclusion manager, subject leaders, teachers, and teaching assistants.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees and local governors, including the chair of the local governing body. She also met with the executive headteacher.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and outside during social times.
- Inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and policies, speaking to staff and local governors and discussing this with pupils.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including school improvement documentation and governing body minutes.

Inspection team

Jo Petch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Emma Law

Ofsted Inspector

Alice Early

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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