

Inspection of The Aldgate School

St James's Passage, Duke's Place, London, EC3A 5DE

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since April 2013.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils grow into active citizens at this school. They are proud and happy to come to school every day. From the very youngest child, they follow the school's clear expectations of how to treat one another. As a result, pupils at this school are kind and caring to all members of the school community. Their behaviour is exceptional because they understand the high standards expected and the routines to follow.

The school prides itself on providing many rich opportunities to its pupils. Every pupil learns to play the violin, cello or double bass by the time they leave the school. Many showcase their talent and skill through public performances. The provision for music is remarkable.

Leaders at the school hold the highest ambitions for pupils. They want all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to access the full curriculum and become confident in all of their subjects. Pupils leave the school with impressive levels of literacy and numeracy, but also a firm grasp across the curriculum. For example, pupils can demonstrate key knowledge from their study of ancient Egypt and the Xia dynasty in history.

Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and recognise that staff are 'attentive and caring and go above and beyond for the children.'

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

The school has used the expertise of their staff to build an ambitious curriculum. The expectations of what pupils should know in each subject are set out and designed in a clear sequence. This helps pupils to remember what they have learned and to build up new knowledge. Vocabulary has an important role here, and the technical terms are shared and explained for pupils to learn and recall. The curriculum is further bolstered by culture-rich trips to museums and other sites that add to pupils' learning.

Staff deliver the curriculum with skill. Leaders invest in training and ensure that staff are confident across the full range of subjects. During lessons, teachers pay close attention to the knowledge and skills that pupils are learning. When needed, they take time to slow down and ensure that pupils have mastered the foundations before moving forward. Any misconceptions are addressed swiftly, including for pupils with SEND.

The school has accurately identified what pupils need in order to become successful readers. Leaders have chosen an appropriate scheme which ensures that pupils develop fluency in their reading. This includes pupils who speak English as an additional language who access a vast range of books which match their stage of reading development. Any pupils that fall behind are supported so that they successfully catch up and become fluent. Pupils learn to read quickly because they

are given books which match the sounds they are learning right from the beginning of their time in Reception. As a result, pupils become confident, hungry readers and share with enthusiasm the latest novel they are reading, comparing this to other books they have read. Pupils go on to write insightful reflections and analysis on their texts.

Children in the early years follow the school's routines with consistency. They play and interact with each other using the same caring and kind manners that all pupils in the school show. The early years environment is rich with stimulation and opportunities for physical development. Adults interact with enthusiasm and encouragement to build children's skills. They introduce new vocabulary to help pupils be prepared for Year 1 and beyond. At times, however, there can be a lack of accuracy and richness in the language used with children. Leaders are taking action through staff training to improve this aspect of the school's work.

Pupils are happy to come to school and attend regularly. When needed, the school works successfully with families to overcome the reasons preventing a child from attending. This strong partnership with parents is a noticeable feature of the school.

The way that the school builds pupils' character is exceptional. There is a programme for personal, social and health education that caters well to pupils' needs. Pupils learn about others and their cultural backgrounds and beliefs. Their talents are nurtured and developed, including for those with SEND. Pupils can, for example, further their interests in singing, performing arts, sports and robotics. Pupils feel safe and content in school. This is strengthened by the extensive systems of support that are in place. Leaders are tuned in to any emerging mental health concerns in pupils and respond by providing help if needed. For example, some pupils attend art therapy, others have access to a school counsellor. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe and are confident that bullying and discrimination have no place in this school.

Leaders and governors have a strong shared vision of high-quality education for all pupils. They hold themselves to high standards and seek external expertise to shape strategic decisions. Leaders ensure that staff have access to excellent professional development opportunities. Staff are listened to by leaders, and have their time and wellbeing taken into consideration.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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	100000
Local authority	City of London
Inspection number	10323215
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Beverley Ryan
Headteacher	Alexandra Allan
Website	www.thealdgateschool.org
Date of previous inspection	18 and 19 April 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates from the same site as City of London Child and Family Centre, and the Cass Child & Family Centre.
- The Aldgate school has delegated responsibility for running The Cass Child & Family Centre which is a registered nursery with URN: EY288677 and operates for children from the age of nine months and above.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- This is a Church of England school under the Diocese of London. The last section 48 inspection took place in May 2019.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the school senior leadership team.
- Inspectors also met with governors, members of the City of London Corporation and a representative of the London Diocesan Board for Schools.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music.
- For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors visited the early years provision and spoke to early years leaders and staff.
- The early years provision of The Cass Child & Family Centre was not inspected during this inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors visited clubs and activities and met with pupils and staff to evaluate the personal development of pupils at the school.

Inspection team

Karim Ismail, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ben Carter	Ofsted Inspector
Pia Longman	Ofsted Inspector
Ogugua Okolo-Angus	Ofsted Inspector

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