

Aston Fence Junior and Infant School

Sheffield Road, Woodhouse Mill, Sheffield, S13 9ZD

Inspection dates 4–5 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils receive an outstanding education in English, mathematics and other subjects. Pupils develop their academic, creative and practical skills exceptionally well and they are very well equipped for the next stage of learning.
- Achievement is outstanding because pupils progress from broadly average levels of attainment on entry to reach levels that are well above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Levels of attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2 are higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
- At Key Stage 2, a high proportion of pupils make the nationally expected levels of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. A good proportion exceeds national expectations. This includes pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils' achievement in art and design is outstanding.
- The outstanding teaching is typified by excellent relationships and high expectations. High quality planning and the methodical teaching of skills successfully engage learners and promote achievement.
- The outstanding curriculum is highly effective in promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A comprehensive programme of well-planned visits and experiences provides an excellent stimulus for learning in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are exemplary. High levels of motivation and enjoyment are evident in the strong work ethic in lessons.
- The outstanding leadership and management are based on the headteacher's well-articulated vision for primary education. This is strongly supported by staff, parents and governors. Leaders carry out rigorous performance management and provide highly effective professional development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons of which two were joint observations with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, five representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, and school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at range of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records of behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.
- They took account of 32 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), a few additional verbal and written comments from parents and 25 questionnaires.

Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Edward Price

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Aston Fence is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- Fewer pupils than average are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Few pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion supported by school action is well below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school has awards for basic skills, the provision for football, healthy school and enterprise education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the high quality of teaching and learning by:
 - extending the programme of teaching letters and sounds into Year 3 and Year 4 to secure the phonic knowledge and skills of weaker readers
 - refining the strategies for extending pupils' understanding and use of grammar in their writing in some years
 - ensuring that, at Key Stage 2, pupils respond to feedback about their writing with actions to show how they have improved
 - using models of outstanding practice within and beyond the school to strengthen the skills and confidence of teachers new to the teaching of a year group.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the school with broadly expected skills. They make a good start and by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage the proportion that reaches a good level of development is higher than the national average.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is significantly above average, especially in reading and writing. In 2012, results dipped a little, reflecting a slightly weaker cohort. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2012, the large majority of pupils in Year 1 met the required standard in the new national phonics screening check.
- At Key Stage 2, attainment is significantly above the national average in English and mathematics and is consistently higher than at the time of the previous inspection. In reading, writing and mathematics, almost all pupils make at least the nationally expected two levels of progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, which is high. In 2011, more pupils than predicted gained at least Level 4 and Level 5 in both English and mathematics. This includes disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- Pupils read widely and with enthusiasm. Every pupil reads regularly with an adult. Reading is promoted strongly within topic work and through parents reading with their children at home. School assessments show that progress in reading is good or outstanding in all year groups in Key Stage 2. Most of the younger pupils rapidly acquire skills and knowledge in letters and sounds. School evaluation has accurately identified that a few pupils in Years 3 and 4 have not made secure enough progress in their reading skills.
- The quality of writing observed in lessons, in pupils' English books, topic work and displays is of a high standard in all year groups. Pupils write with a clear sense of purpose and develop their stamina for extended writing. They write frequently from stimulating first-hand experiences and follow methodical approaches in planning and improving their writing. School analysis indicates that pupils make less rapid progress in writing than reading in some year groups due to a relative weakness in their understanding and use of grammar.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Pupils who find reading, writing or mathematics more difficult receive well-targeted support through additional programmes and well-focused guidance from teaching assistants.
- Pupils' achievement in art and design is outstanding. The skills they display in a range of media are exceptional. In art lessons they work with great concentration and perseverance and produce work of high quality.
- Pupils in all years have outstanding opportunities to learn about subjects across the curriculum through first-hand experience. This results in high levels of motivation and enjoyment which are evident in the pupils' strong work ethic and good attendance.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The teaching observed over all key stages was never less than good and much was outstanding.
- The majority of lessons are very well planned. Teachers' high quality curriculum planning frequently and systematically provides first-hand experiences for learning in a wide range of subjects. Teaching is securely linked to previous learning and effectively builds on other activities the pupils have carried out within the topic. For example, Year 6 pupils studied a Bruegel painting, built excellent clay models and were involved in stimulating drama activities before writing an imaginative and historical account in the observed lesson.
- The teaching of skills in reading, writing and mathematics is methodical and systematically extends prior learning. This is also true of other subjects. For example, in an outstanding art lesson in Year 5 pupils considered drawings and photographs from a visit to a historic building, reflected on previous examples of their pen and ink shading, and creatively and incrementally extended their technical skills.

- The excellent quality of relationships and high expectations of pupils are strong features of teaching from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards. These successfully foster a strong work ethic and high levels of engagement by pupils of all levels of ability. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included through carefully planned classroom activities by teaching and support staff.
- In the best lessons, teachers and teaching assistants frequently ask open questions that encourage and challenge individual pupils to work out mathematical problems or extend their use of vocabulary and grammar. Pupils receive frequent verbal feedback in lessons that accurately guides them in how to improve. Written marking is frequently detailed and constructive. Marking is not always sufficiently consistent in ensuring that pupils respond by showing how they have improved an aspect of their writing.
- In lessons that were good rather than outstanding, the teacher was new to the year group. Planning lacked a little precision and the quality of relationships and dialogue lacked a little confidence and fluency. School evaluation accurately identified the need to extend the teaching of letters and sounds in Years 3 and 4 and to refine the strategies for teaching the use of grammar in some year groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Most pupils have exemplary attitudes to learning. They behave with great maturity for their ages and demonstrate high levels of concentration and perseverance in their work. They enjoy their lessons and are extremely cooperative when working on tasks. Parents, staff and pupils are highly positive about behaviour.
- Behaviour around the school is consistently calm and orderly and pupils are very polite and welcoming. The good range of equipment in the playground successfully encourages varied forms of play and a strong sense of cooperation and security. Bullying is very rare and exclusions are rare.
- The school has an exceptionally positive climate for learning which is reinforced by the high expectations of behaviour and the consistently good management of behaviour by teaching and support staff. The high level of pupils' engagement is reflected in above average attendance.
- Pupils feel safe at school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, particularly in relation to the use of computers and the internet.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher energetically provides clear direction and strong support. He is highly respected and valued by governors, staff, parents and pupils. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Together they have developed an outstanding curriculum which provides well-planned and coherent links across subjects, a purposeful framework for learning, enjoyable learning experiences and high levels of literacy.
- The outstanding curriculum provides an extensive range of educational visits which provide a practical and first-hand context for pupils' learning. These experiences inspire pupils of all abilities, promote strong relationships and are highly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is reinforced by sporting activities, music and after-school clubs. The highly engaging curriculum results in exemplary attitudes to learning, excellent behaviour and above average attendance.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils' progress and behaviour. These are communicated consistently by staff who model high professional standards. Performance management has a rigorous focus and staff reviews are informed by frequent evaluations of pupils' progress and accurate lesson observations. Leaders have a collaborative and outward-looking approach to staff development and they are prompt in tackling accurately identified areas of development.

Expertise within the school, as well as from elsewhere, is used well to strengthen aspects of practice.

- Senior and middle leaders have an accurate analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in aspects of teaching and learning. They are reflective about areas for improvement and focus actively on actions. For example, teachers regularly analyse tests in mathematics to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and use this information to plan more accurately targeted learning activities. Although writing is generally of a high standard and pupils write with a strong sense of purpose and audience, leaders have correctly identified that aspects of grammar could be taught more effectively in some year groups.
 - Relationships with parents are highly positive as demonstrated in the responses on Parent View and in the school's own questionnaires. There is high attendance at school events and parents' evenings. The school successfully involves parents in a wide range of activities to support their children's learning. Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is highly committed to the school's philosophy for education and articulates it persuasively.
 - is well informed about developments in the school and its priorities
 - has a good range of expertise, provides a rigorous challenge to the headteacher and has a clear understanding of the budget and its financial management.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106859
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	403025

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Lewis
Headteacher	Mr D M Clegg
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2008
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