

Derrymount School

Churchmoor Lane, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8HN

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students make good and occasionally outstanding progress in their personal development, particularly in controlling their own behaviour. This has a positive effect on their learning and, consequently, pupils' progress in school subjects accelerates so that they begin to catch up with their peers in mainstream schools.
- Some of the most able students reach broadly average standards before they leave the school and a few achieve remarkably well in an individual subject.
- Teaching is good; some is outstanding. In most lessons teachers plan activities that students find interesting and enjoyable.
- Students feel safe and secure. They work hard to live up to the high expectations set for them.
- The range of subjects and courses offered is carefully designed to meet each individual student's needs. It is enriched by learning opportunities in the community and through experiences beyond the school day.
- Partnerships with businesses, and local schools and colleges have a good effect on achievement.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress in the sixth form because they are well taught and have clear goals about what they want to do next.
- The headteacher is highly ambitious for the achievement of the students and staff are encouraged and supported well to improve their teaching. This is helping the school to improve.
- The governing body is clear about its vision for the future and where it wants the school to get students to. It bases decisions it makes on this understanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in English is not as good as it is in mathematics.
- In a few lessons, less able pupils are not actively enough involved or developing new learning as effectively as other students.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors examined the school's procedures for safeguarding. They also looked at headteacher's reports to the governing body, the development plan, records of lesson observations, targets set for teachers, and documents that track students' progress.
- The inspectors observed nine lessons including two jointly with the headteacher and made short visits to three other lessons. They listened to students read and examined students' work in books. Inspectors held discussions with staff, the vice chair of the Governing Body and a member of the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke with students and the lead inspector took account of nine responses from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as a telephone call from a parent.

Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kate Robertson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The vast majority of students have complex special educational needs as a result of autistic spectrum conditions. In addition, a minority of students have moderate learning difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and a few students have severe learning difficulties.
- The vast majority of students are boys.
- All students have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportions of students eligible for pupil premium funding, which is extra money from the government to schools based on the numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils in the care of the local authority and those from families in the armed forces, is well above average.
- A new small off-site provision, called 'the house', and closer into the centre of Arnold, was commissioned in October 2012 for the sixth form and as a base to educate anxious students.
- The vast majority of students are in Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form.
- There are currently no pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage or in Key Stage 1.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in English by:
 - Providing more planned opportunities for students to develop and practise skills in reading and writing in all subjects.
- Improve teaching for less able students so that they make outstanding progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers always use what they know about what students have achieved in a lesson to help them to plan what they need to do next
 - ensuring that less able students are involved in practical work for more of the time in lessons
 - making sure that lesson observations check that less able students are being extended enough.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All students are working below the levels expected nationally when they start at the school, often because of a disruption to learning as a result of their disabilities and special educational needs. The vast majority of students make good progress in school subjects when compared to pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Students, especially those with Autism and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties make good and sometimes outstanding progress in personal and social development, especially in their ability to control their own behaviour. This enables them to successfully re-engage with learning and accelerate their progress.
- Student's talents in individual subjects are nurtured carefully and occasionally a student makes a remarkable achievement such as gaining a high grade at General Certificate of Education (GCSE) in mathematics in advance of the usual age.
- All students leave the school with a range of qualifications which enable them to go on to study courses at levels appropriate to their ability and ambition.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress in making additional progress in personal development to enable them to successfully follow their chosen courses in their chosen destinations.
- There are still some inconsistencies in achievement. Progress in English and for less able students, including some with moderate or severe learning difficulties, although good, is not as strong as progress in mathematics or the outstanding progress made by more able students. However these inconsistencies are being tackled.
- Students who receive support from pupil premium funding learn at the same good rate as other students. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls. However, students with moderate or severe learning difficulties do not always make the progress they are capable of because targets set for them in lessons are not always as specific as they need to be.
- Students make good or better progress when they spend most of the lesson working on tasks at just the right level of difficulty. In an outstanding English lesson students gave their opinions about a music video and went on to support these with reasons and examples. This was accomplished through skilful questioning and an excellent understanding of how well all the students were learning.
- Students make good progress when they have opportunities to apply their skills. For example, when they learn in the community or follow practical courses such as animal care in other local school and colleges.

The quality of teaching is good

- The majority of teaching is good and some of it is outstanding. Teaching enables most students to make good progress and some to make outstanding progress in their personal development.
- Teaching assistants contribute a lot to the achievement of the students either through good

support for example in guidance or by leading learning in a specialist area such as work experience.

- The quality of teaching is good overall and information and communication technology is used well to keep student's interests. The teaching of mathematics is a strength because teachers have a good knowledge of this subject. However the teaching of reading is not as sharp as it needs to be and there are not sufficient opportunities planned for students to write at length in all subjects.
- Students very much appreciate and understand how well they have been taught. One student remarked that he wouldn't be where he was today without the teaching he had received. Parents agree strongly with this view.
- Occasionally a few lower ability students are not challenged as much as they could be because teachers do not always plan their next steps in learning carefully enough and based on what they achieved in the previous lesson.
- Sometimes less able students are not sufficiently involved in practical tasks such as when they complete worksheets or listen to the teacher for too long. The school is making adjustments to the teaching of less able students, for example by extending opportunities for the application of skills which develop independent and practical learning, such as shop work. This is having a good effect on their progress but there is more to do.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of students, especially those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with communication and interaction difficulties, make at least good progress during their time at the school in learning how to control their own behaviour. This is because they are supported exceptionally well to do so. However because students are at different points in their understanding there are some difficult times for some students during the day.
 - Pupils are polite and welcoming. They work hard to have good attitudes to learning and this helps them learn well and make good progress.
 - Students show the support they have for each other when they wait patiently to make sure that everyone is given time to express their views and respond to questions.
 - Staff manage behaviour very skilfully and understand the needs of individuals. They are skilled in supporting and calming individual students and maintaining a good working atmosphere at all times. This is because there are strong relationships between everyone in the school community.
 - Students learn about how to keep safe when they are out in the community when they follow a course designed to enable them to travel independently.
 - Pupils feel very safe and well cared for. All parents who responded strongly agreed with students that bullying is rare and any issues are dealt with effectively. Parents are exceptionally pleased with the progress the students make in personal development.
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The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is very ambitious for the achievement of the students who is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work as is the promotion of good relationships with the community served by the school. This vision is communicated to, and by, everyone throughout the school though there is more to do to ensure that all lower ability students make the outstanding progress made by others.
 - A comprehensive leadership structure is in place and all staff teams are keenly aware of how well students are progressing and how this compares to students in other schools. Staff teams drive identified school improvement priorities well. For example, provision in the new off site 'house' for the sixth form and to widen learning opportunities is progressing very well.
 - The staff support each other well. All staff are committed to removing any obstacles students may encounter in achieving their potential. They ensure that additional funds, such as the pupil premium are used to good effect such as providing additional staff during visits and when students go out into the local community.
 - The school has an accurate view of its own performance and knows that more priority needs to be given to achievement in English and to extending practical experiences. Plans made are effective because they are clearly understood and contributed to by everyone in the team.
 - The range of subjects and courses on offer are well suited to the interests, abilities and aspirations of individual students very well. It is well organised and capitalises on the many learning experiences out in the community and in partner schools and colleges.
 - Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good because relationships are strong both within the school and with the local community. These provide good opportunities for students' personal development.
 - The local authority supports the school well through an adviser with specialist knowledge who knows the school well. She has worked with governors to ensure that the management of the performance of the headteacher has a good effect on school improvement.
 - The leadership of teaching and performance is effective. Procedures to check the quality of teaching are detailed, extensive and thorough. However, lesson observations do not always check that students of all abilities, especially less able students, are challenged enough.
 - Partnership with parents is outstanding. Making sure that parents are well communicated with and fully involved in the achievement of their children is very effective.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body have a good knowledge of what is happening in school, including how well students are progressing and know that this is a good school. Governors manage the budget effectively and are clear about how the pupil premium funding is being spent. They can identify the positive effect that this funding is having on those students who are eligible for additional funds. Governors have a good understanding of how well teachers are performing and ensure that there is a good link between performance and pay. They have a firm grasp of how the leadership of the school is driving improvement and provide the necessary support for the school to continue to improve. The governing body makes sure that statutory requirements are met, including safeguarding.
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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	122949
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	400207

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	5
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mel Shepherd
Headteacher	Kathy McIntyre
Date of previous school inspection	22-Sep-10
Telephone number	0115 9534015
Fax number	0115 9534025
Email address	head@derrymount.notts.sch.uk

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