

Arnold Seely CofE Primary School

Burntstump Hill, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PQ

Inspection dates

18–19 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress varies across the school and pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable by Year 6.
- There is not enough good or better teaching over time, especially in classes 1 and 2, to enable pupils to work at an appropriate level in lessons.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 declined rapidly in 2012 and is not improving fast enough at the higher levels.
- Children in Class 1 do not make rapid progress because the majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught alongside children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and their individual needs are not always adequately met.
- Behaviour has not been consistently good in recent years.
- Teachers do not always make it clear enough to pupils how they can improve their work in all subjects, especially mathematics.
- Recent strategies to improve teaching, the use of data to plan work, and provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not had time to be fully effective.
- Strategies to strengthen the skills of subject leaders in planning improvements and checking that they are working are not yet fully in place.
- Leaders do not always make it clear to parents how they can improve their children's attendance.

The school has the following strengths

- There is consistently good teaching in Class 3 that engages pupils and helps them to make good progress from their low starting points. As a result, pupils are currently reaching higher standards in English and mathematics.
- Pupils say they feel safe in the school.
- The headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Recent improvements are helping to rapidly improve teaching and pupils' behaviour. Leaders and governors are determined to improve the school further to make this a good school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, two of which were seen together with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of other short visits to lessons and learning areas.
- Separate meetings were conducted with governors, staff, subject leaders, an adviser from the local authority and a group of pupils. The inspectors talked to pupils during lessons, listened to them read and scrutinised samples of their work.
- The 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account and the inspector also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspector took account of the eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A number of documents were reviewed. These included the school's development plan, its self-evaluation report, information about pupils' current progress, arrangements for safeguarding and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance. Reports from the local authority about the school's effectiveness were also examined.

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school, with three mixed-age classes.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion from minority ethnic groups is average but none speak English as an additional language. They come from a wide range of ethnic heritages.
- The number of pupils who join or leave the school at different times through the year is higher than that seen nationally.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. Almost half of the pupils in Year 6 during 2012 received support for their special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This additional government funding only applies in this school to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2012, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, changes in staffing have been significant. After a substantial period of unsettled leadership, a permanent headteacher was appointed in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that all pupils are given ample opportunity to reach the standards they are capable of in lessons
 - embedding recent improvements to the quality and effectiveness of teachers' marking to ensure that pupils receive clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Raise standards and increase the rate of pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that pupils in Class 1 and 2 receive the same high quality teaching as older pupils
 - ensuring that teachers use the information they have to plan work which is at the right level for pupils of all ages and abilities.
- Strengthen leadership and management in order to continue the school's rate of improvement by
 - providing high quality continuing professional development to develop the skills of subject leaders to improve teaching and raise attainment
 - strengthening the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage to improve the provision for these children within a mixed-age class
 - sharing and replicating the most successful aspects of teaching and assessment from across the school so that there is greater consistency across all classes.
- Improve attendance by working closely with families whose children are not attending school regularly.
- Maintain the improved behaviour by consistent application of the school's behaviour policy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children join the school with skills that are typically at or below those expected for their age. They quickly settle into school life but make slow progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are not always able to combine a sufficient amount of work with enough imaginative play.
- Pupils continue to make slow progress across Key Stage 1 as standards in all subjects are below average. This is because staff find it difficult to meet the needs of all children in Class 1, who are at very different stages in their learning and development.
- Too few pupils at each key stage reach the highest levels in English and mathematics because work is not always at the right level for pupils of all abilities and ages. Teachers now track pupils' progress closely to ensure that they make more rapid progress in Key Stage 2 where standards have been variable, particularly in writing. This is due to the significant changes in staffing in recent years and the differences in the size and profile of groups of pupils.
- A scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 6 and the school's new monitoring system show that almost all pupils are working at the level expected for their age and a small proportion of pupils are on target to reach the standards which are usually seen when pupils are in secondary education.
- Pupils, including those who join the school at different times through the year, are now achieving well because the school is ambitious for them. There are well-targeted strategies to support the small number of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium. In 2012, attainment in English for pupils known to be eligible for this additional funding was about eight terms behind their classmates, and in mathematics it was about seven terms behind. Inspection evidence shows that this gap has narrowed quickly and data demonstrate that more pupils are achieving the highest levels in English and mathematics than their peers.
- Pupils read widely and less-able readers benefit from the effective teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) which is ensuring that pupils continue to improve their skills in reading and writing. Year 1 pupils, for example, are predicted to again reach the expected level in the recent national reading check. Older pupils read with expression and interest and talk with great enthusiasm about how they enjoy reading.
- In 2012, the high proportion of disabled pupils and those who had special educational needs made slower progress than expected. The school has responded quickly to ensure that support for these pupils is more effective and as a result, a significant proportion of this group of pupils is currently making the progress expected of them.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although much of the teaching seen in the lessons observed by the inspector was good, over time teaching has not been good enough, especially in Class 2, to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- Throughout the school, teachers and their assistants have established very good relationships with their pupils. Teachers are adept at teaching in mixed-age classes but the organisation of Class 1 makes it too difficult for the teacher and her assistants to plan activities which ensure that pupils always make the best possible progress. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are not given an appropriate balance between work led by teachers and times when they learn through play.

- Where there are shortcomings in teaching, this is mainly because work is not matched closely to the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers do not always use the information they have to plan work which is at the right level for pupils of all abilities. More-able pupils are not always challenged enough and the recent strategies to improve the support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not had time to be fully effective.
- In the best lessons, and particularly in Class 3, teachers make activities interesting and pupils enjoy the challenge of work which makes them think. In one lesson, the teacher's high expectations enabled pupils in Years 5 and 6 to select their own challenging activity and use accurate scientific language to precisely describe the function of each part of the human eye.
- The school has concentrated on improving the marking of pupils' written work and some very good marking was seen in English. Marking generally provides much less guidance to pupils in other subjects, especially mathematics, and teachers do not always make it clear enough to pupils how they can improve their work.
- Teaching assistants who work with pupils at school action plus and those who have a statement of special educational needs make a very good contribution to their achievement, and there is some highly sensitive support for pupils with autistic spectrum and other disorders.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to enable learning support assistants to provide helpful specialist support to identified pupils. These pupils are now making good progress in lessons. This reflects the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity. However, there is still more work to be done to ensure equality of opportunity for the more-able pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning and take pride in their work. On occasion, when teaching is not of the highest quality, pupils do not always show mature attitudes to their work and their books contain work which is not presented to a high standard.
- There were some serious incidents recorded during the past two years. Parents and pupils say that behaviour has improved rapidly this year as a result of a determined effort by the headteacher to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding that anything less than good behaviour is unacceptable.
- Pupils say that behaviour is now consistently good in their lessons and any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by their teachers. Indeed, much good behaviour was evident in lessons during the inspection and around the school. The new rewards and sanctions system is helping pupils to have a very clear understanding of how to behave well.
- Pupils said that they feel very safe at school and know what they can do to help keep themselves safe. Most pupils have a good understanding of the nature of different types of bullying, and are confident that incidents will be dealt with swiftly and effectively by the Year 6 'Peacemakers'.
- The mutual respect between pupils and adults contributes well to the school's calm atmosphere. Pupils are happy and have good opportunities to participate in thoughtful collective worship when they pray and sing together. This effectively promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- As a result of robust initiatives introduced by the headteacher to encourage pupils to attend regularly and on time, attendance is improving but remains below average. School leaders and

governors do not always make it clear to parents how they can improve their children's attendance and reduce the frequency of term-time holidays.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good. The headteacher is working hard to improve this. He carries out rigorous, regular observations of teachers, giving firm judgements and offering detailed and precise advice about how teachers can improve. This advice is clearly linked to training which is helping teachers to become better.
- Subject leaders do not always have sufficient time to review the quality of teaching and assessment, which prevents them from driving further improvement by sharing any effective practice across the school. Training plans to help leaders develop their skills have not yet had time to be fully effective and skills in planning, monitoring and evaluating are not yet sharp enough.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage require improvement to improve the provision for these children within a mixed-age class.
- New procedures to monitor teachers' performance successfully ensure pupils, particularly those with disabilities and special educational needs, now make more rapid progress. Staff are aware that they will only be financially rewarded when their pupils have done as well as they should have done, although this has not been the case in the past.
- The new headteacher has refined procedures to collect and analyse data about pupils' attainment and progress. This information is used well to provide leaders with a clear understanding of how much progress pupils are now making. It is not yet used well to ensure teachers plan work which enables pupils to reach the standards they are capable of.
- The passion, ambition and drive of the headteacher are acknowledged and welcomed by the governing body, school staff, parents and children. In a short time he has had a significant impact on improving the school.
- The school has deliberately focused the curriculum on helping pupils overcome the significant gaps in their basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics and in this it has been successful for older pupils. The school is now developing a broader curriculum and stimulating topics such as Africa, that help pupils see how subjects link together. Although this is developing well, it has not yet had time to become fully established and effective.
- The local authority is providing strong support following the appointment of the new headteacher. It has recognised the ability of the headteacher to improve the school and is helping him to improve the quality of teaching and assessment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has improved its effectiveness. Members are now better informed about both teaching and progress. They know the school well and ensure that the school leadership is appropriately challenged and where necessary, held to account. Governors undertake training for their roles and are involved in the appraisal arrangements for staff and decisions regarding pay progression. Governors are fully aware of the use of pupil premium funding and check carefully the effect on pupils' progress. The governing body uses data knowledgeably to compare the effectiveness of the school with other similar schools both locally and nationally. Governors ensure that all safeguarding procedures are robust.

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	122786
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	412729

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Baylis
Headteacher	Mark Thrower
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2010
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