

Arnbrook Primary School

Bestwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8NE

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Pupils do not reach high enough standards at the end of key stage 2, particularly in mathematics, and they do not make sufficiently fast progress.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in mathematical reasoning, mental calculation and problem solving.
- In key stages 1 and 2, the most able pupils are not moved on quickly enough and given work that will deepen and extend their knowledge and skills.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can do. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Leaders have not targeted the additional funding that the school receives for disadvantaged pupils precisely enough. In particular, the most able disadvantaged pupils are not supported well enough.
- Governors have not been rigorous enough in holding leaders to account for the progress of the disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of them.
- The attendance of pupils, particularly pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, is not high enough.
- Staff do not always deal effectively with off-task behaviour by pupils in classrooms.

The school has the following strengths

- The trust, the headteacher and other senior leaders, have correctly identified the most important areas for improvement, in particular the need to raise pupils' attainment.
- The headteacher enjoys the support of the staff, governors and the majority of parents.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Children make good progress from their different starting points and are cared for very well.
- Leaders make frequent and detailed checks on the quality of teaching. These checks are helping to improve the quality of teaching rapidly in the early years and in key stage 1, particularly in reading.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment, particularly in mathematics in key stage 2, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their skills in mathematical reasoning, mental calculation and problem solving
 - move the most able pupils on to appropriately challenging work more quickly
 - have high expectations for all pupils, particularly the disadvantaged pupils, so that the pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders, including governors, monitor the impact of the pupil premium funding more closely and take action where it is needed to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of them.
- Improve attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development by:
 - working more closely with pupils, families and outside agencies to improve the attendance of all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that occasional low-level disruption to learning in lessons is dealt with more effectively by staff, so that all pupils can focus fully on the task in hand
 - placing more emphasis in teaching on pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Standards at the end of key stage 2 remain too low. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- Leaders have not been rigorous enough in their monitoring of the implementation and impact of pupil premium funding. They have not taken the steps needed to improve teaching and support for disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of them, do not achieve as well as they could.
- The leaders have made solid improvements in other parts of the school.
- The trust has been successful in eliminating inadequate teaching. Robust systems are now in place to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, the quality of teaching in the early years foundation stage and in key stage 1 has improved considerably.
- Leadership of the early years foundation stage is effective. The strengths and areas for development have been identified accurately in the early years action plan and the actions taken have improved the quality of teaching in that part of the school. Consequently, standards at the end of the Reception Year have risen to be in line with national averages.
- Performance management is well organised. Teachers have individual appraisal targets that are linked to the school's improvement priorities. Teachers' performance is measured against the national teachers' standards and a mid-point review is carried out to examine the progress being made. Pay increases are only agreed once the headteacher and trust are satisfied that all of the objectives set have been met.
- Subject leaders in mathematics and English are well aware of the current priorities for improvement in their subjects. Their plans for improvement are concise and are evaluated every half term. As a result of this, standards are beginning to rise in phonics and by the end of key stage 1.
- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sport premium effectively, providing specialist teaching for PE lessons and wider opportunities for pupils to take part in different sporting activities. Teachers have benefited from working alongside specialist coaches to develop their skills. Pupils have enjoyed taking part in a wide range of sporting after-school clubs.
- The school provides well-considered opportunities for pupils to learn about the democratic process through the election of individuals to become 'Members of Believe Parliament' (MBPs).
- Most parents value the positive partnership that they have with staff. A recent survey carried out by leaders indicated that parents' views of the school are improving. For example, their perceptions of how well their children are looked after in school and of pupils' behaviour are more positive than in the past.

Governance of the school

- The trust has successfully changed the school's governance arrangements. By appointing new governors with a range of skills and providing guidance and training for them, the trust has enabled the governing body to have a greater focus on the school's performance and the quality of provision.
- Governors know the school well and are aware of the school's key improvement priorities. They focus particularly on the need to improve attendance and to improve attainment, especially in key stage 2.
- Governors monitor and evaluate the work of the governing body effectively. For example, the vice-chair recently undertook a safeguarding audit to ensure that the safeguarding policies and practices were being carried out effectively by the staff. As a result of this audit, the vice-chair was satisfied that they were.
- Governors have undertaken a wide range of relevant training, including in safer recruitment and about the government's 'Prevent' duty. Consequently, they are well aware of the correct procedures to follow when recruiting new staff and the potential dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism.
- The governing body is aware of the need to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are making the progress of which they are capable. Governors do not, however, hold school leaders to account fully for how pupil premium funding is spent. They do not check how this funding makes a difference to the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and, in particular, of the most able disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's single central record of checks on staff and visitors is kept in order and meets requirements. Checks made on new members of staff are rigorous and in line with national guidelines.
- Staff and governors have a clear understanding of safeguarding. The safeguarding procedures are known well by staff and there is a strong safeguarding culture within the school.
- Leaders respond swiftly to concerns and keep well-ordered records of any actions taken.
- Leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure that pupils' welfare needs are met. Staff care for pupils well and meet regularly with parents and carers to support the needs of pupils.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken when pupils take part in educational visits and activities away from the school site.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 is inconsistent. It is better in key stage 1 than in key stage 2.

- Not all lessons are planned well enough to meet the needs of the pupils, especially the most able.
- Teachers do not always make clear what is expected from pupils during lessons. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- Pupils do not reach high enough standards, or make good enough progress in mathematics during key stage 2. They do not deepen their knowledge and understanding of mathematics because teachers do not provide opportunities for them to practise mathematical reasoning, mental calculation and problem solving.
- Not all teachers check on the pupils' understanding in lessons thoroughly enough. This means that, sometimes, teachers do not pick up on pupils' misconceptions, or lack of understanding. As a result, some pupils, especially the most able, do not develop their skills and understanding as quickly as they could.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils, especially the most able pupils, can achieve. This means that the work that they set for pupils is not always suitably challenging. When this happens, pupils quickly lose focus within lessons and low-level behavioural disruption occurs.
- Some teachers know their subject and their pupils well. For example, in a grammar lesson, pupils in Year 3 were using and developing their knowledge of similes, prepositions and fronted adverbials to write sentences about a picture from 'Beauty and the Beast'. Pupils were interested in this topic, were suitably challenged and their behaviour was good.
- Pupils say that they enjoy reading and many of them read confidently. Reading books are suitably challenging and pupils in key stage 1 use their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words. Older children read with good expression and often have a good understanding of the text.
- The teaching of phonics is good. The sessions are fun and engaging for pupils. Teachers use a wide range of strategies that help to develop pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and also to widen their vocabulary. The activities used are challenging and stretch the most able pupils. This helps them to make good progress in developing early reading skills.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well throughout the school. They support pupils' learning by asking probing questions that enable pupils to think more deeply and to develop their knowledge and understanding. Relationships between teaching assistants and pupils are positive.
- Homework is well received, by both pupils and parents alike. A range of activities in a variety of subjects helps to develop pupils' interests in different topics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.

- Pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be because the teaching that supports their spiritual and cultural development is not good enough.
- When discussing different faiths, backgrounds and beliefs with inspectors, pupils' knowledge and understanding were limited. For example, pupils had very limited understanding of the different places of worship associated with different faiths and religions.
- Younger pupils do not have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. The older pupils, however, had a more secure knowledge and understanding.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive, and consequently, pupils feel cared for well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of democracy through the 'Believe Parliament'. Pupils are elected to become 'Members of Believe Parliament' (MBPs) and represent their classmates. They discuss how the school can be improved and put proposals forward to the headteacher, before a final decision is reached. Pupils are currently striving to make the school more eco-friendly.
- Pupils are self-confident and have a strong understanding about how to be successful learners. Pupils spoke confidently about their learning and showed respect towards each other and the school environment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average and levels of persistent absenteeism are above the national average.
- The absence rates for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are above average.
- Pupils sometimes behave off task in classrooms, when the work given to them is not pitched at the appropriate level of challenge.
- The school has systems in place to follow up absences and does not authorise holidays during term time.
- The majority of pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school.
- Most pupils say that the school is free from bullying, but not all are clear about identifying the different types of bullying. The majority of pupils know to tell an adult, if either they or their friends are being bullied and they are also confident that any issues would be resolved quickly.
- Behaviour logs produced by the school indicate that the number of incidents of poor behaviour is reducing over time.
- The school is an orderly and calm place to be during the school day. Pupils move around the school respectfully and quietly. They are courteous and polite towards adults and each other.
- Pupils look extremely smart in the school uniform and take pride in wearing it.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Over the last two years, pupils' standards have been too low at the end of key stage 2. The school did not meet the national floor standards in 2015, as pupils did not make enough progress in reading, writing or mathematics. In 2016, the school met the floor standards, but results in reading and in mathematics were still far too low and in the bottom 10% of schools nationally.
- In 2016, too many pupils left the school not having met the necessary combined standards in reading, writing and mathematics. There was a similar picture with standards in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test, where too few pupils meet this national standard. As a result, pupils had not gained the necessary knowledge and skills for them to succeed in the next stage of their education.
- At the end of key stage 2, the standards reached by the most able pupils have not been high enough in reading or mathematics because the pupils have not made fast enough progress in their learning. This stems from leaders', teachers' and teaching assistants' expectations of what the most able pupils should achieve not being sufficiently high.
- Leaders have not targeted the additional funds from the pupil premium well enough to meet the learning needs of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of them. Consequently, these pupils are not making the accelerated progress required to catch up with other pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make consistently good progress through the school.
- Standards in the Year 1 phonics check have risen sharply over the last two years, but they were still below the national average in 2016. Standards in phonics at the end of key stage 1 for disadvantaged pupils are too low.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were in line with national standards by the end of key stage 1 in 2016. This is because leaders have improved the quality of teaching in key stage 1.
- The school's internal assessment information for current year groups shows that a greater proportion of pupils are on track to meet the end-of-year standards in reading, writing and mathematics than has been the case in previous years.

Early years provision

Good

- The attainment of children in the early years is rising. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development in 2016 was in line with national averages. The children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Children make good progress from their low starting points when they arrive in school.
- Before starting in September, children have a tour of the school followed by a day visit. Parents are then provided with a welcome booklet that also asks them to let the school know about their children and their children's skills and preferences. As a result of this work, the staff have as much information as possible to enable the children to make a good start to their education.

- The school reinforces positive links between school and home by encouraging parents to share their children's successes at home with school staff. This enables staff to celebrate the children's achievements at school and the children to develop positive self-esteem.
- Close relationships between the school staff and parents are enhanced through engagement projects. These are six-week projects focusing on English and mathematics that aim to help parents to support the children's learning at home. Children benefit greatly because their parents take an active role in their education.
- Children feel safe in the early years environment. Parents and children are met warmly at the door and greeted individually by a member of staff each day.
- The learning environment is purposeful and children are motivated and engaged. During the inspection, for example, the children's imaginations were captured by the topic 'Polar Explorer', with one child keen to show the inspector a drawing of a snowy owl.
- Children's behaviour is good in the early years. Children cooperate well and settle into the school routines quickly. All staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour and they treat children with kindness and respect. As a result, there is a positive climate for learning within the early years setting.
- The school works closely with a range of external agencies, including social care, to meet the needs of children quickly. Consequently, children's needs are identified rapidly and extra support is put in place, when it is needed, to enable children to make good progress.
- Teachers make regular assessments of children's learning to identify the next steps they need to take.
- The early years leader tracks children's progress carefully and holds meetings with staff to ensure that no child is falling behind. Interventions are put in place quickly for any child who requires extra support with learning.
- Disadvantaged children in the Reception Year performed well in 2015, although this was not the case in 2016. Leaders are aware of this fluctuation and have put a range of strategies in place to ensure that the disadvantaged children currently in the early years are supported more effectively.
- The outdoor area is not used by the children as well as it could be. Staff do not make enough use of activities that would enable children to develop their writing, mathematical and reading skills more rapidly in the outdoor environment.

School details

Unique reference number	140357
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10023076

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Martin Coleman
Headteacher	Peter Fowlie
Telephone number	0115 9190199
Website	www.arnbrookprimary.net
Email address	office@arnbrookprimary.net
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Arnbrook Primary School became part of the Believe Academy Trust in April 2014.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2016.
- A large percentage of staff and governors are relatively new to the school.
- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in the majority of year groups and classes. Some lessons were seen jointly with senior leaders and a member of the trust.
- Meetings were held with members of the trust, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised in detail the work in a range of pupils' books.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of the school's documentation, including: the evaluation of the school's own performance and its development plan; information on pupils' attainment and progress, and on behaviour and bullying; attendance records; safeguarding procedures; and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at break- and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with a group of pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 and informally with others around the school. Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 reading books.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with 20 parents before school and considered the seven responses from parents to the Ofsted free-text service. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lindsay Alldis	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Evans	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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