

Archway School

Paganhill, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 4AX

Inspection dates

6–7 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
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	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make rapid enough progress through the school, particularly in Years 7 and 8. As a result, standards at GCSE level are not high enough.
- Some middle leaders have a limited understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within their departments.
- The expectations of the quality of teaching in some departments have been too low. Senior leaders are raising middle leaders' aspirations and understanding, but weaknesses remain particularly in science.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve are not high enough. Teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently to extend their learning.
- Pupils, particularly boys, are not consistently set work that is challenging enough. This limits pupils' progress.
- Where teachers have not planned work effectively, pupils lose concentration and their behaviour disrupts the learning of others. This is particularly so in Year 7.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in languages, design and technology, physical education, art and English. Teaching and leadership in these areas are good.
- The leadership team has raised expectations across the school. Its work is improving the progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive good-quality careers education and independent advice and guidance. As a result, pupils are well aware of their options for the next stage of their education.
- Leadership of the sixth form is strong. Students are taught well, enjoy their experience and achieve good outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievements by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what pupils, particularly boys, are capable of achieving
 - the quality of teaching and learning in Years 7 and 8 across the school matches that seen in the best departments
 - teachers plan learning that is appropriately challenging for pupils with different abilities.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - providing training to help middle leaders accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses of their departments
 - ensuring that middle leaders have consistently high expectations of the quality of teaching in their departments, particularly in science.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Although senior leaders are working hard to improve the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' progress, there is still too much inconsistency across the school.
- Some middle leaders are not rigorous enough in holding teachers accountable for the standards pupils achieve. Hence, standards are not rising in their departments. Teachers do not have consistently high expectations, and so pupils experience considerable variation in the quality of teaching. However, leaders have been particularly successful in improving teaching, learning and assessment in English. The recent reorganisation of the leadership structure and the new focus on pupils' progress in mathematics are beginning to have a positive impact on improving pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders now have a more rigorous system for managing staff performance. They align training opportunities with teachers' performance targets and the school's priorities effectively. Leaders support newly qualified teachers well through an effective induction and support programme.
- In recent years, the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been poor compared with that of other pupils nationally. Steps are in place to reverse this trend through more careful use of the pupil premium funding. Current school information shows that disadvantaged pupils' progress is accelerating, particularly for key stage 4 pupils.
- The curriculum includes a broad range of courses in Years 9 to 13, providing both academic and vocational options. Staff, including the careers adviser, give pupils clear guidance about suitable courses, and so pupils and their parents and carers make informed choices. Courses are enhanced to include additional trips and opportunities out of school, which pupils value.
- Leadership of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is good. Over the last year, the new coordinator has started to reorganise the support provided for this group. Funding for these pupils is used effectively.
- Leaders and governors have successfully created a positive learning environment that supports pupils' personal development and enhances their emotional and physical well-being. Pupils say they are cared for.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of clubs and activities beyond their lessons. Pupils appreciate these extra-curricular activities; one pupil commented, 'There is a lot on offer here, from after-school catch-up sessions to trips abroad like skiing.' Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well through lessons, varied assemblies and other activities.
- Senior leaders make sure that pupils understand the fundamental British values of tolerance, religious freedom, democracy and the rule of law. Pupils demonstrate this understanding through thoughtful daily practice and discussions in personal development lessons, which show their willingness to appreciate difference.
- Parents are very supportive of the inclusiveness of the school. A few parents express concern about the behaviour of some pupils.

Governance of the school

- The governing board is a well-motivated group with a wide set of skills and clearly defined roles. They are passionate about providing a good education for pupils in Stroud. However, they recognise that, in recent years, pupils' progress has not been good enough. The chair of the governing board demonstrates the necessary strategic awareness and urgency to secure rapid improvement at the school.
- Governors work closely with senior leaders to monitor the school's performance. They use training wisely to enhance their understanding of information relating to the progress of different groups of pupils. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The chair of the governing board ensures that all responsibilities relating to safeguarding and financial transparency are fulfilled. Governors monitor the impact of extra funding for disadvantaged pupils, for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and for Year 7 pupils who need to catch up in English and mathematics.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders give safeguarding a high priority and ensure that policy and practice are in line with statutory requirements. Governors, senior leaders and staff are all suitably trained. They understand clearly what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare or safety.
- Senior leaders communicate well with other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. They keep detailed records of any concerns that are raised and any action that is subsequently taken. Senior leaders follow up referrals to other agencies if they do not receive a response quickly enough.
- Senior leaders successfully promote positive messages about safeguarding with parents and pupils. A large majority of parents believe that pupils are well looked after and are safe at school. Senior leaders give staff regular updates that keep them aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and support the culture of vigilance throughout the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies too much across the school and within some departments. Although there are areas of good practice, some teaching does not help pupils to make good progress. For example, the quality of work produced by the same pupil in different subject areas can vary considerably, because of differences in the level of challenge that teachers provide and in teachers' expectations.

- Teaching does not consistently challenge pupils sufficiently. Some pupils have not made good progress in recent years, because teachers' expectations of what they are capable of achieving have been too low. Where teachers expect pupils to learn quickly, for example, in languages, design and technology, art, humanities, physical education and GCSE English, these pupils are successful. However, there are too many other lessons in which this does not happen.
- Most teachers' subject knowledge is good. The vast majority of classes are taught by specialists with a deep understanding of their subject. Particularly in the sixth form, teachers are able to illustrate ideas by drawing on their rich background knowledge. Teachers use homework to reinforce learning in the classroom effectively.
- Teachers' use of questioning has developed over the past year as it has been a focus for improvement of teaching and learning. Most teachers have taken on these ideas readily. Consequently, teachers question pupils to promote deeper thinking and improve their understanding. Some teachers, though, do not use questioning effectively and do not motivate pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers have positive relationships with their classes and most have high expectations of behaviour. Most pupils respect their teachers but, where learning is less well planned, some pupils have poor attitudes and disrupt their own and others' learning. Teaching assistants also have good relationships with pupils. Pupils are appreciative of the help they receive.
- A large majority of parents who responded to Parent View believe that their children are well taught.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The majority of pupils believe that teachers deal with incidents of bullying well when they happen. However, some pupils and parents feel that not all staff resolve issues appropriately.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. They understand the risks they face in many different situations because they receive good advice from staff. For example, pupils understand the risks associated with using social media and the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism.
- Staff give pupils clear messages about how to maintain good physical and mental health. Pupils have a good understanding of these issues, and so are able to make sensible choices to stay healthy.
- The school provides good, impartial careers education and guidance through a variety of well-planned activities. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the different routes available to them in the next stage of their education.

- The personal development programme is comprehensive and valued throughout the school. The programme provides a coherent series of learning opportunities to enable pupils to have a strong understanding of the world around them.
- Staff model and support the values that underpin the school's culture. As a result, pupils are subject to, and in turn shape, these positive influences. This means that pupils are tolerant of one another and accepting of difference. The school culture is helping some pupils who lack confidence to become more self-assured.
- The few pupils who attend off-site provision at Stroud and Cotswold Alternative Provision School, The Hospital Education Service and Bridge Training are well looked after. Senior leaders have close relationships with these providers. They ensure that pupils reintegrate smoothly into school when appropriate.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils do not always present their work well, showing a lack of care and pride; some teachers do not challenge this effectively.
- Leaders have introduced new procedures to manage behaviour which are beginning to have a positive impact. Serious incidents referred to the inclusion room have reduced, although the number of referrals still remains too high.
- Behaviour in lessons is generally good where teaching is strong. Pupils told inspectors that there is disruption in lessons where teaching is weak. This was confirmed by inspectors' observations.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the site, and so the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The school is calm and orderly, even when large numbers of pupils are moving around both sites. Staff provide good supervision at break, lunchtime and after school.
- The majority of the parents who responded to the Parent View survey believe the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved. However, a few commented that the behaviour of some pupils needed addressing.
- Attendance is in line with the national average for most groups of pupils. A small group of pupils find it difficult to attend school regularly. The rate of persistent absence is currently below national average and the school has appropriate measures to address this issue.
- The number of fixed and permanent exclusions has decreased this year. The school has many systems in place to support pupils at risk of exclusion.
- The vast majority of pupils are polite and well mannered. They enjoy school and appreciate the support teachers give them.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress in mathematics and subjects measured across eight GCSEs was below national average in the last two years. Pupils currently in the school continue to have gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

- The progress current pupils make varies between year groups and subjects. In some subjects, for example mathematics, leaders focus attention on providing extra support for Year 11 pupils, to enable them to catch up following previous underachievement. This often results in younger pupils continuing to make insufficient progress.
- Pupils do not make good progress in science in all year groups. Progress is insecure because pupils' lack of knowledge and understanding goes unchecked, and their misconceptions are not corrected. Many pupils struggle to explain the key ideas they are learning.
- In recent years, the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been consistently well below that of other pupils nationally. Senior leaders' efforts to help these pupils to improve are now proving more successful. The individual needs of disadvantaged pupils are now known well. Staff monitor each pupil carefully and provide effective individual extra support for academic, social and emotional development when required. As a result, the progress made by these pupils has improved and they achieve similarly to other pupils in the school.
- In Years 7 and 8, pupils are making good progress in art, languages and music. Pupils develop their drawing skills quickly in art. For example, Year 7 pupils demonstrate an ability to draw detailed portraits. However, in some mathematics lessons and in science, pupils are not progressing well. Some teachers have expectations that are too low, particularly of boys.
- In the past, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have not received effective help and so have not made strong progress. The support for these pupils is improving, and so pupils currently in the school are making better progress.
- Leaders have an effective system to monitor pupils' progress carefully. This enables them to have an accurate view of how each pupil is progressing. The targets set for pupils are now more aspirational.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Sixth-form students make strong progress on their courses because they are motivated to succeed and are taught well. Leaders are keenly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the sixth-form provision. Students' attainment is continuing to rise.
- Leadership of the sixth form is strong. The leader demonstrates a genuine passion for the success of all students, no matter what their starting points. Disadvantaged students' progress is improving on 16 to 19 study programmes as a result of the support they receive.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sixth form is more consistent and effective than in the main school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and well-developed strategies for helping students to make progress. They challenge students to think deeply about their learning in many subjects.
- Last year, those students who had to retake GCSE English made rapid progress. A high proportion of these students attained a grade 4 or above in GCSE English and mathematics by the end of Year 12.

- Senior leaders keep the curriculum under review to ensure that it meets students' needs and aspirations. A full academic and broad vocational offer is available, with new courses introduced this academic year.
- The school offers work experience and other work-related activities in Year 12, which the majority of students take up. These experiences help students to develop their employability skills well. Students receive timely advice about the possibilities open to them when they leave school. The majority of students take up university places, and a significant proportion go into apprenticeships.
- The school meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes. Many students complete one-year courses and so leave the sixth form at the end of Year 12. The majority of students who start two-year programmes see them through to completion at the end of Year 13.
- Students develop their confidence and personal skills well through a wide range of additional enrichment opportunities. Many students mentor younger pupils in the main school, including those who are refugees.
- Students' attitudes to their learning are generally good. The majority use their independent study time wisely. The sixth-form centre has a range of good facilities for study, including a supervised quiet room.
- A programme of personal and social education helps students understand how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including online. Students have a good understanding of how to ensure they have good mental health, because sixth-form leaders emphasise this issue.

School details

Unique reference number	115723
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10042688

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1084
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne-Marie Delrosa
Headteacher	Colin Belford
Telephone number	01453763242
Website	www.archwayschool.net
Email address	admin@archwayschool.net
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school is above average in size. Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The number supported by an education, health and care plan is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below average.
- The school uses Stroud and Cotswold Alternative Provision School, The Hospital Education Service and Bridge Training.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in a broad range of subject areas and across year groups. They conducted some observations jointly with the school's senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and observed their conduct during the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including information on pupils' outcomes, the school's self-evaluation, and governing body minutes. They also reviewed records relating to the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment, behaviour, attendance, exclusion and the safeguarding of pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, middle leaders, groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. The lead inspector also made a telephone call to a representative from Gloucestershire local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 126 responses to the Parent View survey, 44 responses to the staff survey and 68 responses to the pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Gill Hickling, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Thompson	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Butler	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
David New	Ofsted Inspector

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