

# Arnbrook Primary School

Bestwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG5 8NE

## Inspection dates

20–21 November 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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are not high enough in English and mathematics. Standards by the end of Year 6 are not high enough in writing.
- Leaders have improved pupils' outcomes since the previous inspection but have not tackled other weaknesses with the same urgency.
- The quality of teaching is improving but remains variable. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. This results in some low-level disruption in lessons.
- Governors' challenge to senior leaders has not always been timely.
- Expectations of the most able pupils are too low. Teachers do not sufficiently challenge and deepen these pupils' learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not attain as well as their peers, or other pupils nationally, at the end of key stage 1.
- Middle leaders are supported in their new roles but are not yet effectively monitoring and evaluating the impact of their actions intended to improve provision and outcomes.
- Strategies to improve attendance have not had sufficient impact on disadvantaged pupils and other pupils who are regularly absent from school.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are achieving consistently well in mathematics.
- The early years provision is a strength of the school. Children in the early years make a good start to their primary school life.
- Safeguarding practices are effective and there is a strong culture of safeguarding.
- Pupils achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. They develop early reading skills well.
- Pupils' welfare is a strength in the school's provision. Pupils are cared for and feel safe at school.
- Behaviour has improved since the previous inspection.

## Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that directors, governors and senior leaders:
  - more effectively prioritise the use of the pupil premium funding to overcome barriers to learning and improve the attendance and attainment of disadvantaged pupils
  - further develop the new curriculum to include clear long-term aims which are complemented by a range of enriching extra-curricular activities
  - support middle leaders to further develop their roles to become more effective in their strategic leadership.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
  - teachers use assessment information more effectively to plan learning activities, so more pupils make appropriate gains in their learning, attain to their capability and make stronger progress across the curriculum
  - teachers consistently have the highest expectations of what pupils can and should achieve, including the most able pupils and those who are disadvantaged
  - pupils develop the resilience needed to become more confident and independent in their learning
  - writing across all subjects is of the highest quality and reflects a wide, varied and challenging diet of writing opportunities.
- Improve behaviour and attendance by:
  - significantly reducing the persistent absence of some pupils so they take better advantage of what the school provides
  - ensuring that learning meets pupils' needs and results in the eradication of low-level disruptive behaviour and improved attitudes to learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Actions for improving the teaching of writing and improving attendance have been implemented too slowly. As a result, the outcomes for writing are low and too many pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Leaders have built a successful relationship with members of the Believe Academy Trust. Together they have brought about sustained improvement in some areas, for example within the early years and the teaching of, and pupils' outcomes in, phonics and mathematics.
- Leaders have improved the teaching of mathematics and reading, resulting in proportionally more pupils attaining expected standards for their age at the end of key stage 2, in 2018, than in previous years. However, leaders have not ensured that the most able pupils are being sufficiently challenged to reach the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Middle leaders, who are relatively new to post, are passionate to bring about improvement. They are beginning to have an impact on the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, the impact of additional funding is unclear as this monitoring aspect of the role is not yet embedded.
- Leadership of the curriculum is driven enthusiastically. However, the monitoring and evaluation aspects of this role are not sufficiently developed to review provision and further refine curriculum improvements.
- Leaders have established a new and effective system for tracking pupils' attainment and progress, using accurate assessments that are moderated internally as well as with other schools. This information is used to identify pupils requiring extra support in order to close gaps in their prior learning.
- Too few current pupils' writing is in line with age-related expectations. Likewise, too few pupils are attaining greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2.
- Teachers and support staff value the opportunities provided for their professional development. Many commented positively on the training which has brought about improvements in their mathematics teaching.
- Leaders have been successful in improving pupils' behaviour through the introduction of a new scheme for rewards and sanctions. This scheme is helping pupils to understand the consequences of poor behaviour and to build a more coherent school community.
- Leaders are determined to improve the school further and, to this end, have invited scrutiny from a range of external expert partners. They have responded well to advice. For example, they have improved the anti-bullying policies and the provision for sex and relationships education.
- Governors and leaders have looked very carefully at the way they spend the pupil premium funding and have undertaken several reviews of this aspect of their work. Some use of the funding has been effective, for example well-focused support in the

early years and in Year 1 resulted in a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils attaining well in the Year 1 national phonics screening check in 2018. However, the impact of the use of the pupil premium funding remains variable, and the impact of the support to help this group of pupils improve their writing is not yet clear.

- Leaders have used the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to provide a range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. Pupils who met with the inspector said they like the opportunity to try different sports, such as archery and dodgeball, and look forward to using the new trim trail which is being constructed.
- The curriculum has been reviewed and is being developed to complement learning in English and mathematics. This new curriculum is in its early stages of development and provides a thematic approach. Initial plans are focused on 'awe and wonder', 'war and peace' and 'best of British'. It is too early to determine whether the new curriculum is having the desired impact on deepening pupils' learning in geography, history and the arts.
- Pupils are engaged by a range of themes that allow them to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. They have the opportunity to explore 'big questions' as part of their weekly class discussions. For example, questions are focused on remembrance, crime and punishment, and homelessness. Such opportunities make a rich contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being.
- Leaders make the most of developing pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. For example, during the inspection, an assembly focused on the rule of law, democracy and standing up for what is right as part of 'Parliament Week'. Pupils were challenged to think deeply to understand non-violent protest, as well as considering their own views about right and wrong actions.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors and trust officers do not always provide timely challenge and support to senior leaders. For example, leaders have been slow to question the effectiveness of senior leadership action to improve the teaching of writing in key stages 1 and 2 since 2016.
- Governors undertake regular training, which enables them to be aware of their statutory responsibilities to fulfil their requirements alongside trust directors. As a result, they fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities well.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and have a clear vision for the school to be inclusive and successful. They gain first-hand understanding of the school by visiting regularly and meeting with a range of leaders. They know the school community well.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors ensure that all aspects of safeguarding arrangements work well and are fit for purpose.
- Leaders responded well to a recent audit of their safeguarding practices, putting in place a range of measures to improve further the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe.
- Staff are trained and understand different aspects of safeguarding. They are clear

about how to report their concerns to designated senior leaders.

- Leaders with safeguarding responsibility know pupils well. They work well with parents and carers and a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils receive appropriate support and are kept safe.
- Leaders are trained in safer recruitment, and procedures for checking the suitability of staff, volunteers and visitors are thorough. Leaders work with colleagues from the trust to make sure comprehensive systems are in place to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils are taught how to be safe in different situations and understand risks involved in online activity. Those who met with inspectors said they feel safe and are well looked after by teachers and other adults.
- Parents who expressed their views through the online survey, Parent View, and those who spoke with inspectors mostly express the view that their children are happy and safe at school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teaching is not consistently effective to enable pupils to make good progress, especially in writing.
- Teachers' expectations are sometimes too low, and learning is not sufficiently demanding. They do not always give pupils tasks to enable them to attain the standards of which they are capable. This lack of challenge leads, at times, to some low-level disruption.
- Teachers' questioning is not always sufficiently probing. When questioning is more effective, pupils are challenged to explain and give reasons for their thinking. For example, in a guided reading session, pupils were challenged to determine possible reasons why the author did not correctly punctuate the text, the effect this has on the reader and how this reflected the disability of the character in the book 'Wonder'.
- Teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils. Too few of these pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- The school's marking and feedback policy is not implemented consistently. This limits further learning, because pupils are not always encouraged to respond to teacher feedback.
- Teaching of mathematics is a strength, with a higher proportion of pupils attaining age-related expectations in key stage 2.
- Pupils respond well to the newly introduced praise system. Positive learning attitudes are reinforced with points awarded for specific learning behaviour and attitudes. This is having a positive effect on motivating some pupils.
- Teaching assistants ask purposeful questions, especially when they are working with identified groups of pupils, such as those with SEND, pupils who need to catch up and pupils who are disadvantaged. They provide effective classroom support.
- The teaching of early reading and phonics is effective. Children and pupils were observed using phonics to successfully blend sounds and break down words into

separate sounds. Pupils apply phonics knowledge to read new words. This is supporting pupils to make good progress in reading, particularly in the Reception Year.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors are proud of the school. They are smart and wear their uniform with pride. Pupils are respectful of each other and listen to and support their peers.
- Pupils who spoke with the inspector are clear about what constitutes bullying and the forms it can take. They report that there is less bullying than there used to be. They are confident that pupils can speak to an adult and their worries and concerns will be dealt with well.
- Pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They talk confidently about internet safety and the risks involved in sharing information on social media.
- Personal, social, health and economic education is supported with the work of outside agencies, such as the NSPCC and theatre workshops. This has a clear focus on respecting oneself as well as others. Pupils value these opportunities and those who met with the inspectors say they feel safer because of them.
- Pupils who require additional emotional support are looked after well. Pupils respond well to support from the learning mentor, a specialist teaching assistant and the school counsellor. Staff care about pupils' well-being and are nurturing in their support. As a result, vulnerable pupils are provided with support to help meet their needs.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Overall attendance has improved slightly but is still likely to be below the national average in 2018, as it was in 2016 and 2017. Leaders have not acted swiftly enough to bring about the significant improvement needed in attendance.
- Leaders' actions to reduce persistent absence are effective in improving the attendance of a few pupils. Too many pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, continue to be regularly absent from school.
- Some pupils lack self-discipline and disturb the learning of others through low-level disruption. This is particularly the case when teaching does not meet pupils' needs well enough.
- Most pupils respond swiftly to requests and instructions and behave in an orderly manner. They move from place to place and task to task in a purposeful way and conduct themselves well around school. They are polite.
- Behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. The new rewards system has been effective in reinforcing positive attitudes and behaviour. Parents, staff and pupils

agree that behaviour has seen a marked improvement.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Provisional information suggests that in 2018, the proportion of pupils at the end of Year 6 attaining the expected standard in writing has declined to below the national average.
- Provisional and published information show that standards at the end of key stage 1 in reading and mathematics declined in 2017 and 2018; writing also declined in 2018. These pupils are making steady progress in Years 3 and 4.
- In 2018, the proportions of pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 attaining the greater depth standard were below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2018 who attained the expected standard in reading and mathematics was above the national average. These pupils made good progress, particularly in mathematics.
- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils' attainment lags behind that of other pupils nationally by the end of key stages 1 and 2. However, pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics, but not in writing.
- Too few current pupils are making good progress. Most pupils are making insufficient progress in writing and to meet the school's age-related expectations. Progress in mathematics is stronger, but too few pupils are working to meet greater depth standards.
- Too few disadvantaged pupils make sufficient progress to catch up with the school's expected standards, especially in writing.
- Pupils' outcomes in phonics are a strength in the school's work. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check in 2018 was above the national average. Proportionally more disadvantaged pupils met the check than all Year 1 pupils at the school.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. Staff members work as a team and they know and understand the priorities for improving the provision. Adults have high expectations of children, who respond very well to these expectations.
- Leaders ensure that children are assessed when they start in the Nursery or Reception class. Staff gather information quickly, especially in relation to communication, reading, writing and mathematical development. They then plan learning to ensure that children get off to a very good start.
- Children settle into the Nursery and Reception class quickly and happily because their transition into school is very effective. Staff establish routines and children quickly become ready to learn and behave well.
- Provisional information suggests that in 2018, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development overall was in line with the national average. Disadvantaged

children attain in line with their peers.

- The teaching of mathematics is a strength in the early years, with a higher proportion than average of children attaining a good level of development in this area of learning in 2018.
- The early years classroom is a stimulating place in which to learn. Activities indoors and outdoors provide children with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in different areas of the curriculum. With suitable adult support, children are encouraged to investigate and work things out for themselves.
- Adults are well trained and skilled in teaching phonics and early reading skills. Children transfer these reading skills into their writing. For example, children's work showed progress from mark-making to letter formation and writing simple words.
- Relationships between adults and children are positive. Children cooperate with each other, take turns and respond positively to adult interactions. As a result, children are confident and develop positive learning attitudes.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors are pleased with the provision for their children in the early years. They said that their children settle well and enjoy coming to school. The team works to establish strong relationships with parents, encouraging them to be involved in their children's learning. For example, parents were encouraged to take part in the planned stay and read morning.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years and statutory welfare requirements are met.

## School details

Unique reference number	140357
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10048183

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	279
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Anne Hurt
Headteacher	Peter Fowlie
Telephone number	01159 190199
Website	<a href="http://www.arnbrookprimary.net">www.arnbrookprimary.net</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@arnbrookprimary.net">office@arnbrookprimary.net</a>
Date of previous inspection	January 2017

## Information about this school

- Arnbrook is smaller than the average-sized primary school; it became an academy in January 2016.
- The school is part of the Believe Academy Trust. The trustees are the appropriate authority. The trust provides support for the school through its regular training and monitoring visits.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is also below the national average.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is also below the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons or parts of lessons. Senior leaders carried out some observations jointly with inspectors. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books with senior leaders and sampled books in classes.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff, and spoke with a group of pupils.
- The lead inspector met three governors, including the chair of the trust, who is also vice chair of the governing body. He also met the chief executive officer and director of teaching and learning from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and pupils around the school. In addition, they evaluated the 15 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as three free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, the minutes of the governing body meetings, improvement plans, reports of various audits, and school information on pupils' recent attainment and progress.
- Inspectors also considered behaviour and attendance information, policies and procedures relating to special educational needs funding, the pupil premium funding, PE and sport funding, safeguarding and child protection.

## Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Caroline Poole	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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