

Inspection of an outstanding school: Arnold Nursery School and Children's Centre

Goldsmith Road, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S65 2LY

Inspection dates:

5 March 2020

Outcome

Arnold Nursery School and Children's Centre continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The start to school life children get at Arnold Nursery School is exceptional. Leaders and staff make sure children feel safe and looked after. Leaders plan a curriculum that helps children to be the best they can be. Their expectations of what children can achieve are high.

Parents and carers have very positive views about the school. Staff members make every effort to involve parents in school life. Many parents say that staff give support to their whole families, not just their children.

Children cannot wait for the school doors to open. They are never sure what exciting experiences await them. The adults create special places to learn and play, such as a Gruffalo reading cave. They make stories come alive by dressing up and using animated voices for different characters. Children learn from this great example. They act out their own stories enthusiastically in classrooms and outdoors.

From the moment children start school, adults set a good example in kindness and care for others. Children know that they should treat each other well. When fall-outs happen, adults quickly step in to help children learn how to solve problems. Children trust and care for the adults. They smile proudly when they are praised for their excellent behaviour.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a curriculum that broadens children's experiences and understanding of the world around them. The curriculum excites them and interests them in learning new things. It helps them to learn and practise basic skills in early reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders understand the different starting points and backgrounds of their children. They keep their expectations of what children can achieve very high.

Recently, the school has taken the two- and three-year-old provision, previously run by the local authority, under its wing. Leaders have recognised the need for consistency across the two buildings. They have mapped out exactly what a child's journey through the school will look like. They have set goals for children to reach which ensure they are ready for primary school. Staff check how well children remember what they have learned. They give children extra support if necessary. Children develop a wide knowledge across different areas of learning.

Staff quickly get to know children when they start school. They soon notice when children need further support. They work closely with parents and other agencies. They check that children's needs are well understood and that they have the support and resources they need. Children's special educational needs and/or disabilities are exceptionally well met.

Leaders know that children need lots of help to communicate successfully when they start school. The days are rich with stories, rhymes and conversations. This helps children to learn, practise and broaden the language they use. Everyone learns simple sign language and many younger children use this when they speak.

Reading is promoted in all areas of the school. Children are keen to share the books that they love and hear regularly. Leaders choose books that widen children's knowledge of other areas of the curriculum. At story time, children were absorbed in their teachers' acting out of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' story. Children giggled with delight and joined in with the phrases they knew.

Children have lots of opportunities to test out what they have learned in mathematics. Adults talk about number, shapes and measures naturally when they join children in their play. Children readily join in number songs, such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs'. They use number in their play with other children.

Children start to gain a good knowledge of the world. They visit places in the local community, such as the post office and library. They delight in growing their own vegetables, then cooking and eating them.

Staff training is high on the school's agenda. The executive headteacher's ambition that everyone should keep learning and improving is clear to see. Staff feel well supported in their roles and proud to belong to 'the school family'. Governors give appropriate support and challenge to school leaders to ensure that the quality of education continues to be excellent.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders work closely with staff in the children's centre and the local authority to put effective systems and policies in place to safeguard children. They ensure that staff have training and weekly updates. This means that staff know how to recognise potential concerns and how to report them. Close partnerships with parents, and an understanding of the local community, help leaders and staff direct families to the support they need.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding on 23–24 September 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	106826
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10047770
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Robert Bird
Headteacher	Peter Gerrard (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.thearnoldcentre.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 September 2014

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has federated with Rawmarsh Nursery School and Children’s Centre. The headteacher of Rawmarsh Nursery School and Children’s Centre was appointed as executive headteacher of the two schools in January 2019.
- In September 2019, leaders incorporated the two- to three-year-old provision into the school. This was previously run by the local authority. This has almost doubled the size of the school.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the executive headteacher and the head of school throughout the inspection. We spoke to members of the governing body, including the chair. We spoke to the local authority designated early years adviser.
- We carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and understanding the world. This work included meeting with curriculum leaders to discuss their plans and their checks on what children know. We visited classrooms and the outdoor area and spoke to children informally. We looked at examples of children’s work.
- We checked how well leaders ensure that everyone knows how to keep children safe. We looked at examples of leaders’ records, training information and the curriculum for

keeping children safe. We spoke to staff, parents, governors and children about this area of the school's work.

- We considered staff members' responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire. We spoke to parents at the end of the day and took into account the 47 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Kate Rowley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Mensah

Ofsted Inspector

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