

Inspection of Arnold Mill Primary and Nursery School

Cross Street, Arnold, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG5 7AX

Inspection dates: 4–5 March 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in October 2014 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for over five years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a buzz about school life at Arnold Mill Primary School. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. There are many opportunities for pupils to be creative and active. Pupils like the way that staff make learning fun. For example, all staff dress up on World Book Day, share stories and act them out in assembly.

Pupils feel that they are listened to and parents and carers agree. Pupils say that bullying and name-calling are rare. They say that, when it is dealt with, it stops. Pupils feel behaviour has improved and that staff use the behaviour system consistently. Pupils know that some of their peers need more help to behave well but feel that this is fair.

Staff want all pupils to be ready for the next stage of their learning. They expect them to present their work neatly and be proud of what they can do. They encourage them to become resilient learners. Most pupils leave the school well prepared for secondary education. However, some of the younger pupils who need to catch up are not doing so quickly enough.

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

Leaders are ambitious for children in early years. Children learn about topics which excite them, such as rainforests and space. Children get off to a rapid start in phonics. They remember the sounds that they have learned and use these to write words in their 'Supertato' books. No time is wasted in mathematics either, as children in the Nursery learn about numbers and what they are worth. Adults help children to solve problems, such as building a trap for 'Evil Pea'. Through well-chosen questions, they encourage children to think more deeply. Teachers have identified what children still need to learn to be ready for Year 1. However, not all activities that they organise help children to gain this knowledge in all subjects.

The teaching of early reading is systematic and rigorous. Staff receive regular training. They understand exactly what they need to teach pupils next. Leaders have made sure that pupils get help to catch up in phonics. They check that it is making a difference. Older pupils learn important background information before they begin to read. Pupils understand the vocabulary that is in more complex texts. This helps them to make sense of more demanding passages. Pupils learn to justify their answers. Work is challenging but adapted well to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The writing curriculum is not implemented as consistently. Teachers have high expectations. They plan work to help pupils apply their knowledge of spelling and grammar. By the end of key stage 2, pupils write fluently and with creative flair. However, teachers do not consistently identify the gaps in knowledge that some pupils in key stage 1 have. They do not adapt what they are teaching well enough to help some of the younger pupils catch up quickly.

Teachers know what pupils need to learn next in mathematics. They plan work so that pupils become fluent and understand how numbers work. Pupils use what they know effectively to solve problems. All staff are committed to a broad curriculum. They are proud of pupils' achievements in art, for example. Pupils gain a wide range of skills that build on what they learned before. They use this knowledge to create their own pieces. Their achievements are celebrated through vibrant displays and recognition in assembly. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, achieve well. Leaders have reviewed what they are teaching in all subjects. They found out that, in some subjects, pupils do not gain the knowledge that they need in the right order. Subject leaders are improving this, but this is at an early stage in some subjects.

Leaders want pupils to be active and responsible citizens who care for the world around them. Pupils relish the chance to be house captains and to work together to entertain older members of the community. They have made sure that pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils can take part in clubs and the wider curriculum. Staff plan opportunities to help pupils become more resilient. Pupils learn to take risks and trust each other during outdoor learning. For example, pupils read out loud in turn during 'forest schools'. Pupils respect each other's difference and learn about a range of faiths. They feel that they show friendship to pupils from all backgrounds.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made sure that pupils learn about the dangers that they might face in the local environment. They make sure that teachers adapt what they are teaching to prepare pupils well. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe online. Leaders make sure that all staff have had training and know what to do if they are concerned about the well-being of a child.

Leaders make sure that they record any concerns. They refer them in a timely manner. Governors keep their safeguarding training up to date so that they understand the actions that leaders should be taking.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The improvements that leaders are making to the writing curriculum in key stage 1 are at an early stage of development. Teachers do not always plan work which helps pupils gain key knowledge that they have not yet understood. Some younger pupils, including a small proportion of pupils with SEND, do not catch up with their peers quickly enough. Leaders should ensure that the writing curriculum is coherently sequenced for all pupils.

- The curriculum in some subjects is not yet coherently planned and sequenced. Sometimes teachers do not identify well enough what the key knowledge is that they want pupils to gain. Leaders have begun to address this. They have clear plans in place to improve these subjects further and these are beginning to make a difference. For this reason, the transition arrangement has been applied in this case.

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	122720
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10121314
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anthony Clarke
Headteacher	Jackie Oldfield
Website	www.arnoldmillprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	8–9 October 2014

Information about this school

- Many leaders are new to their roles since the previous inspection. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and coordinator for special educational needs started in their posts in September 2019.
- The chair of governors took up his position in November 2019

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher, leaders in early years and key stage 1 and the coordinator for pupils with SEND. We met governors and spoke with a representative from the local authority. We spoke with a range of staff and met with groups of pupils. We spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, writing and geography. We spoke with subject leaders, staff and pupils. We visited lessons and scrutinised a sample of pupils' work.
- We looked at records of training that staff had received about safeguarding. We spoke with staff and pupils. We considered a range of records which leaders keep. We looked at records of the checks that leaders make before adults begin to work with pupils.

Inspection team

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