

Inspection of a good school: Arnot St Mary CofE Primary School

Arnot Street, Walton-on-the-Hill, Liverpool, Merseyside L4 4ED

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 November 2022

Outcome

Arnot St Mary CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and children in the early years, are happy, safe and confident. They live and breathe the school's mission to be 'Ready, Kind and Safe'. Pupils also respect and welcome diversity and difference. They are caring of each other and recognise when their peers may need additional support and help. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their school and about making friends.

Pupils have the opportunity to take on responsibilities that promote and develop their character. For example, older pupils care and support younger pupils to access yoga sessions as part of their well-being programme.

Leaders expect pupils to learn well. Pupils, and children in the early years, strive to achieve well in their lessons. They value and thrive on the learning opportunities provided by staff. Two-year-old children are equally well supported to learn, grow and develop. Children in the early years are well prepared for the demands of key stage 1. Overall, pupils across the school engage very well with learning.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils benefit from a calm and purposeful environment in which they can learn. Leaders quickly respond to any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying. They sensitively and carefully support pupils to regulate their behaviour, when required.

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

Leaders have ensured that there is an ambitious and engaging curriculum for all pupils, including children in the early years. Subject leaders' expert knowledge has resulted in a curriculum that is well designed. Leaders have ensured that new subject knowledge is delivered in a logical order. This helps children and pupils to deepen their knowledge of the curriculum over time. As a result, pupils are able to retain and recall knowledge from earlier years and apply it to their present learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 used

their secure knowledge of number methods in mathematics and successfully applied this to more challenging problems.

Teachers use leaders' assessment systems appropriately. They successfully identify pupils' starting points and any gaps in pupils' understanding. Teachers use this information well to adapt the curriculum so that they can consolidate pupils' learning before moving on to new topics. As a result, teachers are knowledgeable and consistent in their delivery of the curriculum.

The provision for two- and three-year-olds is well structured and focuses on establishing routines and the key areas of learning. This prepares the youngest children well for their move into the Reception class.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders have established a well-resourced library hub and frequently visited reading stations in each classroom. Pupils talked to the inspector about their love of reading and its importance to them in being able to learn more across the curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in ensuring that pupils quickly gain confidence in their phonics knowledge and early reading skills.

Pupils are enthusiastic about taking books home with them. Teachers support parents and carers in developing the skills that they need to help pupils to develop further their reading knowledge when at home. Leaders are also beginning to ensure that pupils read much more widely across the different subjects that they study. This is to develop the range and depth of their knowledge across the wider curriculum. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of this work.

Leaders are quick to identify and respond to the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders take effective steps to reduce the barriers to learning faced by some pupils with SEND. Leaders also successfully ensure that pupils with more complex needs are able to maintain their placement in school and learn alongside their peers. Leaders have ensured the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils with SEND. These pupils have equality of opportunity in this school.

Pupils' behaviour in and out of class is extremely positive. Pupils show a real concern for the welfare of themselves and others. In particular, older pupils showed significant empathy for younger pupils and those with additional needs. Parents described the school as one which makes them feel welcome. Parents said that they trust school leaders to look after their children.

Leaders have ensured that pupils gain access to a range of well-designed opportunities that support their awareness of the wider world, as well as their immediate local community. Leaders' aspirations for pupils inspire them to believe in themselves and in all the possibilities open to them. Pupils recognise that they have a strong voice in shaping the future. They value the opportunity to achieve well in their wider personal development programme.

Governors know the school well. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in relation to the quality of education for pupils. They share

and support leaders' passion and commitment to nurture and inspire all pupils. Governors and senior leaders ensure that the school plays a pivotal part in the local community.

Senior leaders ensure that staff are consulted on developments in the school. Staff recognise both this and the care taken to support their welfare and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders understand the needs of their pupils and how to keep them safe. They have established a strong culture of safeguarding and a whole-school responsibility for pupils' welfare.

Staff spoke with confidence and consistency about how they would respond if they had any concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders ensure that pupils and their families can access and receive the timely support they need.

Pupils are taught about the risks they might face in the wider community and when online. They know how to keep themselves safe and how they can report any concerns or worries about their safety or welfare.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not read as widely as they could across all subjects in the curriculum. As a result, this limits the breadth and depth of subject-specific knowledge that some pupils acquire. Leaders should finalise their approaches to reading across the school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2017.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	135267
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10212402
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	437
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. Fiona Pennie
Headteacher	Fiona Roper
Website	www.arnotstmary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	31 January and 1 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's last section 48 inspection took place in January 2017.
- The school does make use of one registered alternative provision for a small number of pupils.
- The school extended its provision to include two-year-old children in 2018.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also met with the local authority designated school improvement partner, as well as the headteacher and other senior staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector heard pupils read.

- The inspector talked with pupils, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- The inspector reviewed documentation relating to pupils' behaviour, safety and well-being. The inspector also reviewed information relating to safeguarding and the recruitment of staff.
- The inspector contacted the one alternative provision used by the school.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspector also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Iain Sim, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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