

Inspection of Arnold Hill Spencer Academy

Gedling Road, Arnold, Gedling Road, Nottingham NG5 6NZ

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at Arnold Hill Spencer Academy. Staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct. Lessons are calm and orderly. Most pupils behave well at breaktimes and lunchtimes. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils.

Leaders have ensured that movement around the school is well managed. Most pupils arrive at lessons on time. They settle quickly and get ready to learn.

Pupils appreciate the help they get from the pastoral support staff. Pupils say that bullying does occur sometimes. If it does happen, pupils are confident that staff will resolve any issues.

Students in the sixth form are positive about their lessons and the opportunities the school provides for them. They say that leaders listen to their views through the student council. This helps them feel part of the school. Students say that teaching in the sixth form is 'very strong'. Leaders ensure that students are well prepared for their futures.

There are a wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, that many pupils take part in. Pupils follow The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and join the Combined Cadet Force. Pupils enjoy participating in a variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs.

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

Leaders have ensured that there is a well-planned and ambitious curriculum in place. Pupils in key stage 4 can study a wide range of subjects. An increasing number of pupils choose to study a foreign language at key stage 4. Leaders have identified the knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn. Teachers say curriculum plans help them deliver topics well.

Leaders are clear about the teaching methods they want teachers to use. Teachers use these consistently in lessons. For example, every lesson starts with a knowledge recall activity. Pupils say this helps them to remember key knowledge.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. In lessons, teachers present information well and use questioning to check pupils' understanding. They use 'mini tests' to check pupils' knowledge. This helps teachers identify and address any misconceptions and gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils build their knowledge over time and achieve well.

Many teachers in the sixth form are experts in their subject. They deliver the curriculum well. They have high expectations of what students can achieve. This means the work they set is demanding. They help students remember key content. Students receive detailed feedback on their work. This helps them improve their understanding of key topics. Students achieve well.

Leaders have prioritised reading. They are ambitious for all pupils to become confident readers. Pupils who need extra support to become fluent readers get the help they need. Leaders are developing the interventions they use with the weakest readers.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Teachers ensure that they adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND have full access to the curriculum. Pupils with more complex needs are well provided for. They have bespoke provision that meets their needs. Pupils with SEND achieve well. They appreciate the support they get from staff in the learning support area.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. There are clear policies in place that staff and pupils understand. Pupils say that most teachers use the behaviour policy consistently. This means that lessons are rarely disrupted.

Leaders' work with pupils with more challenging behaviour is less consistent. Leaders regularly check on pupils who attend alternative providers. For some pupils, these checks are not detailed enough. As a result, leaders are not always clear about what works well for some pupils who receive alternative provision.

Leaders have constructed a well-thought-out personal development programme. Pupils learn about physical and mental health, and about healthy relationships. Through 'guidance sessions' and assemblies, pupils cover topics such as tolerance, democracy and equality. This prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Many students in the sixth form take part in a range of extra-curricular opportunities. These include trips, visits and leadership opportunities.

Leaders have ensured that there is an effective careers programme in place. Pupils in Year 11 have 'mock interviews' with local employers. Outside providers come into school to tell pupils about different career paths. This prepares pupils well for their next steps.

Staff say that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Governors and trustees know the school well. They understand the strengths of the school and know what needs to improve. Subject directors from the trust provide effective support and challenge to subject leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know whom they can talk to if they have a concern. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Staff are well trained and know how to report any concerns they have. Leaders involve external agencies when required. This ensures that pupils get support and help when needed.

Some safeguarding records lack detail. Records do not always accurately detail the actions staff take to keep pupils safe. Leaders are acting to address this issue. Safer recruitment procedures are robust. The single central record is well managed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are minor weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements. Some records do not contain enough detail. Actions that staff take to safeguard pupils are not always recorded quickly enough. This means that crucial details could be missed. Leaders need to ensure that all incidents and actions are recorded as quickly as possible. Leaders should also ensure that all records are precise.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is clear communication between staff who are responsible for pupils in alternative provision. This means that leaders are not always clear about what is working well and what needs to improve for these pupils. Leaders should ensure that there is a clear system for recording information for all pupils who attend alternative provision. Leaders should also ensure that communication improves between staff who oversee this area of the school's work so that those responsible have clear and effective oversight of the provision for these pupils.

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	146562
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10254752
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,574
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	240
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Donna Kinderman
Principal	Matt Robertson
Website	www.arnoldhillacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Arnold Hill Spencer Academy joined The Spencer Academies Trust in October 2018. When its predecessor school, Arnold Hill Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school uses five registered alternative providers and six unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, art and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors visited lessons in other subjects and visited guidance sessions.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of year groups, including sixth-form students, and with pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation, behaviour, attendance and governance.
- Inspectors spoke on the telephone with representatives of several alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses of parents and staff through Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's staff survey.
- The lead inspector evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by meeting with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewing a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- The lead inspector met with trustees and members of the local governing body. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the trust.

Inspection team

Paul Halcro, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Shepherd	Ofsted Inspector
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