

# Inspection of The Arnewood School

Gore Road, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 6RS

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher of this school is Jamie Anderson. This school is part of the Gryphon Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Nigel Pressnell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roy Wilkins.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

While the majority of pupils at Arnewood are well-mannered and cooperative, a minority spoil it for others. For many pupils, learning is frequently hampered by low-level disruption in lessons. High levels of staff absence mean pupils often experience cover lessons. This is frustrating for pupils, parents and carers and staff alike, who all express concern about the current situation. Some pupils also expressed worries about bullying and discriminatory language. Pupils know whom to speak to in school if they need support with this, but they often choose not to and, instead, are resigned to the unkind behaviour continuing.

Despite this, most pupils enjoy learning at the school and have positive relationships with each other and staff. They recognise that the school is trying to improve the situation. The situation in the sixth form is very different, with purposeful, focused lessons, during which pupils work diligently. Pupils across the school appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and trips that enrich school life.

There is an ambitious vision for the school, and determined work to reverse its decline since the previous inspection. The school has been making appropriate changes to the curriculum, but these ambitions are not yet realised. Many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not achieve as well as they should in their GCSEs.

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

The school has rightly focused on improving pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards their learning. New approaches to managing behaviour have recently been introduced. Not all pupils and staff clearly understand and follow these approaches yet. Consequently, the behaviour of a minority of pupils often falls short of the school's expectations. Lessons are frequently disrupted, and there are examples of antisocial behaviour outside of lessons.

The school's focus on improving attendance has had some positive impacts. Overall attendance is similar to the national average, and persistent absence rates have reduced slightly. However, too many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not attending school regularly. This is having a significant negative impact on their learning.

Over time, pupils have not achieved well in GCSE examinations. The school is now focused on improving pupils' achievement from Year 7 onwards. However, the organisation and delivery of the curriculum do not currently support all pupils to remember and apply knowledge securely over time. As a result, many pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

The school has not fully identified the precise knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in some areas. In addition, in some subjects, pupils do not learn the curriculum in sufficient breadth or depth. There are inconsistencies in how the

curriculum is taught and how pupils' learning is assessed. The school has introduced the 'Arnewood Lesson', which sets out the expectations for teaching lessons. Some aspects of this are working well, for example how teachers help pupils to recall prior learning. However, staff do not routinely use their assessment information to address gaps in knowledge and misconceptions before moving on.

The school has improved its systems for identifying the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Individual 'pupil passports' ensure that staff are aware of what help they should provide. However, at present, some staff do not always provide the precise support that pupils with SEND need to be successful.

The school is committed to providing a culture of reading. Pupils in key stage 3 enjoy reading with their teachers during daily reading lessons. The school's reading and phonics programme is used successfully to support pupils who need more help to read more fluently.

There are many strengths in the school's personal development programme. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including when online. They discuss sensitive topics confidently, such as the importance of consent in healthy relationships. A comprehensive careers programme includes regular sessions with employers and local education and training providers. However, citizenship education is not delivered as well as other areas. Many pupils have gaps in their knowledge about important topics such as democracy and civil liberties.

The sixth form remains a strength of the school. Study programmes are well planned to build on students' individual starting points and aspirations. The extended project qualification is particularly impressive. Students benefit from the expert subject knowledge of staff and receive very personalised support. As a result, students develop very positive attitudes to their learning and attend regularly. Students' achievement in A-level exams was not as strong in 2023 as in previous years. However, current students are being well prepared for examinations and their next steps after they leave school.

Trustees recognise that change is needed and are supporting the school to address its weaknesses. They have prioritised improving pupils' achievement and have recently moved to set out new expectations for behaviour and attitudes. These changes are not yet established consistently, so have not had the required impact on the quality of education and culture across the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils' behaviour frequently disrupts lessons, hampering pupils' learning and progress overall. The school must further raise expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, and ensure a more consistent response from staff to poor behaviour across the school.
- Some pupils feel uncomfortable in school because of bullying or prejudicial language. They do not always report these issues because they are not confident that staff will deal with them effectively. The school must address these aspects of the school's culture and restore the faith of all pupils that their concerns will be dealt with effectively.
- In some subjects, the important knowledge and skills pupils need to learn are not fully identified and carefully organised. This means that teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to embed and apply their knowledge. The school should continue to develop the curriculum to ensure that pupils accumulate key knowledge and skills over time in all subjects.
- Within and across subjects, there is variation in how effectively the curriculum is being delivered. Some teachers do not always use effective strategies to help pupils to learn well. As a result, not all pupils are learning as well as they should. The school needs to provide further training and support for staff to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to deliver the curriculum effectively.
- Staff do not consistently adapt their teaching for pupils with SEND. This means the achievement of these pupils is variable. The school should ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to adapt their teaching and rigorously check that pupils with SEND are learning as well as they could.
- Many pupils lack secure knowledge of important aspects of the citizenship curriculum. This means that they are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. The school must ensure that it gives sufficient attention to teaching fundamental British values and checks that pupils develop secure knowledge and understanding of this aspect of the curriculum.

### 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136652
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10313350
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	954
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	129
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Roy Wilkins
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Nigel Pressnell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jamie Anderson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.arnewood.hants.sch.uk">www.arnewood.hants.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	17 and 18 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes of staff. The headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- The school currently uses six registered alternative provisions.
- A higher-than-average number of pupils join the school at other times after Year 7. Many of these pupils join from other secondary schools in the local area.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information 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.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders, including the headteacher and senior leaders. They also met with representatives from the trust and the local governing body. The CEO was not present during the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, English, geography, modern foreign languages, physical education and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders and visited lessons of some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed support plans for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- In addition, inspectors considered a range of information including the school's plans for improvement and behaviour records.
- Inspectors considered the views of members of staff who responded to Ofsted's online staff survey. The views of parents were taken into account from the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text responses. Inspectors met with groups of pupils formally and informally to discuss their views of the school and considered their responses to the Ofsted survey.

## **Inspection team**

Mark Bagust, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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