

Arnold Woodthorpe Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122511
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	327745
Inspection date	10 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	156
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Amanda Briggs-Goode
Headteacher	Ms S Mackay
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Arno Vale Road Woodthorpe Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG5 4JG
Telephone number	0115 9263820
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- whether all groups of pupils make the best progress that they can
- if staff make full use of assessment information to provide challenging activities
- whether the monitoring of the work of the school is sufficiently rigorous to identify where further improvement needs to be made.

Evidence was gathered from observations of parts of lessons and discussions with the headteacher, senior staff, governors and pupils. Inspectors also scrutinised the inspection questionnaire for parents, school documentation and a sample of the pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in as much detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school in a socially advantaged area on the edge of Nottingham. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. There are slightly fewer pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds than seen nationally and a below average proportion at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average with most of these having moderate learning difficulties. The school holds Activemark and Eco awards and has achieved the National Healthy Schools Standard.

There is both a pre-school and after-school provision on the school site that is not managed by the governing body. This was inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The judgement matches the school's evaluations of its own effectiveness and demonstrates that the setting has maintained the strengths identified in the previous inspection. Parents are generally very pleased with the standard of care and education provided. Several note positive features, including that the school 'Has excellent discipline and structure and 'Is a very happy school.' Others comment that their children's 'Confidence has increased because of the school environment and teachers.'

Children enter the Reception classes with skills, knowledge and understanding that are above average for their age in most areas of learning and especially in their personal, social and emotional development. They make good overall progress in both the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. At the age of seven, standards are consistently well above national averages. A large proportion of pupils read particularly well and are effectively supported in this by their parents. The numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing, mathematics and science are also high although vary a little from year to year because of the different numbers attaining the higher levels. Boys and girls and those of all abilities do equally well. The small number who speak English as an additional language and those who need additional support also achieve well.

The personal development of pupils is good. There are outstanding features in their behaviour and enjoyment of school which really shine out particularly when they are singing. In discussions, pupils identify that they like all the activities they take part in and there is little they would change about the school. Attendance is above average. In lessons and around the school their behaviour is invariably of a very high standard. They move around the school quietly and sensibly and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, including at playtime. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They also have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They recognise the benefits of healthy eating and enjoy lots of exercise, for example in the over-subscribed extra curricular activities. Pupils readily take on responsibilities in school, including as members of the school council. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to take on other responsibilities, develop independence and make decisions in their learning. There are also few occasions when they are able to follow lines of enquiry or solve problems which restrict a little how they develop the full range of skills that help prepare them for their future.

The quality of teaching and learning and of the curriculum is largely good. There are particular strengths in music, resulting in musical performance of a very high standard. Lessons are conducted in a calm and purposeful manner so that pupils are able to concentrate well. Where teaching is strongest, staff have consistently high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and use information about their progress to set challenging tasks that move learning forward. The curriculum is well crafted to meet the needs of those who find learning difficult. However, there is some variation in the effectiveness of planning for the different needs of all pupils. Occasionally, planning is brief and unspecific, and does not identify clearly enough how different groups are to be challenged. A small number of parents believe their children could make further progress. Inspectors agree that, at times staff could expect more of some pupils and particularly those of higher ability or those identified as gifted or talented. While in most lessons there is a good balance of tasks, occasionally, teachers control activities too much at the expense of pupils finding things out for themselves.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. All aspects of the way in which the school safeguards the pupils are effective. There are careful checks of those who work in school and child protection training is appropriate. The school quickly identifies individual needs and where additional support is needed. Skilled teaching assistants and class teachers support pupils well. This promotes equality of opportunity and has a positive impact on learning and development. The school has good links with a range of external agencies which leads to some parents noting with pleasure how well the school meets their children's needs. Academic guidance is good although there is variation in the marking of pupils work and the use of assessment information which leads to some pupils making slower progress.

The leadership and management of the school is good. Key to this is the effective work of the headteacher who has a good grasp of what works well and of the areas for further improvement. She accurately evaluates the quality of teaching and learning and manages assessment information well to identify where progress may need improvement. Subject leaders have a growing role in monitoring and evaluating areas for which they hold responsibility. Governance is good. Governors are supportive and have developed their role as a critical friend well. They are now keen to develop their involvement further through a wider range of focussed visits to ensure they are well informed, at first hand. The school works successfully to unite groups in the local community and is working to develop a global dimension to its work. Because of these many strengths the school is well placed to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the two Reception classes is good because staff are enthusiastic and committed to further improving provision for their charges. Children enter with skills that are above those typical for their age. Most have good skills in communicating with others and can often count very well. They are confident and happy and keen to do what their older friends and siblings do. The checks of children's progress are thorough and well managed so that staff have a clear understanding of what progress is made and where further support may be needed. As a result children make good progress and achieve well in all areas of their learning. Most exceed the targets for their age when they enter Year 1. Teaching and learning are good. Children are eager to learn and staff provide an interesting range of activities indoors and outside that motivate them well. Classrooms are well-organised and stimulating environments that encourage the children to try hard with their work. The welfare of the children is well considered and has a positive impact on their personal development. Leadership and management of the key stage is good and has ensured that the provision has embraced the changes to meet current requirements. While the outside area is somewhat small the school works hard to overcome such limitations.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information more effectively to provide the highest appropriate level of challenge for all groups of pupils.
- Develop pupils' skills so that they can carry out investigations and solve problems independently.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Arnold Woodthorpe Infant School, Nottingham, NG5 4JG

Thank you very much for looking after us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed speaking to you in and around school and meeting some of you in lessons, in assembly and when we spoke to the school council.

These are some of the best things we found.

- The standards you reach are high and lots of you do well in your work.
- Most of you really like coming to school, you behave very well and make good progress.
- The quality of music in school is excellent and you sing extremely well.
- Your headteacher understands very clearly what works well in school and where improvements can still be made.
- The staff look after you well and provide extra help when you need it.

Yours is a good school. To help things to improve further we have asked that:

- staff use the information from checking your work to provide activities that really challenge you so that you can make even better progress
- teachers provide more opportunities for you to find things out, carry out investigations and solve problems.

To help your school to do even better, please continue to be enthusiastic and try really hard with your work. We hope you enjoy your summer holidays.

Yours faithfully

Sue Hall

Lead inspector