

Arnold Mill Primary and Nursery School

Cross Street, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 7AX

Inspection dates

8–9 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school is outstanding because it is led exceptionally well by the headteacher. He has brought about marked improvements in achievement by creating a very positive culture that all with a stake in the school share.
- A major factor in the school's success is the headteacher's visibility and high profile around the school. He has excellent relationships with pupils, many of whom have significant difficulties and disadvantages.
- The school ensures pupils' safety and also promotes outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning throughout the school.
- From often very low starting points, pupils make exceptionally strong progress. For the last three years pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 6 have made significantly above-average progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- This excellent progress has been largely due to outstanding leadership at all levels. The shared vision and values found throughout the school ensure provision is, and has consistently been, exceptional.
- Pupils and parents have a clear understanding of the school's high expectations of all aspects of school life, including attendance and punctuality. Parents are very supportive and share the school's pride in its achievements.
- All staff at the school with leadership roles play a full part in promoting the school's values, ensuring pupils develop a love of learning. Staff who completed the questionnaire strongly agreed they, too, were proud to be part of the school.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection through a wide range of training and the very effective use of appraisal systems. Teachers new to the profession are very well supported.
- Teachers have worked hard to improve the marking and the feedback they provide for pupils in literacy.
- The governing body is knowledgeable and holds the school to account very effectively. Governors' skills are used to excellent effect in supporting and challenging the work of the school.
- The Nursery and Reception classes provide children with an exceptional start to their school lives. The school's clear focus on children's social and emotional development prepares them very well for their future schooling.
- The school is playing an important role in supporting and working alongside other schools. Staff have excellent opportunities to learn from outstanding practice elsewhere and also to share their own excellent leadership practice with other schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 18 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these were observed jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, a representative from the local authority, members of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined, some with the headteacher and deputy headteacher present, and pupils read to the inspectors.
- Inspectors took into account the 36 responses to the parental survey, Parent View, as well as responses to the school's own parental questionnaire. The inspectors took account of the 35 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents produced by the school, including data on pupils' progress and attainment, procedures for safeguarding, the school's own evaluations of its work, reports to the governing body and minutes of their meetings, and the action plans for raising attainment.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Amarjit Cheema	Additional Inspector
Patrick Fielding	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Arnold Mill Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Redhill Teaching School Alliance, which enables a number of schools to share expertise and good practice.
- Most pupils are White British. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school Action and Action Plus are above average. There are three pupils with statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher provides support in leadership and management to another school.
- The school has a nursery class which takes most children on a part-time basis.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- There is a privately-run after school club which shares the school site and which is inspected and reported on separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the marking of pupils' work in mathematics so that it is as good as it is in English, and helps pupils understand more clearly what they have done right, how they can improve their work and what they need to do to improve it.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership is outstanding at all levels. The headteacher has created an extremely positive culture which is at the heart of everything the school does. All leaders and members of the school community, including the vast majority of parents, share the school's vision and guiding principles. This ensures complete consistency of approach in the way staff support the pupils, some of whom are significantly disadvantaged and often face acute challenges. As one teacher wrote, 'The school feels like home – it enters your heart and soul.'
- There is outstanding leadership of teaching. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of the action taken where necessary, are excellent. This provides staff with high quality support and challenge and is very effective in supporting teachers new to the profession.
- Senior and middle leaders' skills have been well-developed through appropriate training. The headteacher encourages all staff to develop their skills and fulfil their potential as leaders. The senior leadership team consists of representatives of most aspects of the school. This helps the school ensure pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent and generates the ethos of inclusion that permeates the school's work. Because of the school's success the local authority uses an appropriately light touch approach when checking on its work.
- The school's self-evaluation and improvement planning is detailed and sets out appropriate priorities. Teachers' good understanding and use of the available assessment data mean they rapidly identify and address weaknesses or signs of underachievement. This is true for all the different groups in the school, including those entitled to funding from the pupil premium and those who are the most able. The school's strong administrative systems ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.
- Training and performance management have been used exceptionally well to develop teachers' professional skills. For example, training has very rapidly improved the teaching of phonics (the linking of letters and sounds) and because of this, reading standards have risen and pupils' progress, their skills in reading and their love of books have greatly improved. Within the teaching school alliance, staff have been able to share good and outstanding practice. This promotes the school's outstanding capacity to maintain its strengths and continue improving.
- Data on pupils' progress and attainment are regularly checked, and internal and external checks are carried out to confirm the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work. The school is preparing well for the full implementation of its approach to assessment, following the change next year to remove National Curriculum levels.
- Funding available through the pupil premium is used extremely effectively to help eligible pupils take a full part in school life, and benefit, where appropriate, from additional help from adults. The impact of this is evident in the significant narrowing of gaps in achievement between eligible pupils and others over the past year, and the much higher standards now achieved by disadvantaged pupils.
- Good use is made of the extra funding available to promote physical education and sporting opportunities. High quality staffing leads to pupils making good, and frequently exceptional progress and helps develop other teachers' knowledge and skills. The school has seen increased participation in a wider range of clubs and sporting activities, and this is contributing to pupils' healthier lifestyles. In addition, the school takes part in a range of competitions with other schools with a great deal of success.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Equality of opportunity is ensured for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. The high proportion of pupils who face a variety of challenging circumstances are very well cared for and nurtured. There is excellent preparation for life in modern Britain.

■ The governance of the school:

- Following the last inspection, the governing body changed its membership and improved the way it carries out its statutory duties. It is now a strong and effective body which acts as a critical friend and whose members provide the headteacher and leaders with genuine challenge through hard questioning. Governors have carried out a rigorous review of their skills and this has had a beneficial impact, especially on the effectiveness of the committee work.
- Governors check the school's work through a good range of visits, such as to observe and monitor the teaching of phonics. Members of the governing body have a clear understanding of the system used to determine teachers' effectiveness in enabling pupils to make progress. Governors check how well school leaders improve the quality of teaching and ensure decisions about teachers' pay are appropriately linked to their performance and responsibilities.
- Governors track finances well and lead the school in deciding how to spend additional money, such as that to support disadvantaged pupils. They understand and can talk knowledgeably about the school's data and what it tells them about the school's performance, of which they are rightly proud.
- Governors ensure that the school promotes key values such as tolerance and understanding of the beliefs and culture of others very well. They ensure the school's links with parents are effective and that parents' concerns and opinions are carefully listened to and acted on.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**are outstanding****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The exceptionally high standard of pupils' behaviour has been maintained since the last inspection. In all lessons observed, and in other settings such as the harvest assembly, the dining room and at playtimes, pupils were well-behaved and fully engaged in their learning. They demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to learning. This was supported by what pupils told inspectors about how much they enjoyed school, and it has a positive impact on the progress they make in lessons and over time.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about lessons and other aspects of school life. They clearly like school a lot. Pupils show great respect for the learning environment and do not drop litter. Pupils praised the teachers and said that they provide work which challenges them. One said there was a 'nice, caring atmosphere' in the school.
- Pupils' response to the school's expectations of their behaviour and social development is consistently excellent. Their horizons are widened through the good opportunities they are given to take responsibility, such as on the school council or in the gardening club.
- Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards others. They are extremely polite and interested in other people. They work together well when solving problems, demonstrating strong negotiation and co-operative skills. Pupils show a very caring and accepting nature and are very supportive of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or those who have difficulty in managing their behaviour for themselves.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Leaders and governors give the highest possible priority to the safeguarding of pupils in their care
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, and all parents confirm this view. The school provides a good range of activities to help pupils learn to stay safe, and they are taught how to safely use computers and the internet. The pupils say there is no bullying but they are confident that if it occurred, it would be effectively dealt with, and they demonstrate a clear understanding of different types of bullying.
- The breakfast club provides pupils with a calm and productive start to the day, as well as a healthy snack, and good opportunities to develop social skills.

- Attendance has improved rapidly and, last year, it was above the national average. It has improved as a result of the school's strong and successful focus on encouraging better attendance, and monitoring and addressing persistent absenteeism. Parents appreciate the importance of their children's full attendance. Pupils are punctual both to school and to lessons.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The school's own evaluations, together with inspectors' direct observations of teaching and pupils' work, provide strong evidence that the teaching of literacy, including reading, and mathematics, is outstanding. Since the previous inspection, leaders have ensured improvement to teaching throughout the school through focused training and the effective use of appraisal. The teaching caters consistently for pupils' different needs and capabilities. This high quality teaching is responsible for pupils' currently outstanding progress and rapidly rising standards.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' attitudes to their learning, and their interest and engagement in their work, are excellent. Pupils are often encouraged to learn through imaginative tasks and well-chosen resources. For example, in Year 3 the imaginative use of chocolate bars provided an excellent problem-solving task that extended pupils' knowledge of fractions.
- The learning environment throughout the school is kept very tidy, with most material resources easily accessible for pupils. Displays of pupils' work are used well to reinforce pupils' understanding, learning and vocabulary, and also to celebrate their achievements.
- Pupils throughout the school talk positively about how they enjoy lessons, especially writing. One boy talked enthusiastically about how he enjoyed writing fiction. They describe the progress they have made and talk with pride about their work. This pride is reflected in pupils' books, which are very tidy and well presented.
- Teachers' use of assessment information and other data is excellent. Assessments are invariably accurate and are used carefully to group pupils by ability and provide work that is well targeted for their different capabilities. Teachers are very aware of how different groups, including the most-able pupils, are learning in lessons, and adjust their practice to make sure that everyone does well. Their very effective deployment of the high quality teaching assistants has also had a very positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment, particularly by those who find learning more difficult and those pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and follow the school policy consistently. The marking of work in English provides pupils with clear and constructive suggestions for improvement. Pupils are beginning to get better at responding to the marking and this is having a positive impact on their progress. However, the marking in mathematics is less effective and does not always make it clear enough how pupils can improve their work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive outstanding support. This ensures they are able to take a full part in school life and that they make excellent progress from their different starting points. Teachers also provide well for other groups, such as the most able, by ensuring that they set them appropriately challenging work.
- Teachers have responded well to recent national changes to the curriculum and plan challenging activities that link subjects and the use of different skills. For example, in Year 4, pupils learning about the Stone Age use a well-known novel to help develop their reading and writing skills. Teachers ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and their future lives.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have risen slowly but consistently over recent years although they remain below those expected nationally in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has been broadly average for the past two years. However, this represents outstanding progress in relation to pupils' starting points. For the last three years the measure showing how much value the school has added to pupils' learning suggests this has been significantly above the national average. Last year, above-average proportions of pupils made expected, and more than the expected, progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2013, the attainment of Year 6 pupils supported through the pupil premium funding in mathematics, reading and writing was around two terms behind pupils nationally and other pupils in their year group. Last year, the school significantly closed the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others. There is now no gap between their attainment and that of pupils nationally or of their classmates. In reading and mathematics the disadvantaged pupils are ahead of pupils nationally and of their classmates. This represents outstanding progress through the high quality provision for these pupils.
- The results of the Year 1 check on pupils' skills in linking letters and sounds (phonics) show that in 2014 standards were broadly average, but this represents outstanding progress given pupils' starting points. This reflects the excellent teaching of this aspect of literacy and is the result of the new system for teaching phonics now used across the school and the additional training undertaken by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is outstanding throughout the school. There is also evidence of excellent achievement in other subjects such as physical education, science, geography and history.
- Throughout the school the most-able pupils, and the small number from minority ethnic backgrounds, make outstanding progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make equally strong progress because of the extra help they receive. Last year, these pupils in all years made similar or better progress than their classmates.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The early years' provision is outstanding; children make excellent progress from their different but often very low starting points. Many children entering the Nursery have levels of knowledge and understanding which are well below those typical for their age, especially for their communication and personal and social skills. Children make strong progress in all areas of learning, although attainment remains below that typically reached for their ages when they move to the Reception classes. They continue to make excellent progress in Reception and an above-average proportion of the children last year reached at least the levels expected by the end of the year. This represents outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Children in the Nursery class quickly get used to the school's routines. They start the day happily and productively, meeting friends and settling down to their activities. This very positive social development is carried over into the Reception classes and is helped by sessions such as singing, when the Nursery and reception children are able to mix together.
- The progress made by children who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is outstanding. The most-able children are also well provided for and staff are very aware of all individuals' prior knowledge and skills. Some of the best progress is seen in children's social and emotional development and in extending their vocabulary and speaking skills. This is important because these are areas of development which is a weakness when children start school. Children's good progress helps prepare them well for the next stage in their education.
- The accommodation is excellent, well-organised and offers a very productive learning environment. The outdoors area is used very effectively to extend children's learning, both through adult-led activities and those that the children choose for themselves. Children learn to behave well, are clearly happy at school

and are kept safe. There is good provision for their health, safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers make very effective use of their assessments of what the children know and can do in order to plan the children's next steps. All activities are carefully designed to help to move children's learning on. All adults have an input into observing children's progress. Parents are regularly informed about progress and they are invited to record their comments in the children's records of learning.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122720
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	448548

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	338
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Hopewell
Headteacher	Matt Lawrence
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2010
Telephone number	0115 9160034
Fax number	0115 916 0035
Email address	office@arnoldmill.notts.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

