

# Inspection of a good school: Archdale School

Archdale Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S2 1PL

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Inspection dates:

29 and 30 November 2022

## **Outcome**

Archdale School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils enjoy attending Archdale school. At the heart of the school is a real commitment to get it right for every child. Staff are very caring and supportive. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils know staff will look after them and help them to learn. This helps pupils to feel safe. Staff work extremely well with health care professionals to ensure pupils with complex health care needs are fully supported, and included in school life.

Parents speak highly of the care and support that staff provide for pupils. One parent, echoing the views of others, commented, 'staff are amazing, they have gone over and above to meet the needs of my child.'

Leaders are committed to every pupil achieving their best. Due to the fact that pupil's complex needs are well supported, pupils behave well and try their best in lessons. Staff support pupils in managing their emotions, so that they learn over time how to become more independent. Bullying is rare; if there is any bullying, it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

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

Leaders took the decision to fully review the curriculum two years ago. This review has resulted in a highly bespoke curriculum designed to meet the needs of all the pupils.

Leaders are ambitious for their pupils. This is evident in how pupils, some with life threatening health care needs, are fully included in all aspects of school life. Skilled staff support their care well and, because of this, pupils access learning as fully as possible.

From their starting point in early years, children are taught the skills of communication, problem-solving, and independence. Teachers are reflective on the needs of each pupil and use assessment tools to carefully plot the next steps of learning.

Early reading is embedded across the school. Pupils enjoy listening to stories, which are made accessible by staff using sensory materials and music. Teachers adapt English activities to ensure pupils develop the important skills of reading and writing, for example pupils use symbols and key words to build sentences.

Leaders have recently introduced a phonics programme, with all teachers trained in the scheme. A small number of pupils are now following this and it is helping these pupils to make strong progress in learning and blending sounds. Pupils read daily with staff and they were proud to read to inspectors. School leaders have planned further phonics training for all staff, and a programme is planned to monitor pupils' ongoing progress.

Across each term, leaders and teachers plan the best ways for pupils to access foundation subjects. Pupils told inspectors about the fun they had in physical education (PE), and when out on visits, and what they had learned in history. However, some curriculum subjects, such as geography and computing, have not been planned in enough detail, and because of this pupils' progress slows. Leaders are aware of this and are refining foundation curriculum documents, so they provide clearer information to teachers about what to teach and when.

Leaders invest in enrichment activities to ensure all pupils receive high-quality experiences, both in and out of school. These experiences include horse-riding, live music, sporting events and recently a group of pupils performed at the city's Octagon venue along with children from local primary schools.

Leaders have rightly identified the need to further develop support for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and severe communication difficulties, to ensure these pupils engage in learning as fully as possible. They have targeted additional resources, and have a strong development plan in place to ensure these learners continue to do well.

Governors are highly supportive of school leaders and hold a clear vision of improving life chances for all pupils at Archdale school. They take an active role in the life of the school and are keen to secure and invest in resources to support their pupils effectively. They recognise areas of improvement, particularly in regard to the curriculum and are keen to support leaders in their next steps.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff understand the important role that they play in keeping pupils safe. They know pupils really well, and are vigilant to any changes that might indicate that the pupils are at risk of harm. They understand how to report concerns to the school's designated safeguarding leader when they have concerns about pupils' welfare. Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate and regular safeguarding

training, and work extremely well with a range of external agencies to provide support to pupils and their families.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have not identified the sequence of knowledge in sufficient detail in some subjects. Consequently, pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Leaders should continue to develop detailed curriculum plans and assessment arrangements in every subject.

## **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 October 2017.

## **How can I feedback 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	107177
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242238
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary Special School
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	96
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mr Phil Borkett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Matthew Cam
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.archdale.sheffield.sch.uk">www.archdale.sheffield.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Archdale is a primary school in Sheffield Local Authority.
- The school caters for pupils with the full range of special educational needs.
- All pupils have education, health, and care plans.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has changed its name from Norfolk Park to Archdale School.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Meetings were held both together and separately with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors also met with curriculum leads both separately, and along with senior leaders.

- Inspectors conducted a telephone interview with the local authority representative, and with the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with the chair, the vice-chair and parent representative of the local governing board, along with two other governors.
- Inspectors spoke with a small mixed-group of boys and girls.
- They also spoke informally with pupils at play times and lunchtimes and with parents dropping off and collecting pupils from school.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's single central record, and child protection records.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in communication, including the early stages of reading, mathematics, and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to the school's curriculum, along with the school's own evaluation and its development plans.
- Inspectors reviewed planning and assessment documentation linked to pupils' education and health care plans, including behaviour support plans.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to the staff survey and comments from parents through Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Berni Moorcroft, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Michelle Farr

Ofsted Inspector

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