

Archibald First School

Archibald Street, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE3 1EB

Inspection dates 31 March 2015–1 April 2015

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.

- All groups of pupils, including those who are potentially at risk of underachievement, make rapid progress and leave with standards that are very high for their age.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 are consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers assess what pupils know and can do accurately, and use the resulting information to set work that is perfectly matched to their ability.
- Teaching is of a high standard. Over time it is never less than good and much of it is outstanding.
- Children in the early years progress rapidly so their attainment is above that typical for their age on entry to Year 1. Children are very well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- The school provides a very well-rounded education for all its pupils, so they develop spiritually, culturally, morally and socially equally as well as they do academically. They are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, caring and have a strong sense of right and wrong.
- The school is a completely safe place to learn so pupils feel totally secure.
- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has forged a very close team of staff who are always seeking to improve aspects of their work and pupils' achievements.
- The school's plan for further development is well thought out and based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas that are less strong. It is used well to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The school provides staff with high quality training. The best practice in the school is shared, but this could be developed even more for the benefit of all.
- Governors play an exceptionally strong role in leading the school and checking that other leaders and managers are doing all they can to improve pupils' education.
- The school's very strong partnerships with parents contribute to the school's success. Parents feel very well informed and are very appreciative of all the school does for their children.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons, including some that were seen jointly with the headteacher. In addition, they listened to pupils reading and analysed work from a range of subjects across both key stages.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders to discuss systems for keeping pupils safe and to discuss the progress that groups of pupils make. They met with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors.
- They examined records of the local authority’s involvement with the school and held a telephone conversation with a local authority representative. Pupils’ behaviour was observed in lessons and during lunch and break times. Inspectors met with groups of pupils to gain their views of the school and spoke informally to them at other times.
- Inspectors took account of the 76 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also spoke to parents during the inspection.
- Documents relating to the school’s work were examined, including: the school’s own information on pupils’ progress; the school’s evaluation of its performance; records relating to attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Jonathan Chicken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Frank Cain

Additional Inspector

Patrick Hargreaves

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The early years comprises full-time Reception and part-time Nursery classes.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from other backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- Fewer pupils than average are eligible for support through the pupil premium. This is additional funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Pupils have access to a breakfast and after-school club on the same site as the school. This provision is privately managed and subject to a separate inspection. The report for this provision can be found at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further refine the quality of teaching to ensure that outcomes for pupils remain very strong by:
 - continuing to share the very best practice in the school
 - extending the very best marking and feedback strategies in order to extend pupils' thinking.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides outstanding and inspirational leadership and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Together, they have created a school where there is a strong sense of teamwork that enables everyone to succeed.
- Senior leaders, staff and governors work with determination and skill to constantly improve the school. The headteacher's highest priorities are always to improve the quality of teaching and to raise pupils' achievement.
- The school does all it can to ensure pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. Senior leaders and staff make very regular and rigorous checks on pupils' individual progress. Pupils' learning needs are very clear as a result and should any pupil fall behind for any reason, quick action is taken to remedy this.
- Additional funding is expertly used to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This results in them making excellent progress, similar to their classmates, because of the extra help they are given to improve their reading, writing and numeracy skills.
- Leaders regularly visit classrooms and check pupils' books and assessment information. As a result, they have a very accurate understanding of the impact of teaching on learning across the school.
- Middle leaders are very effective. They have a very good knowledge of the strengths and priorities within their subjects and year groups. These leaders make important contributions to improvements in the quality of teaching and achievement across the school.
- The performance of staff is extremely well managed. Teachers' performance targets and pay progression are very closely linked to pupils' attainment and progress. Staff are very well supported. When areas for improvement are identified, they are followed up quickly with training and coaching that is both personal and relevant.
- Leaders are highly committed to working with parents and do this very well. Parents say that communication is now extremely effective and has improved since the previous inspection. Parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire showed unanimous support for the way the school is led and managed. Almost all parents are pleased with the progress their children are making.
- The rich and exciting curriculum builds pupils' basic skills exceptionally well. It is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and practical activities which bring learning to life. Pupils enjoy themed projects and are enabled to develop their academic, creative, practical and sporting skills extremely well. During the inspection pupils from Year 1 visited a local railway museum as part of their transport topic. The visit allowed them to learn about transport from the past and compare it with that of the current day.
- The school makes very good use of its additional primary sports funding. Staff are benefiting from the expertise of a specialist sports teacher who works alongside them. This strategic use of funding across a number of local trust schools has enabled pupils to engage in a wider range of physical and sporting activities.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Staff have high expectations and promote pupils' personal development and self-esteem effectively. Assemblies and religious education are used well to promote British values of respect and tolerance. While these are predominately Christian, visitors from other faiths are regular visitors in school. Pupils are given systematic opportunities to learn about cultural differences and other faiths. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils are beginning to understand the importance of democracy. For example, pupils learn about the importance of fairness as they recently voted for pupils to represent them on the trust council. As a result, from an early age, they learn to understand the importance of listening to the views of others.
- The local authority provides 'light-touch' support. The school has found the local authority's challenge useful. It has acted on its recommendations as well as buying extra support when it is needed.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are very thorough. They meet statutory requirements and in many respects go beyond these.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly effective and use their wide range of expertise for the school's benefit.
 - They are very ambitious for the school and have received training to ensure that they have the necessary skills to carry out their roles. The governing body was recently awarded a nationally recognised quality standard. Work towards this accreditation marks governors' commitment to sustainable excellence.
 - As regular visitors to school, governors know the school exceptionally well and have the highest expectations of staff and pupils. They use a good range of information, including data on pupils'

progress and attainment to ensure they know how well the school performs compared with other schools nationally.

- They challenge and question senior leaders and have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They hold school leaders to account and set rigorous performance targets for the headteacher.
- The governors provide appropriate support to the school and often use their skills and interests to support and enhance the school's curriculum.
- They are fully aware of the performance of staff and make sure pay rises for staff are deserved. Governors ensure that funding is used well and has a direct impact on pupils. This can be seen in the improvements to outcomes for early years children since the previous inspection. They closely monitor the spending of the pupil premium grant and sports funding. They ensure these monies are used appropriately to raise pupils' achievement and improve participation rates in sporting activities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their conduct is exemplary in classrooms, during break times, and when pupils move around the school. One lunchtime supervisor commented that the pupils 'were a pleasure to work with' and that incidents of poor behaviour were 'almost unheard of', adding that there was a lovely atmosphere.
- Relationships are excellent and pupils from different backgrounds get on extremely well together. Pupils respect one another and actively celebrate their differences. This is because the school places a very strong emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils at Archibald First are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are always polite with each other and staff. This ensures everyone enjoys being part of this harmonious community. Pupils greet each other with smiles. They say 'please' and 'thank you' without being reminded and welcome visitors to their school with courtesy.
- Pupils enjoy school and have extremely positive attitudes to learning because lessons are designed to hold their interest. They are quick to participate and keen to do their best. They listen carefully when their classmates explain their ideas and get on with their work very well when working alone.
- Pupils and their parents have unanimously positive views of how well pupils behave and how the school manages their behaviour.
- Attendance rates are above average. The school has robust procedures, supported by governors, to ensure pupils regularly attend school. The school employs a specialist who works closely with families to develop positive relationships between home and school. As a result, children attend more regularly and achieve well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. There are robust systems to ensure the safety of pupils, including those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable.
- Pupils are extremely well cared for and pupils say they feel very safe at school. Pupils contribute to the safe environment at the school in the manner in which they conduct themselves.
- All parents who responded to Parent View feel that their children are kept safe in school.
- Pupils show high levels of understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Pupils and staff receive training in cyber-bullying and e-safety including when using social media. Best practice and advice for parents are shared on the school's website.
- As a result of a carefully planned curriculum that includes teaching by visiting experts, bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are aware of different types of prejudiced-based bullying and know what to do if anything unkind should be said or happen to them.
- Staff are very well trained to ensure the needs of pupils with particular difficulties are met, such as medical or physical needs.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- In all classes, teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding, including the teaching of English and mathematics. As a result, all groups of pupils are making rapid and sustained progress over time.

- Teachers plan an exciting range of themes and topics and discuss what is expected of pupils in the different year groups. Together with classroom assistants, they exchange observations and highly accurate assessments of the pupils' achievements and record these systematically. 'Pen portrait' documents are used by all staff to ensure pupils' learning needs are closely and consistently met. As a result, lessons are well planned and the work given to pupils is accurately matched to the needs of groups of pupils.
- The vibrant curriculum, combined with teachers' very systematic teaching of basic skills, underpins pupils' rapid learning in reading and writing.
- Teachers plan very carefully and provide experiences that enable groups and individuals to make as much progress as they can. They are vigilant in seeking opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and ensure pupils learn to work hard.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge, enthusiasm and high expectations, including in mathematics, result in detailed and thoughtful responses from pupils.
- In the very best lessons, teachers provide pupils with just the right amount of time to think for themselves. Well-thought-out strategies encourage pupils to discuss and refine their ideas based on teachers' skilful explanations. Although staff have opportunities to observe outstanding teaching, this could occur more frequently so that best practice is fully shared.
- Marking is effective and teachers' written comments in books are readily understood by pupils and usually contain helpful suggestions for improvement. However, this good quality marking is better in some classes than in others.
- Teaching assistants make a very important contribution to the quality of teaching. This is because they are highly skilled and plan in close partnership with teachers very carefully to ensure that they are used to support and challenge different groups of pupils very effectively.
- Both teachers and teaching assistants teach phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) consistently well. Strategies and techniques are refined and as a result, pupils learn to read very well.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Most children enter the early years with skills and knowledge similar to those typical for children of their age. By the end of Year 2, they achieve standards that are exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics year after year. This represents excellent progress.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to build on the progress they have made in Reception in reading, writing and mathematics. Current Year 2 pupils are at the same high level of learning as those in previous years.
- The attainment of the pupils currently in Year 4 was higher than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. However, the proportion of them who achieved the higher Level 3 was just below the national average. School information suggests that because of very strong and sustained progress a large majority of these pupils are now attaining higher standards than would be expected.
- In the Year 1 national screening check on phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) pupils were above average, and this is confirmed by their higher reading levels by this age. Pupils who did not reach the required standard have received additional teaching to help almost all of them catch up by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils in Year 2 read fluently. They use a wide range of strategies, including the use of phonics and clues from the context to help them read unfamiliar words. They talk knowledgeably about the books they are reading and can justify their choices to their classmates. Some children are reading at a higher level and are expected to choose their own reading book. This enables pupils to pursue their own interests and demonstrate their passion for books.
- Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. They bring their writing to life by adding adjectives and adverbs. The most able writers in Year 2 are already using more complex grammatical techniques. They write clearly in well-constructed sentences and use imaginative vocabulary to express their ideas.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is equally strong. The school builds pupils' basic skills exceptionally well, and they quickly become very competent when adding, subtracting and understanding simple multiplication facts. They make excellent progress in applying their understanding of number facts to carry out calculations.
- Pupils learn rapidly across a wide range of subjects. They make excellent progress in developing their computing skills and apply these to help them learn in other subjects. Evidence of exceptionally good work was also seen in science and geography.

- All groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, those who are potentially vulnerable, are disabled or have special educational needs make excellent progress. This is because the school is committed to equality of opportunity. Pupils' progress is checked regularly and carefully. Where there is any chance of pupils slipping behind, they are offered effective support from the class teacher and the teaching assistants.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by additional government funding benefit from well-organised and effective extra support. Consequently, they make as much progress as other pupils and good progress compared to others nationally. In 2014, gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally had completely closed in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with others in the school disadvantaged pupils were ahead of their classmates in mathematics and up to one and a half terms behind in reading and writing.
- The most able pupils make excellent progress across the school. By the end of Year 2, the proportions reaching the higher Level 3 were significantly above average in 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics. The current Year 2 pupils are working at similarly high standards as in 2014. Teachers have high expectations and plan activities that ensure these pupils are consistently challenged.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in sporting activities and have a good understanding of how sport contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They look forward to the regular visits of the specialist coach and have benefited from this expertise. Pupils' interest in sport has been increased and more pupils now participate in additional activities as a result.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children start school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age.
- Children settle well into the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff plan their induction into school very well. They quickly form strong relationships with their classmates and adults. They make excellent progress so that, by the end of Reception, the proportion reaching a good level of development is above that found in most schools, including in communication and language, literacy and numeracy.
- Good use is made of the outdoor and indoor areas to help the children learn in a safe and secure environment. Children are taught to manage risk appropriately, for example using wheeled toys with consideration for their classmates.
- All staff implement the school's safeguarding policies and procedures very effectively. As a result, the children are kept very safe and secure, and are extremely well cared for.
- Children greatly enjoy being in school because classrooms are calm but productive and provide exciting places in which to learn. Consequently, children are enthusiastic learners who show curiosity and delight, and behave very well.
- Teaching activities are of a high quality. Learning opportunities both indoors and out are irresistible; there is frogspawn to observe, animals to feed, construction outdoors, model-making and writing areas to name but a few. Children make rapid strides in developing their early literacy and numeracy skills because these are seamlessly woven into imaginative play, for example when children read instructions, or use the play telephone in the themed areas.
- Staff provide a very effective balance of learning experiences. Daily literacy and numeracy lessons are followed through in high-quality small-group work, and opportunities for independent learning. This was seen, for example, by children being encouraged to write freely on an Easter theme. Children were observed writing, at length and with great enthusiasm for their work, reading back their emergent writing using the reading strategies that they have been taught.
- The teaching of reading is given high priority. For example, lessons in sounds and letters enable children to rapidly learn new sounds and recognise them in written form. Adults consistently use lively techniques to encourage children to break spoken words into their component sounds.
- Adults are very adept when joining in with play to extend children's learning. This includes helping children to apply their knowledge of letters and sounds when writing, for example during role play or when selecting activities from the themed areas.
- Carefully targeted activities make sure the most able achieve their potential. Disabled children and those with special educational needs are assessed quickly and have the support they need from an early stage, often provided directly by the school. As a result, they are nurtured very well and make similar progress to their school friends.
- Leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. Staff are highly trained and motivated, they work exceptionally well together and, as a result, children make rapid progress. Assessment of

children's progress and reporting to parents are excellent.

- The school provides excellent information for parents about how they can help their children at home and parents are very closely involved in their children's development at school. Special sessions that encourage parents to 'stay and play' or to participate in the 'take home bear' books foster strong links with parents and families.

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	108438
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	448357

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Davison
Headteacher	Julia Bayes
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2009
Telephone number	0191 285 1957
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	admin@archibald.newcastle.sch.uk

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