

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



22 October 2025

Jamie Anderson
Headteacher
The Arnewood School
Gore Road
New Milton
Hampshire
BH25 6RS

Dear Mr Anderson

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of The Arnewood School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 1 October 2025, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in March 2024.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Julia Mortimore, Ofsted Inspector (OI), and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, Bourne Education Trust's director of education, Gryphon Trust's chair of trustees and the school's chair of governors, the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also visited a range of lessons, discussed safeguarding and met with pupils, both in formal groups and in lessons and around the school, and met with a group of teaching staff. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to no longer be judged as having serious weaknesses.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since the last inspection, you and school leaders have reflected deeply on how best to ensure a positive and enriching school experience for pupils. Consequently, our visit focused mainly on the improvements that you have made to the behaviour and attitudes in the school. You, rightly, identified that work was needed to build a new and constructive school culture. This culture is founded on high academic expectations and positive behaviour and relationships. Your use of the school's values of 'ambition, success, together' has built a strong shared understanding of what the school stands for. These values now underpin many aspects of school life. Furthermore, your development of the school's culture has energised the way staff understand their roles. They now focus on individual pupils and take time to recognise their strengths and differences. As a result, pupils now feel that staff work with them, meaning pupils respond positively and respect the high expectations the school has for their behaviour and attainment. Many pupils told us that their daily school experience has been transformed by this recent work.

While you have been right to focus your attention on the most pressing aspect of school improvement, behaviour and attitudes, you recognise that pupils' attainment, in the lower school, remains too low. The improvements that you have made to classroom behaviour, and improvements to the way your curriculum is designed and used, mean that lessons are more productive. However, there is more to do in order to ensure that all pupils learn as much as they should. You and your team already have plans in place to achieve this and should ensure that these now become a priority, while maintaining and embedding the school's much-improved behaviour and attitudes.

You have made a range of changes to the way the school approaches the promotion of positive behaviour and how staff help any pupils who find behaving well more difficult. Processes and systems to tackle misbehaviour are now consistent and considered carefully. Pupils who need the most help in behaving well receive the support they need. As a result, poor behaviour is now infrequent, and the number of suspensions has reduced dramatically. You are rightly proud of this difference. Furthermore, pupils now have confidence in the way that behaviour systems are used. They consider them to be fair and effective because they have seen how much behaviour in lessons and around the school has improved. Older pupils appreciate that they can now learn without disruption, and new pupils consider this to be the norm. Moving forwards, you should continue to embed these new behaviour processes and check that they remain impactful so that they become permanent expectations as part of the school's culture.

The school has also worked to eradicate the bullying behaviour and prejudicial language that were reported by pupils at the last inspection. The incidence of both has rapidly decreased, and pupils now consider bullying and abusive language to be rare. Previously, pupils were reticent to report incidents and had low confidence in the way that concerns would be treated. Most pupils are now certain that they would report concerns, and the majority are confident that any issue would be dealt with sensitively and effectively. In a small number of cases, pupils from some minority groups consider that others have

received precedence. You should persist with your ongoing work to show pupils the impact of the changes. You should also continue to gather and respond to pupils' views and opinions. You must ensure that pupils both recognise and feel the full benefit of the cultural changes that you have enacted.

Those responsible for governance understand that the school needs to improve, although trust leaders and governors had difficulty in articulating the way that they had supported the school to improve. As a consequence, the school has been proactive in seeking wider support to help build further improvement. This includes securing additional leadership capacity for the school. It is vital this momentum continues. Leaders have successfully used this support to synthesise new structures and processes, leading to the positive changes that we saw across the school. Additionally, you have received much support and advice from a local trust to strengthen a number of leadership aspects. Moving forwards, the school should continue to strengthen the way that leaders not only plan and enact change but also check and evaluate the impact of these changes. Leaders should then consider and enact any necessary adaptation to systems or processes to ensure that they are fit for purpose. The school's action plan is appropriately detailed and focused on the tasks ahead. It will help the school to ensure that it focuses on the necessary aspects.

You should now continue to develop and embed the successful behaviour and attitudes changes while ensuring that your improvement of the school's teaching and learning is equally effective. You must ensure that these modifications are impactful and lead to pupils attaining well, as soon as possible.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO or equivalent of the Gryphon Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Ed Mather
His Majesty's Inspector