

Inspection of Arthur Mellows Village College

Helpston Road, Glinton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE6 7JX

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2025

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is John Gilligan. This school is part of The Four Cs Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mike Sandeman, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Whiles.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Arthur Mellows Village College thrive in a welcoming and vibrant school community. They benefit from a high-quality education that extends beyond the classroom. Pupils are happy, friendly and highly motivated. They take part in a wide range of activities, from sports such as football and netball to trips to the beach, Iceland, and Madrid. Many lead volunteering projects. They enjoy the Dorset coast charity walk and supporting local food bank collections. This develops their confidence and character. Pupils support each other and build strong, lasting friendships.

The school is ambitious for all its pupils. A broad curriculum, including in the sixth form, offers pupils the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects. Pupils value their learning and the support they receive from staff. Sixth-form students particularly appreciate the personalised care that starts from their first day in Year 12, and helps them achieve highly.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the site. They show high levels of respect for others and celebrate difference. Events such as culture day, student-led charity work, and assemblies sharing heritage and language reflect the school's inclusive, respectful, and vibrant community.

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

The school provides pupils with an ambitious curriculum that meets their needs well. Pupils receive high-quality guidance to help them choose from a broad range of subjects, including in the sixth form. Here, students benefit from an extensive mix of academic and vocational courses that prepare them exceptionally well for their next steps. As a result, students achieve highly and gain the qualifications they need to move on successfully. Leaders have worked hard to improve the uptake of modern foreign languages at key stage 4 as they recognise that, in the past, too few pupils chose a language at GCSE. Their efforts to build a vibrant and inclusive languages department are making a positive difference, with more pupils now choosing and achieving well in languages.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and explain new ideas clearly. In most lessons, they check pupils' understanding carefully and help them build their knowledge and skills over time. They use questions highly effectively to help pupils recall what they have learned and to think hard. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well because staff are quick to address any gaps in knowledge or misunderstandings. Staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND early so they receive highly personalised care and support. This ensures that they access the curriculum successfully and achieve well from their individual starting points.

While teaching is typically strong, in a small number of lessons teachers do not check pupils' understanding precisely enough or adapt their teaching as well as they could. This means pupils are not moved on to new learning at the most appropriate time. Occasionally, this means some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. In the sixth

form, however, teaching is consistently highly effective. Teachers know their students well and help them make excellent progress through the curriculum.

Reading is a school priority. Expert staff provide effective support to pupils at earlier stages of reading. This helps pupils quickly build the confidence and fluency they need. The school monitors this provision closely, making sure pupils get the right help at the right time. As a result, pupils are well supported to access the full curriculum.

Pupils' conduct is excellent. They are confident, polite and respectful in lessons and around the school. Classrooms are calm, focused places where pupils work hard and show pride in their learning. Clear routines help pupils know what is expected. They rise to meet these high standards. Around the school, pupils move sensibly and show care for others. Pupils with SEND are particularly well supported to manage their emotions, including through calm spaces where they can reflect and reset. This helps them flourish. Pupils are proud of their school and the positive culture they help to maintain.

The quality of school's personal development provision is exceptional. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences that help them grow in confidence and character. They feel listened to, valued, and supported. From clubs, trips, and leadership roles to charity work and community projects, pupils are encouraged to make a positive difference beyond the classroom. The school's well-planned careers programme starts early and continues through to the sixth form. Pupils receive high-quality advice and guidance that help them make ambitious and informed choices about their futures. As a result, they are exceptionally well prepared for further education, training or employment.

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils and place their well-being and success at the centre of every decision. Parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the difference it makes to pupils' lives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of lessons, teachers do not check pupils' understanding precisely enough or adapt their teaching appropriately to ensure pupils meet the full demands of the curriculum. As a result, some pupils are not fully supported to access more complex learning over time. The school should ensure that all teachers check pupils' understanding consistently well, and adapt their teaching where needed, so that all pupils are fully supported to meet the demands of the curriculum.

How can I feed back 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	136266
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10345296
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,657
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	345
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Whiles
CEO of the trust	Mike Sandeman
Headteacher	John Gilligan
Website	www.arthurmellows.org
Date of previous inspection	3 and 4 December 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In September 2023 a new headteacher (head of college) was appointed.
- Since the previous inspection in 2014 there have been significant changes to the senior leadership team.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses two registered and two unregistered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, business studies, modern foreign languages, geography and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects.
- Inspectors met with trust staff, including the CEO of the trust. They also met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and senior staff, including those with responsibility for safeguarding of pupils.
- The lead inspector met with trustees and governors, including the chair of trustees and the chair of governors.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents relating to school improvement and governance, behaviour and attendance, alternative provision, enrichment, careers and SEND. They also held meetings with staff with responsibilities in these areas.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also spoke to groups of pupils and took into consideration the online staff surveys.

Inspection team

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