

Hilton Primary Academy

Hilton Avenue, Blakelaw, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE5 3RN

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The principal and her team are committed to meeting the needs of pupils and families. They have established a school that lies at the heart of the community. Their actions help pupils to make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- All staff show a commitment to providing the highest standards of care and support. They know their pupils exceptionally well, enabling them to match teaching and additional support to pupils' needs effectively.
- Senior leaders acted decisively to address a dip in outcomes in 2016. They invited external scrutiny and boldly addressed weaker teaching. Their actions led to significant improvement in 2017, with current pupils now making outstanding progress.
- Senior leaders work closely with senior colleagues from the Northern Education Trust to check standards, develop leadership and support ongoing improvement.
- Teachers help pupils to develop strong and purposeful attitudes to learning through their creative planning and exciting teaching.
- Senior leaders work closely with the entire teaching team to develop a stimulating curriculum. Core learning is complemented by experiences, trips and visits that make learning meaningful and enjoyable.
- Governors are passionate in their commitment to the school's community ethos. They provide effective support and closely check key aspects of performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are extremely effective. The actions of leaders and teachers significantly enhance the well-being of children and families.
- High-quality provision in the early years, including the innovative provision for two-year-old children, enables children to make outstanding progress in their learning and development.
- Through assemblies, the wider curriculum and extensive charitable activities, the school promotes pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in distinctive ways.
- Although pupils are making outstanding progress, in some year groups the proportions of pupils working at greater depths of understanding remain below that seen nationally.
- Leaders work alongside the family support worker and attendance officer to address many of the barriers to learning that children and families face. Although their actions are beginning to influence improvements in attendance, overall absence remains too high.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen the quality of teaching by:
 - further embedding opportunities for pupils to work at greater depths of understanding across all year groups.
- Further improve pupils' attendance by:
 - intensifying the work of leaders and the attendance team to build stronger links with harder to reach families.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The principal and her team have established a culture of high expectations for pupils and staff. She has worked continuously with her team to improve the quality of teaching and to develop a curriculum that is exciting and meaningful. As a result, pupils make excellent progress and develop into inquisitive and articulate learners.
- Leaders at all levels maintain a constant focus upon standards and swiftly modify teaching and support to address underachievement. Leaders' monitor pupils' progress at weekly review meetings, focusing upon specific areas for improvement. This enables teachers to modify teaching and plan support to ensure that pupils can make strong progress.
- Leaders have shown considerable vision to meet the needs of their community. They had the foresight to establish two-year-old provision to overcome barriers to learning at the earliest opportunity. They share curriculum plans with community groups so that their activities can complement those taking place in school.
- School leaders have responded purposefully to new 'non-negotiable' systems, introduced by the new chief executive of Northern Education Trust. Leaders follow a rigorous assessment calendar, involving standardised assessments that give an ongoing picture of current progress. Leaders and teachers are clearly accountable to governors and the trust for pupils' progress. The principal reports to the governing body regularly and accounts for ongoing progress at frequent meetings with fellow trust principals and leaders.
- As a result of thorough monitoring and rigorous accountability systems, leaders, governors and trust leaders have a clear picture of school strengths and areas for improvement. They carry out additional reviews of standards with colleagues attached to the trust, to provide further scrutiny of standards.
- The principal recognises that standards slipped after she was redeployed to provide support at another school in 2015. Since her return, she has worked to address weaker teaching, recruit new staff and re-establish high expectations. As a result, outcomes rose significantly in 2017 and a temporary spike in exclusions was eradicated. Current pupils are making outstanding progress, with evidence of strong progress across a range of year groups.
- Leaders have developed a culture of continuous professional development that creates a dynamic learning environment. Teachers have extensive opportunities to develop their expertise and plan initiatives. They are encouraged to innovate new practices and establish small-scale trials to assess effect. They then roll these out across the school and, in some cases, across the trust. Senior leaders and middle leaders have made significant contributions to the development of literacy and numeracy practices across the trust.
- Leaders have established an innovative and stimulating curriculum. They have developed a literacy-led curriculum that places the deep study of texts at the heart of the curriculum. Teachers plan a range of curriculum links to make texts meaningful and relevant, such as their studies of art, human geography and life in different cultures

and time periods. In some cases, subject-specific skills in aspects of science are not as fully developed. Leaders are currently engaged in a curriculum review to further strengthen the wider curriculum.

- The actions of teachers to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are exemplary. Pupils develop insights into a range of equality issues and study texts that thoughtfully explore the right to be different. Pupils develop a strong sense of social responsibility through their extensive community involvement. The school's own war memorial has become the community war memorial and hosts its own remembrance ceremony. In the wake of the Manchester bombings, pupils participated in a number of 'random acts of kindness' to raise money for those affected. Their actions ultimately resulted in commissioning a bus for pupils and staff to visit a school in Manchester attended by one of the victims.
- Senior leaders have developed rigorous performance management arrangements that are used effectively to support individual teacher and whole-school improvement. Governors and trust leaders review teacher performance thoroughly. Systems to account for the additional use of funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium, and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, are thorough.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has a thorough understanding of the needs of pupils and puts considered support in place. She provided clear evidence of how this support has improved pupils' progress and their wider engagement with school life. Leaders utilise the additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities well.
- Funding from the government to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used successfully. The school has appointed a full-time sports and activities leader who leads participation in a range of competitions and provides regular access to sporting activities at lunchtime and at the end of the school day.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. The governing body has a deep understanding of the school and its central importance in the community. They have expertise in areas such as behaviour support and pupil welfare that enables them to check the effectiveness of the support provided by school leaders.
- Governors share the headteacher's high standards and expectations. They support the headteacher in actions to improve the quality of teaching and ensure that performance management processes are used to support school improvement.
- Governors hold leaders to account for the use of the pupil premium. They track the impact of support and school improvement strategies at half-termly meetings.
- New monitoring systems introduced by the trust have intensified systems of accountability. The principal provides regular reports on progress towards objectives. She invites additional scrutiny from other leaders to gain objective insights into school performance. The trust is closely involved in tracking progress and measuring the ongoing effect of improvement strategies.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders carry out extremely rigorous checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on-site. They ensure that staff and governors receive up-to-date training on a range of safeguarding issues. Staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of safeguarding policies and practices.
- Leaders and teachers, at all levels, show a continual vigilance for pupil welfare. The actions they take have a significantly positive effect upon the well-being of children and families. The support they provide for the most vulnerable pupils is exceptional.
- Through the work of the school attendance officer and the family support worker, the school actively reaches out to the local community to provide care and support for pupils and families. In many cases, the school acts as a crucial link between families and other support services.
- Children feel safe in school and value the support of teachers and other adults. Leaders provide a thorough programme of activities to make children aware of the potential hazards they can face and the actions they can take to keep themselves safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers demonstrate convincing subject knowledge that they use to deepen pupils' understanding. They plan lessons that regularly capture pupils' interests and imagination and encourage pupils to discuss and explore their learning.
- Teachers plan lessons and learning experiences thoughtfully. They consider the additional experiences that will enable pupils to understand a novel or topic. They then plan visits to places such as capital cities, art galleries and historical sites, to make learning relevant. This work enables pupils to relate to topics and themes and aids the development of their vocabulary as the meaning of words and ideas is rooted in specific contexts.
- Pupils are regularly encouraged to apply their ideas and learn from their mistakes. Throughout the school, pupils are expected to discuss solutions to problems with their partners. In mathematics, teachers regularly provide pupils with deeper challenges and expect them, as a matter of course, to 'prove it' and demonstrate their understanding.
- Teachers use questioning and regular assessment to gauge pupils' progress and to modify their support to help pupils to engage successfully in their learning. Teachers provide leaders with weekly updates on pupils' progress in their learning that is then used to inform teaching and support. Through regular moderation, teachers have developed an accurate view of standards.
- Teachers manage learning well. Relationships are strong, and pupils are quick to settle to their learning. Pupils are keen to learn because of clear classroom routines and highly effective teaching. Time is used well, and teachers manage transitions between initial discussion and group work effectively.
- Teachers are aware of areas for improvement. They have introduced new approaches to reading that have accelerated pupils' progress. In both key stages 1 and 2, pupils read to inspectors with clarity and understanding. In books, pupils are regularly encouraged to analyse literary and non-literary texts in depth, assessing the effect of

words and phrases on meaning.

- Teachers encourage pupils to write with accuracy and purpose for a variety of audiences and purposes. Pupils demonstrated competence in writing for a range of genres and purposes, from biographical studies of writers and artists to persuasive writing for local universities. They regularly apply vocabulary and sentence construction in accomplished ways.
- Teachers give pupils exciting opportunities to explore themes through the literacy-led curriculum. This makes literary texts more vibrant and relevant. Pupils showed a strong insight into aspects of social geography, history and art. On occasions, they do not develop discrete knowledge and skills in science to the same depth as in English and mathematics.
- The provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is extremely strong. The SENCo knows the needs of her pupils extremely well and works with teachers and teaching assistants to customise support that aids strong progress for these pupils.
- Planning and teaching in the early years are extremely effective and are matched closely to children's interests and abilities. Children are happy, engaged and curious through the many stimulating opportunities to learn.
- Teachers work effectively with teaching assistants to plan and provide well-targeted support that contributes towards the outstanding progress that pupils make. Teaching assistants have strong and supportive relationships with children and show good subject knowledge, particularly in the teaching of phonics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Teachers have established a culture that is founded on mutual support and respect. Pupils are articulate and self-confident, as they are encouraged to participate and know that their contributions will be valued.
- Pupils show high levels of respect towards pupils and adults and treat everyone equally. Leaders have done much to raise pupils' awareness of equalities through carefully chosen books and topics and a thoughtful personal and social education programme. Their actions in this area have been rightly recognised in the award of a Rainbow Award for their work to promote equalities.
- Pupils are given a range of responsibilities and develop their self-confidence through a diverse range of activities and interactions with different groups. They develop resilience and self-confidence through regular trips and residential experiences.
- Pupils feel bullying is extremely rare and are confident that adults would address any unacceptable behaviour.
- Leaders are extremely aware of the need to develop healthy lifestyles. They are determined to tackle issues such as childhood obesity through regular exercise, including the daily mile. A full-time sports and activities leader organises regular activities at lunchtimes and after school.

- Leaders work with pupils to develop an awareness of personal safety. In books and in discussion, pupils showed an awareness of the actions they could take to stay safe on the roads and on the railways. Pupils show a consistent pride in their school. One child said, 'The school feels like home', while another said, 'If I could pick my own school, I would pick here.'
- All the parents talked to valued the work of the school and the contribution it made towards their child's progress and welfare. A number of parents gave reference to the support provided for their children who have SEN and/or disabilities. One parent captured this appreciation by asserting, 'I would fight for them to come here.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Teachers set high expectations and encourage positive behaviours and routines from the early years onwards. Pupils work very well together and regularly discuss their thoughts in pairs to develop ideas and check their reasoning.
- Pupils are proud of their school and their community. Displays around the school reflect their wide range of accomplishments and their regular contributions to a range of charities.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and work with enthusiasm and purpose. Incidents of low-level disruption are rare. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely with pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning. The rare instances of misbehaviour are addressed effectively.
- In 2016, the school experienced an increase in fixed-term exclusions. Leaders reflected upon this and introduced changes to the curriculum and provided additional support through the Pathway's curriculum. As a result, fixed-term exclusions have fallen dramatically and pupils with previous behaviour issues are engaging more productively with school life and making better progress.
- Leaders have worked strenuously to improve rates of attendance. In regular meetings with teachers, the attendance officer and the family support worker, attendance is monitored closely. Through a mixture of support, challenge and rewards, there are signs that overall attendance is showing improvement. Of the 52 children to receive an attendance contract this year, 29 have improved. In addition, the proportion of pupils achieving 100% has increased. Between 2015 and 2017, absence fell. Despite these improvements, attendance remains below that seen nationally and has not improved rapidly enough.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Through a thorough review of work in books across all year groups, and in studying school pupil progress information, current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making outstanding progress from their starting points. The proportions of pupils achieving expected standards have shown a significant increase to levels above those seen nationally, while increasing proportions of pupils are working at greater depths of understanding.
- Children are making increasingly good progress in the early years and this is improving

their readiness for key stage 1. Outcomes were recently moderated and, in 2018, 63% of pupils are anticipated to reach a good level of development. The success of the two-year-old provision has helped to accelerate children's progress in the early years.

- Outcomes are improving at key stage 1. In 2018, over 80% of pupils are on course to meet the required standard in the phonics screening check. Current pupils are making outstanding progress, with increasing proportions on course to exceed expected standards and to reach a greater depth of understanding. However, there is still variance in the proportions achieving higher standards in some year groups.
- Following a dip in outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2016, outcomes showed a significant improvement in 2017, with the proportion of pupils achieving expected standards rising from well-below to in line with those seen nationally. Current pupils are achieving even stronger levels of attainment, and this represents outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have acted decisively to improve outcomes in reading. Pupils who failed to achieve the required standard in the 2017 phonics screening check showed strong progress when reading to inspectors. All are expected to reach the required standard this year. In addition, pupils in Year 5 read with fluency, understanding and expression. In their books, pupils across a number of year groups demonstrated highly perceptive reading skills in their analysis of texts, explaining the effect of words and phrases on meaning.
- The quality of writing is strong across the school. Pupils show confidence in their use of vocabulary and ability to use a range of sentence structures for effect. Handwriting is neat, and pupils take a demonstrable pride in their work.
- Pupils are making strong progress in mathematics as they develop a secure knowledge of key operations and have regular opportunities to apply their reasoning and problem-solving skills. In lessons and in their books, pupils show a confident grasp of number and the ability to apply their mathematical understanding effectively. The school is leading on developments in mathematics across the trust due to its success in this area.
- Pupils make good progress in history, geography and art by exploring these subjects in meaningful contexts. On occasions, the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils acquire in science are not as well developed as those acquired in English and mathematics.
- In reviewing the effect of support plans and progress in books and folders, there is much evidence that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress through improving teaching and well-tailored support.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years leader provides incisive leadership that supports children in making outstanding progress from their starting points. Teachers and teaching assistants have a thorough understanding of children's needs and plan activities that support their personal development and their progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Leaders demonstrated considerable vision in establishing two-year-old provision. The provision has grown in a short period of time and there is now a waiting list to join. As

a result, children are more equipped for early years and for Year 1. Children who have attended the two-year-old provision are making better progress than their peers and are showing better attendance as they are used to school routines and expectations. This initiative is removing barriers to learning and progress at an earlier stage.

- Children continue to arrive at the early years with skills and abilities that are well below those seen nationally. Because of thorough planning and support to meet their needs, children make excellent progress.
- Leaders assess children regularly and discuss their progress as a team. They are continually adapting learning activities to match children's need and interests. In a recent local authority visit to moderate standards, teachers and teaching assistants were shown to have an accurate view of standards.
- Teachers and teaching assistants develop children's enthusiasm for reading from an early stage. Pupils quickly learn the links between letters and sounds and explore this in their reading and writing. They are keen to practise their counting skills, comfortably counting to 20.
- Children across the early years are happy and confident in their play and learning. They confidently move around the provision, whether building bridges, pretending to be characters or tending plants in the polytunnel. They learn to manage risks thoughtfully from an early age.
- The high standards of planning and strong systems to check progress and quality that characterise much of the schools' work are equally as apparent in the early years.
- Teachers provide a highly stimulating environment where children are inquisitive, curious and show excellent levels of concentration. They develop a love of books at an early age and teachers and teaching assistants do much to develop their love of reading.
- Safeguarding practices in the early years are highly effective. The robust safeguarding culture that characterises the school's work is similarly evident in the early years. There are no material breaches of statutory welfare requirements as the children are safe and well supported.

School details

Unique reference number	138995
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10042408

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mick Dunn
Principal	Shirley Davison
Telephone number	0191 2869297
Website	www.hiltonacademy.org
Email address	admin@hiltonacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	June 2014

Information about this school

- Hilton Primary Academy is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is in line with that seen nationally and has increased over time.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average and has increased in recent years.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well-above average and includes nearly two thirds of pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well-above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

- In February 2015, the school was designated a national support school by the Department for Education, and has provided leadership support to other schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons taught by teachers and teaching assistants. They observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes. Inspectors also visited the two-year-old provision situated at the nearby Blakelaw Centre.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, attendance officers and a wider group of teachers and teaching assistants. Inspectors also met members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors met senior representatives of the Northern Education Trust, including the chief executive officer and the director of standards and governance.
- Inspectors met a group of pupils on day one and talked to pupils about their learning and experiences at the school in lessons and at breaktimes. They also listened to pupils read in different year groups.
- Inspectors talked to parents as they dropped their children off at school on day two of the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out an extensive review of pupils' books and folders.
- Inspectors looked at the academy's development plans, information on pupils' progress and arrangements for managing pay and performance. They also considered arrangements for safeguarding and attendance and behaviour policies and records.
- Although no formal questionnaires were issued as part of this inspection, inspectors did talk to a wide variety of parents, pupils and staff to gather their views on many aspects of the school's work.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gillian Nimer	Ofsted Inspector
Jim Hannah	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Vernon	Ofsted Inspector

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