

Hillyfield Primary Academy

Higham Hill Road, London E17 6ED

Inspection dates

11–12 December 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and headteacher have led significant improvements in the school. They are well supported by members of the senior leadership team.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic, passionate about their pupils and demonstrate good capacity to drive further improvements.
- The school's current information on pupils' progress shows a picture of improving outcomes.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum but leaders know it requires further refinement.
- Leaders make good use of additional funding to ensure that vulnerable pupils do well.
- The governing body does a good job.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils are looked after very well. They feel secure at school and cared for by staff.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite, courteous, act considerately and are positive about their learning.
- The early years provision gives children a good start to their education. Staff plan and deliver activities which engage children's interests. This leads to them making good progress.
- Provision for pupils in the special needs unit is outstanding because of the strength in leadership in meeting the needs of all pupils.
- The school has put in place effective actions to improve attendance. Current information shows attendance to be above the national average.
- Parents and carers are mainly supportive of the school. They know their children are safe and enjoy school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve consistency in the quality of teaching by building on the strengths in evidence in other parts of the school.
- Continue to enhance the curriculum so that pupils are inspired to achieve highly across the full range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the appointment of the executive headteacher and headteacher, significant improvements have been made. There is clear direction for the school's future improvement. This is a result of strong and effective leadership, especially from the senior leadership team.
- High expectations of what pupils can achieve have been established. These expectations are based upon the school's vision: 'Brilliance in every child; Excellence every day'.
- Leaders, at all levels, take actions which are based on a secure analysis of their pupils' needs. They review and analyse all aspects of the school's performance regularly to ensure that everything they do has a positive impact.
- Leaders rightly prioritise specific areas for improvement in their plans. This focuses particularly on the quality of teaching and learning, behaviour and the curriculum. Leaders recognise that expectations need to be raised and that inconsistencies in the quality of teaching need to be addressed.
- Reading has a high priority and a range of strategies have been introduced to encourage reading. As a result, reading skills are taught more explicitly and pupils enjoy their reading. A culture of reading has been established, resulting in improving standards.
- Leaders have high expectations of themselves and others. They are reflective and seek to continuously improve. Leaders set challenging targets which focus on improving pupils' progress. They pinpoint priorities for the school based on an accurate self-evaluation. Leaders form effective action plans, which support key areas for development. They monitor these plans rigorously.
- Leaders make sure that staff receive high-quality training to develop their skills. Teachers attend regular staff training sessions. Leaders ensure that performance management targets are specific and focus on pupils' learning. Leaders encourage other teachers to shadow them in their roles, for example in science.
- Leaders review the curriculum constantly to ensure that it is meeting the needs of all pupils. Audits of arts and sports curriculum areas have been conducted so that improvements can be made. A wide variety of enrichment activities enhances pupils' learning. The curriculum team is reviewing current provision and is piloting different strategies, for example a mathematics project in Year 4. Leaders recognise that refinements need to be made, including ensuring that there is a clear rationale for what is planned. This will better enable the school to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Leaders also appreciate that the foundation subjects need to be reviewed to ensure a broad, balanced and inspirational curriculum.
- Leaders have a good understanding of those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are robust systems in place to both identify and support pupils. This enables teachers to focus on pupils' individual needs. Good liaison with a full range of external agencies provides further support. Pupils with SEND make

good progress because of effective teaching and support.

- The provision for pupils who attend the specialist resource centre is outstanding. The unit leader has an excellent understanding of pupils' needs and provides well-structured programmes to meet them. Teachers promote language skills, concentration and emotional support. There is clear evidence of impact, for example in the ability of pupils to work independently. Pupils learn well in their unit and apply what they have learned in their mainstream class.
- Leaders analyse and review the use of pupil premium funding to make sure that it is making a difference to the pupils it is meant to support. Most of this funding enhances the provision of quality-first teaching. Disadvantaged pupils receive personalised support in and outside of lessons, and can attend after-school clubs. This is leading to improved progress and attendance for these pupils.
- Leaders also ensure that the sport premium funding is used effectively. Specialist coaches work alongside teachers to develop and support them in delivering high-quality physical education lessons. The school participates in many competitive sports with increasing numbers of pupils participating.
- Parents are mainly supportive of the school. Many spoke enthusiastically about the choice of free clubs and how their children were keen to come to school and enjoyed learning.

Governance of the school

- Governors are effective in their role. They have played a crucial strategic role in the improvement of the school in the past year. They have an in-depth understanding of the needs of the pupils, and what is needed to improve the school further. They provide great support to school leaders. Individual governors each have a responsibility for a specific part of the school. Their visits to the school are planned well, for example a monitoring visit focusing on the teaching of science. This enables governors to deepen their understanding so that they are better informed to hold leaders to account.
- Governors check on all aspects of the school's performance and are analytical in the questions they ask school leaders. Governors monitor finances closely and evaluate their impact. Governors have willingly undertaken training so that they are well informed about school performance measures and current safeguarding practice.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is an appropriate safeguarding policy which incorporates current government guidelines.
- Leaders and staff ensure that pupils' safety and welfare are given the highest priority. They promptly identify vulnerable pupils and ensure that a 'team around the family' supports the needs of the pupil. Senior leaders, including the designated safeguarding lead, are fully aware of local risks that could pose a threat to the safety of pupils.
- Leaders are knowledgeable about the specific needs of the community. They ensure that staff have regular training to enable them to spot any pupils at risk of potential harm. This includes a project with the local council about combating gang culture. All

concerns are reported to the appropriate authorities.

- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They learn about road safety and not talking to strangers. They know how to be safe, including on the internet, because they learn about cyber bullying in computing lessons and assemblies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Where teaching is strong, lessons are well planned, teachers have high expectations and they challenge pupils through their directed questioning. This promotes deeper understanding. Teachers provide reasoning activities and make connections with other areas of the curriculum. They provide accurate feedback which helps pupils make progress. Where teaching is less effective, not all pupils are appropriately challenged and not able to apply what they have learned.
- In Year 6, pupils develop their understanding of fractions and decimals well. They solve problems using a range of problem-solving strategies. Pupils are challenged to explain their reasoning. Teacher questioning consistently challenges them to think in greater depth.
- In Year 5, pupils have to justify why some events in 'Macbeth' are significant. Each pupil is expected to contribute. Their responses are detailed and evidence based. They consistently use the strategy of 'point, example and explain' when answering questions from the text. Teacher questioning promotes deeper understanding. The lesson is well structured and all pupils are challenged to answer. When writing, there is strong emphasis placed upon key features of grammar. Pupils are reminded of the standards expected of them.
- In Year 4, pupils edit and redraft a persuasive text related to their reading. Expectations are high and pupils use feedback from their teacher to improve their writing. Evidence from books seen shows that they have thought about their improvements and make good progress in their writing. In mathematics, pupils successfully solve a sequence of challenging perimeter problems. They are used to 'prove it' and 'convince me' when justifying their answers. Those that require help are supported by the teacher, which enables them to answer more challenging questions.
- In Year 3, all pupils are engaged in plotting a narrative. There is a clear structure to the teaching of writing. The teacher expects pupils to be 'ambitious' in their writing. To use 'power words' well. Pupils draft their writing without the use of dictionaries, which are available to them. Consequently, many words are spelt inaccurately. Assessment from previous lessons is used well to support learning. Pupils know how to use the 'feedback slips' because 'they help us to know what to write' and 'it's for our challenges'.
- In Year 2, pupils learn about fractions. Teacher explanation attempts to clarify how to identify different quarters of a shape. Pupils respond positively to teacher questions, but their understanding is limited because they have not had the opportunity of using practical apparatus. Consequently, their learning is restricted.
- Phonics is taught consistently well. Mispronunciations are addressed promptly. Incorrect spellings are quickly identified when pupils are writing on their whiteboards. They are challenged when asked to think of a word and write it in a complete sentence. Reinforcement of basic skills is evident as teachers remind pupils to use capital letters

and full stops. Pupils are confident with their sounds.

- Specialist teachers for dance, art, music, computing and sports enhance experiences for pupils and provide consistently good teaching. For example, in art, Year 3 pupils develop their skills when they blend water colours. They evaluate the techniques in the work of Turner, using appropriate technical vocabulary in their comments. Similarly, in a music lesson, pupils practise playing a song and use technical vocabulary when reading music. They know that a semi-breve is four beats and a minim two. In dance, pupils talk about how this has increased their 'body confidence'.
- There is a clear approach to writing throughout the school. Pupils complete a 'cold task' and given the 'next steps'. Following engagement in a number of activities, a 'hot task' is completed, which demonstrates progress made during the lesson. Pupils write well in a range of genres.
- Additional adults are deployed effectively throughout the school. They support pupils well, either in small groups or an individual basis.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They take a pride in their work and are reflective. They can explain the school's values and how they use them to be more resilient 'in the face of hard times'. This helps them when they find learning difficult.
- Pupils speak positively about the range of subjects taught and say that teachers make learning fun: 'When we did Macbeth, we got to act it out.'
- Pupils are motivated learners and they want to do well. They said that they enjoy a range of clubs, both after school and at lunchtime. They like the links to different subjects in the curriculum and the educational visits they are offered. They love the opportunities to perform in front of their families.
- Pupils enjoy responsibilities given to them throughout the school. They understand that they are contributing to the life of the whole school, for example as advocates at breaktime and lunchtime.
- The school's values and curriculum support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Pupils have a good understanding of other religions and faiths through religious education lessons and visits to different places of worship. Pupils have a good sense of social responsibility. For example, they are involved in charity work and talk sensibly about why they should help those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are particularly articulate when discussing the rights of women and 'black civil rights'. They learn about plastic pollution and how this damages the environment. Assemblies and personal, social and health education help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and reinforce fundamental British values.
- They know that teachers care for their well-being and will help if they have any problems.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They understand the expectations of them. They respond promptly to teacher instructions. They play well with one another during breaktimes. They enjoy a good range of activities that are there for them. They report that bullying is rare and, when it does happen, it is dealt with appropriately. They said that behaviour has improved in the school.
- Pupils are happy and polite. They are respectful of each other. Pupils listen well and get on with their work.
- The school has put in place strong and effective systems for checking attendance. Attendance figures for the previous school year were in line with national averages. Current attendance figures are above the national averages. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils in all key stages are working at least at age-related expectations. Many are working above, especially in mathematics.
- In the national assessments in 2018, outcomes at the end of each key stage and in the phonics screening check were at least in line with national averages. At the end of key stage 2, progress in mathematics was significantly above average. Most-able mathematicians achieved highly at greater depth.
- Effective use of moderation ensures the accuracy of assessments. This shows that, apart from one group, there are no significant gaps in performance. Decisive action to change the culture of underachievement for Black Caribbean pupils has been taken. It is too soon to evaluate the impact.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make strong progress in their writing. As pupils progress through the school, their writing demonstrates a growing sophistication, for example in their use of word choices.
- Evidence from a scrutiny of work across the curriculum shows that there are inconsistencies in some year groups and in some subjects. This is because in some subjects, for example history, there is too much repetition, which restricts progress.
- Pupils of all abilities read regularly and fluently. They demonstrate a range of skills in reading unfamiliar words. The school's promotion of reading ensures that pupils read widely and are appropriately challenged. Current assessment information shows that there is an increase in the proportion of pupils in key stage 1 at the expected standard and in key stage 2 at the higher standard.

Early years provision

Good

- Strong leadership in the early years has resulted in improved provision and outcomes. In 2018, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was above the national average. Leaders have a good understanding of the main strengths and areas to develop. Safeguarding is effective.
- Staff assess children's progress accurately through observations and discussions about their work. A new assessment system has been introduced which is enabling

assessment information to be used more consistently. This is helping teachers to more promptly address underachievement.

- From below average starting points, evidence from children's learning journals demonstrate that children make good progress in all areas of learning. This is because teaching is good. Most children, including disadvantaged children, achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception and are ready for key stage 1.
- Specialist teachers provide additional support for the curriculum. This provides children with opportunities to further develop their skills in physical education, music, art and computing.
- Staff plan well for the range of children's needs and abilities. They have established positive relationships with all children. They have good subject knowledge. Routines are clearly established. They provide clear explanations for activities to ensure that children make progress. For example, when children are trying to count backwards, very clear explanations ensure that they understand how numbers move backwards and forwards.
- Both the indoor and outside areas in the early years are well resourced and provide a rich learning environment. This helps children to learn in a variety of ways and to develop their independence.
- Staff use effective questioning to promote children's learning. For example, they ask questions about children's drawings and provide feedback which helps them to reflect and improve their work.
- Children's language skills are consolidated in phonics sessions, in which children successfully sound out simple words. Linked to their work in art, children are asked to sound out the name of the artist Kandinsky. They use their prior learning to accurately pronounce the name.
- Children behave well. They demonstrate independence and confidence. They listen well and play cooperatively with each other in all activities.
- Leaders plan good opportunities for high-quality professional development to ensure that practice is consistent across all settings. This is helping to improve the quality of teaching.
- Parents enjoy planned opportunities to work with their children. For example, the 'stay and play' sessions are much enjoyed as it provides parents with opportunities to find out what their children are learning in school.

School details

Unique reference number	136413
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10056717

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,266
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Rebecca Lyons
Executive headteacher	David Worrall
Headteacher	Pauline Casbolt
Telephone number	0208 527 7934
Website	www.hillyfieldacademy.com/
Email address	office@hillyfieldacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Hillyfield Primary Academy was last inspected as an academy by Ofsted in October 2014. It was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is based on two sites, each with pupils from the early years to Year 6.
- The executive headteacher was appointed at the beginning of 2018.
- The governing body has recently been restructured.
- Hillyfield Primary Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has a learning centre, with specific provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic group is higher than the national

average.

- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is significantly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in parts of 76 lessons. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors to the majority of these lesson visits.
- The inspection team looked at work in pupils' books and listened to key stage 1 and 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff and two members of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the recent survey given to all parents. Inspectors also talked with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the day. A telephone conversation was held with a parent who had contacted the offices of Ofsted.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents provided by the school, including planning and monitoring documentation, records related to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Rick Barnes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Matthews	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Knowles	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Titus	Ofsted Inspector

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