

# Inspection of Hillside Primary School

Belstead Avenue, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 8NU

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Inspection dates: 1–2 October 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy a wide range of school clubs that are both fun and interesting. These include sports teams, a reading club, an eco-club and a choir. They have many opportunities to learn about the arts. Pupils also enjoy visitors coming into school to speak to them, for example The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the local vicar and the police.

The school also encourages parents and carers to come into school to support their children. During the inspection, they came to watch the children practise their phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). The school holds campfire and 'crafty cafe' events for adults and children. This is to help pupils to improve their reading skills.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. Staff also teach them how to stay safe out of school. The younger pupils learn how to cross the road safely. Older pupils play computer games that teach them to keep passwords safe on the internet.

Pupils say they enjoy lessons and that behaviour in classrooms can be good. We saw how they are quick to respond to their teachers in some classes. Occasionally, we saw some pupils finish work and sit idle in lessons because the work was too easy. In the same lessons, others lost interest because the task was too hard for them.

Pupils told us that behaviour is better in the classroom than outside. They told us that disagreements can lead to disputes and fights at playtimes and lunchtimes. They say that bullying happens but that teachers usually stop it. Pupils' attendance is not as good as it should be.

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

Pupils are not achieving well enough in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders and governors know this. They want pupils to do better but their actions have had limited success. Improvement planning is not effective because leaders are not clear about what works and what they need to do next.

The teaching of reading needs to improve in key stage 1. In some classes, teachers set reading work which is too easy, so pupils become bored and do not pay attention. Support staff are helping pupils to catch up in phonics but this is not enough to help pupils make quick improvements in their reading fluency. The teaching of reading is better in key stage 2. Pupils behave well and respond to the teacher because they find the work interesting. By Year 6, most pupils told us that they enjoy reading.

There are rapid improvements in older pupils' writing skills, spelling and handwriting. This is because opportunities for teaching writing are well planned. There is a consistent approach to teaching writing, and the needs of pupils are well met.

Younger pupils' writing skills are not improving as fast. They do not have sufficient opportunities to write without support.

Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics. There is too much incomplete work in books, and pupils have too many gaps in their knowledge. Leaders have identified this problem but it is too early to see any impact of their actions on pupils' learning.

Teaching in science and religious education (RE) does not help all pupils to develop good subject knowledge. Inspectors visited RE lessons where pupils were making presents for a baby. Pupils did not understand that the presents they were making were for the baptism of a baby. They had no knowledge of baptisms that they could share with inspectors. Teachers do not always give accurate explanations of scientific ideas in lessons. This stops pupils developing sound scientific knowledge and causes misunderstandings.

Leadership for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Leaders understand the difficulties the pupils face. They ensure that training helps teachers to meet the needs of pupils with SEND in their classes. Staff provide extra support for pupils with SEND to help them achieve their best in everything.

Children are well looked after in the early years. There is suitable support for Reception children with specific speech and language needs. There is a variety of activities in Nursery to encourage reading and writing. In phonics, children move from activity to activity without any off-task behaviour.

Leaders in school and in the trust do not provide an ambitious curriculum for the pupils in all areas. They know that there is still more to do. All leaders have an awareness of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Almost all staff feel that the school is well led and are proud to work there.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all necessary checks are complete before new staff work at the school. There is a clear and accurate record of this information on the school's single central record. Staff receive regular training about safeguarding. They can spot signs of abuse and know how to report their concerns. The designated safeguarding lead is quick to follow up any referrals. The school keeps detailed records of safeguarding concerns. These show the close work between leaders and other agencies to support pupils. Leaders are tenacious about keeping children safe.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Improvement planning needs to be more sharply focused. Planned actions should have regular review points so that there can be a clear evaluation of their impact. This will allow leaders to identify what went well and what they need to do next to improve the quality of education.
- In early reading and mathematics, learning is inconsistent. Inspectors saw pupils become disengaged as the work is sometimes too easy or too challenging. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that learning is carefully sequenced. Leaders' monitoring should identify the training and support needed to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics.
- Inaccuracies in the teaching of science in some classes are causing pupils to misunderstand some things. These misunderstandings could impede future learning. Teachers need to develop a stronger understanding of the science topics they teach. Leaders need to help all teachers improve their scientific knowledge through subject-specific training.
- Leaders must ensure that teaching in RE develops pupils' knowledge in a coherent way. This will help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and have a better understanding of religious ideas and beliefs.
- Pupils' attendance is lower than the national average. While staff follow up when pupils are absent, there is not a whole-school culture of good attendance. Leaders in the school and in the trust must explore new ways of engaging with families. This is so that more pupils attend regularly and do not miss out on learning.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six

years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140887
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110208
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	583
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Robert Dool
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lee Abbott
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hillsidecp.net">www.hillsidecp.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7–8 June 2017

## Information about this school

- Hillside Primary School is part of The Active Learning Trust, which is a multi-academy trust.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils joining or leaving the school mid-year are higher than the national averages.
- The school is in the process of electing a new chair of the local governing body.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, leaders, staff and three representatives from the governing body. We also met with one representative from the academy trust and had a telephone conversation with another.
- We visited lessons to look at work and spoke to pupils about what it is like to be a pupil at this school. Almost every class in the school was visited at least once.
- The inspection focused on the teaching of reading, writing, mathematics, science

and RE.

- We spoke to pupils and staff about how the school keeps pupils safe. Safeguarding records and documentation in the school were considered, along with the single central record.
- We observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- We spoke to parents at the start of the school day. The pupil and staff surveys were taken into account. We received eight free-text responses from parents to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

### **Inspection team**

James Adkins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
James Richards	Ofsted Inspector
Brenda Watson	Ofsted Inspector
Rob James	Ofsted Inspector

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