

Inspection of a good school: Hill View Junior Academy

Queen Alexandra Road, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR2 9HE

Inspection dates:

10–11 March 2020

Outcome

Hill View Junior Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Hill View Junior Academy are proud to belong to this happy and inclusive school. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are very positive.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have thoroughly considered what pupils should learn in each subject, term by term. Leaders have created a well-structured and imaginative curriculum. Pupils have positive attitude towards their learning because teachers make lessons interesting and relevant.

Leaders and staff encourage all pupils to do their best and to behave well. Pupils are mature and cooperate well with one another. Pupils are hardworking. They rarely give up when faced with a challenge. Pupils are very proud of their achievements, including gaining the Gold Arts Mark.

Pupils are polite, caring and considerate. Pupils say that they have many friends. The 'anti-bullying crew' takes its responsibilities seriously. Pupils do not feel that bullying is an issue. They are confident that staff will sort out problems quickly if they do occur. Pupils are safe.

Many parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent said, 'My children have had a great experience. They have flourished with the help and support of all the staff.'

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

The headteacher, board of trustees and governors are a strong team. They know the school well and are always looking for ways to make it even better.

Leaders have made improving reading a main priority. Reading is now a strength of the school. Staff access regular training. Teachers successfully develop pupils' phonics knowledge and skills. Pupils read regularly. Pupils who struggle with their reading practise each day. Books are well matched to pupils' reading abilities and interests. Teaching staff skilfully question pupils to help extend their understanding. Pupils read with confidence and fluency. They enjoy reading.

Leaders have improved the curriculum for mathematics. Teachers make sure that pupils build their mathematical knowledge in a logical order. Pupils are confident to apply their mathematical knowledge to reasoning and problem-solving activities. Pupils show resilience in tackling difficult problems. In mathematics and English, teachers carefully check pupils' learning. Staff effectively build on what pupils already know and can do.

Leaders have made a strong start in developing the wider curriculum. Curriculum plans identify what pupils will learn in every subject. These plans include the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils will learn each year. In some subjects, such as history and geography, teachers need help to put the school's curriculum plans into practice. Leaders are beginning to provide subject-specific training so that teachers become more confident and skilled in teaching these subjects.

There are clear systems to identify pupils who have additional needs. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is appropriate. However, at times, teachers do not support these pupils effectively enough. Resources sometimes do not match the needs of pupils with SEND. Occasionally, adults give too much help. This can hamper pupils' learning, confidence and independence.

Leaders have carefully considered the personal development curriculum. Teachers broaden pupils' moral and spiritual understanding well. Pupils develop carefully considered opinions. Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of enriching experiences. Pupils speak passionately about the recent 'community appreciation day', when diversity was celebrated.

A lot of learning takes place outside the classroom and beyond the school day. Teachers plan visits to make pupils' learning meaningful. Pupils talk excitedly about their residential visits. Many pupils attend extra-curricular clubs. These clubs include those for choir, gardening, dance and netball. Pupils enjoy having leadership roles, such as buddies, school ambassadors and school councillors.

Pupils enjoy their learning and concentrate hard in lessons. Leaders are proud of the positive behaviours that pupils demonstrate. Low-level disruption to lessons is very rare.

Teachers know that leaders value their hard work and commitment. Leaders consider the well-being of staff. Where possible, issues of workload are reduced. Staff feel well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding. They know the signs to look out for that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Welfare records are detailed and include any follow-up actions taken.

Senior leaders are persistent in pursuing support from external agencies. They work well with social services and healthcare partners to ensure that the needs of vulnerable families and pupils are met.

Rigorous recruitment checks are carried out to ensure that all adults are suitable to work with children.

The curriculum helps pupils to stay safe. Pupils can explain when it is not appropriate to share personal information online and why they must always report any worries they have.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always have the skills or subject knowledge to implement curriculum plans effectively in subjects such as history or geography. This means, at times, that pupils do not achieve as well as they should in these subjects. Leaders must ensure that training and additional guidance are provided for all staff to give them the skills, confidence and knowledge they need so that pupils know more and remember more in all subjects.
- Sometimes, support for pupils who are struggling or for pupils with SEND does not meet their needs. Consequently, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Leaders must ensure that all staff receive training so that they have the skills to adapt their teaching and provide high-quality support. Teachers need to make sure that the support for these pupils precisely meets their needs and enables them to achieve well across the curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Hill View Junior School, to be good in December 2012.

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 are the school and you are 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

Unique reference number	144224
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10121766
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	465
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Steven Little
Headteacher	Tricia Bevan
Website	www.hillviewjuniors.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Hill View Junior Academy converted to become an academy in April 2017. When its predecessor school, Hill View Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school is part of Vision Learning Trust.

Information about this inspection

- I carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and science. In doing so, I visited every class and reviewed pupils' work. I spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read. I also met with teachers.
- I met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff. I met with a representative from the board of trustees and held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes. I gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions.

- I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans and records of governors’ work.
- I considered the responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire, Parent View, and Ofsted’s staff survey.
- I met with leaders responsible for safeguarding. I examined a range of documentation linked to safeguarding policies and procedures. This included information about staff training, online safety procedures and managing pupils’ behaviour and attendance.
- Ofsted is aware of the challenges that Covid-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, I took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of Coronavirus by the school. This has included the effect these measures have had on the current attendance of the pupils and staffing arrangements.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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