

Inspection of Hillside Avenue Primary and Nursery School, Thorpe

Hillside Avenue, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0QW

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Hillside Avenue are happy and well behaved. They make sure that any newcomers are made welcome. Children settle quickly into Nursery and Reception. Pupils have lots of opportunities to develop their confidence and language skills from the very start. Leaders have high expectations of pupils to work hard, and they do. Pupils enjoy learning. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils have lots of opportunities to be physically active, leaders have encouraged this along with a focus on positive mental health. Pupils are musical, many play an instrument and are part of the band. Pupils are very proud of the different responsibilities they have as they move through the school, such as being play leaders and helping organise playtime.

Staff have taught the pupils how to keep themselves safe. For example, currently moving safely through the areas of the building that are part of a major renovation. Bullying is rare but, when it does happen, pupils are confident that adults help them.

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

Leaders have planned out the core knowledge and skills that will be taught year on year. Teachers are skilled at ensuring that pupils' learning is well sequenced and that lessons build on what has come before. Staff in Nursery and Reception are skilled at planning activities that support children's learning effectively.

However, in some subjects, important knowledge and vocabulary could be more clearly mapped out. Where this is the case, teachers do not always know how what they teach links to pupils' previous or future learning. Where subject leaders have had time to check on teaching and work with colleagues, their curriculum plans are more detailed. The use of vocabulary is a current focus. In some subjects, teachers make more use of subject specific words than in others.

Leaders place great emphasis on ensuring that staff access high-quality professional development. Teachers value working together to trial new classroom practice. They feel well supported by senior leaders.

Across the school, staff prioritise reading. Children in the early years start to recognise sounds and are introduced to stories from the start. Teachers check on their pupils' phonics knowledge frequently and adjust teaching groups as a result. Staff are confident about teaching phonics and use the same approach when teaching spelling. Pupils have a wide range of books to choose from. Staff have carefully matched books to pupils' reading standard. Pupils at risk of falling behind have specialist additional support to help them keep up.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well within their classes. Teachers adapt activities appropriately, so that pupils with SEND

can make progress. Leaders' identification of pupils' needs is accurate. Their planning for staff to help meet pupils' needs is of a high standard.

Pupils' personal development is enhanced by many aspects of the school's work. The curriculum helps pupils to enhance their mental health. Leaders have carefully planned out what wider opportunities, such as residential and volunteer work, pupils will experience as they move through the school. Assemblies encourage pupils to reflect and learn about different ways of living. Pupils are well behaved, polite, and work hard.

Leaders from the newly merged multi-academy trust know the school well. They work closely with senior leaders to help them continue the journey of improvement. Members of the local governing body provide a balance of support and challenge. Trustees and governors understand and perform their statutory duties well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained. They check on staff's understanding of safeguarding regularly and provide regular updates on key issues. As a result, staff are skilled at identifying any risks that pupils may be facing.

Record keeping is highly comprehensive. Staff look for links between behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and any other parental contact. This means that any unusual patterns are quickly spotted. Leaders work closely with parents and other agencies to support families where needed.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They are very clear on what they need to do when accessing the internet to lessen any risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans in some subjects do not always identify precisely enough the knowledge, vocabulary, and skills that pupils should learn at different times. This means teachers are not always as clear about what learning should take place and in what order. Leaders need to ensure that all elements of the planned curriculum, including vocabulary, are clearly mapped at an appropriate timescale from Nursery through to Year 6.
- Some subject leaders have not had the opportunity to evaluate how effectively their subjects are taught. As a result, they have not been able to improve the quality of education in their subjects. Senior leaders need to ensure that subject leaders have the time and training needed to provide the guidance and support needed for teachers to implement the planned curriculum in each subject well.

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](#)' 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	143280
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10227289
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	408
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Gibson
Headteacher	Andrew Phoenix
Website	www.hillsideavenue.org
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school opened as an academy in September 2016. At that time, it was part of the Yare Education Trust. That trust merged with the Boudica Schools Trust in July 2022 to become the Broad Horizons Education Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider of education.
- The nursery admits children from age three to a range of part-time and full-time places.
- A separately run and registered before- and after-school club operates in a building on the school premises.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff. They met with the chair of the local governing body, a trustee and representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education, science, and geography. For each of these, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at plans and visited some lessons in other curriculum subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and a wide range of safeguarding files. They spoke to leaders, including the designated safeguarding leaders, staff, pupils, and parents.
- Inspectors considered the 58 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They took the 56 responses to the pupil survey, and the 23 responses to the staff survey into account.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sam Nixon

Ofsted Inspector

Helen McCarney

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022