

# Inspection of Hillside Primary School

Field Avenue, Baddeley Green, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST2 7AS

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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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 are proud to be part of Hillside Primary School. They are friendly and welcoming and make the school a happy place to learn. Pupils and staff get on well together. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe here. If bullying happens, pupils trust adults to resolve it so that it does not happen again. The rules of 'be kind, be safe and show respect' are evident in all that the pupils do.

Pupils study a broad range of subjects and are interested in what they are learning. The majority achieve well, particularly in mathematics and writing. Leaders provide a range of leadership opportunities to pupils, including school councillors, science ambassadors and sports ambassadors. Pupils value this.

Pupils enjoy attending a range of lunchtime and after-school activities, including cookery club and singing stars clubs. Pupils regularly take part in community events including visits to the local church. They also support charities, including 'Children in Need', and have opportunities to explore potential future roles through the careers fair.

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

Leaders have designed a well-structured and sequenced curriculum, across all subjects, that starts in the early years. For example, in science pupils enjoy taking part in many useful, and well-considered practical experiments that bring the curriculum to life. Most pupils achieve well in the broad range of subjects they study, particularly in mathematics and writing. However, in some foundation subjects leaders have not always ensured that assessment identifies the small steps pupils should take to be successful, so pupils do not always progress as well as they might.

Reading is at the heart of Hillside Primary School. Pupils enjoy the wide number of reading opportunities that they have from the reading vending machine, mystery readers and the reading bus. Leaders have introduced a new phonics scheme. This is well embedded. All staff are trained and expertly teach early reading. They make sure that all pupils are being supported to read with confidence and accuracy. Leaders ensure that pupils have the correct book to match their stage of reading. Pupils read for pleasure, both at school and at home. The pupils are highly motivated by a reading scheme that encourages children to read for pleasure on a regular basis. Year 6 pupils are proud of their reading roles as librarians and reading ambassadors.

Early years leaders have thought carefully about what children should learn and the order in which it should be delivered to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education. The early years classrooms are well resourced and children have access

to a wide variety of activities that are carefully chosen to allow children to develop their vocabulary and their social interactions.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance levels are high. Parents are very positive about the school. Pupils, including those in the early years, behave well. They demonstrate a good understanding of the school rules. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful at all times.

Leaders have enriched the curriculum with a wide range of opportunities to develop both the academic and social aspects of all pupils. For example, pupils are taught about different family structures and beliefs. Pupils were able to talk confidently about different religions and about some British values.

Staff are very proud of their school and enjoy working here. They feel valued and supported by leaders who take their well-being seriously. For instance, leaders consider their workload when introducing new initiatives. Governors know the school well and use this knowledge to support and challenge leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff are trained appropriately in safeguarding. Staff are vigilant. They raise concerns quickly and leaders act on these concerns in a timely manner. However, not all governors have completed the most up-to-date training. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to address this.

Leaders and staff record safeguarding concerns, but the way in which they do this does not allow leaders to gain a clear overview of the actions taken or easily see any patterns and trends. Leaders and governors are beginning to address this. Despite the lack of detailed oversight pupils are not at risk.

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

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

- Not all governors have up to date safeguarding training. This means that they are not as able to hold leaders to account for their safeguarding work, and support them with this work, as they should be. Leaders and governors should ensure that appropriate safeguarding training is completed as a matter of priority by anyone who needs it.
- Leaders have not ensured that assessment is used precisely enough in all foundation subjects. Where this happens, misconceptions are not always addressed, and gaps in learning go unchecked. Leaders should make sure that teachers use assessment precisely to identify and address pupils' gaps in learning curriculum across the foundation subjects.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124024
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-on-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241303
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	235
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jill Bennett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Schonau
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hillsideprimary.org.uk">www.hillsideprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 and 20 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

## 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 held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing board.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and geography. Inspection activities in these subjects included: lesson visits, discussion with staff and pupils, meeting with subject leaders, and work scrutiny. An inspector also observed pupils reading.

- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also reviewed the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.
- Inspectors talked to staff about their role in keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed lunchtime and break time.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Sarahjane Cuncannon Edwards, lead inspector      Ofsted Inspector

Tim Bassett      Ofsted Inspector

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