

Inspection of a good school: Hillview Primary School

Beechwood Avenue, Beechwood East, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 3HB

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

Hillview Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Hillview is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's ethos. Pupils get on well together. They are kind and courteous. Pupils have adults in school who they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively by leaders. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe in school.

Leaders have high aspirations for what all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. Leaders also have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to these expectations. They behave sensibly and achieve well.

Parents who responded to the survey were very positive about the care and support that their children receive in school.

Leaders provide a range of extra-curricular activities to nurture pupils' interests and talents. For example, pupils enjoy singing in the choir and playing dodgeball. Pupils in several year groups enjoy the residential trips arranged by leaders. These activities increase pupils' independence and cultural awareness.

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

Leaders have designed an aspirational curriculum from the Reception class to the end of Year 6. The curriculum in the early years prepares pupils well for key stage 1 and beyond.

In most subjects, leaders have carefully identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to know and the order in which it should be taught. Leaders ensure that teachers receive the guidance they need to enable them to implement the curriculum with expertise. Teachers present information clearly. They ensure that pupils' attention is directed at the key information that they need to know. Teachers use assessment strategies appropriately to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils, including

those with SEND, achieve well. However, in a few subjects, leaders are in the process of refining their curriculum thinking. In these subjects, the key knowledge and the order in which it should be implemented is less clearly defined.

Leaders are very clear in their vision for all pupils to learn to read fluently as quickly as possible. They recognise that this is the key to enable pupils to learn effectively across the full range of subjects. The phonics programme begins as soon as the pupils start in the Reception class. Leaders ensure that all staff are trained to implement this programme well. Pupils take home books that contain words that match the sounds that they are learning. Leaders intervene quickly and successfully to enable those who find reading more difficult to keep up with their peers. For the most part, class texts are carefully chosen to enhance curriculum learning. Pupils say that they love reading and can eagerly describe the characters from and recount the plots of their favourite books.

Clear systems are in place to identify the needs of all children, including those with SEND. Leaders, staff, parents and carers work closely together to ensure that the most appropriate adaptations are in place to enable pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as their classmates.

Children in the Reception class adopt school routines quickly. They learn to listen to each other and to take turns. This helps them to settle quickly into school life. Pupils in all years engage well with classroom activities. Teachers respond effectively to ensure that pupils are not distracted from their learning.

Leaders provide many opportunities to enhance pupils' learning beyond the school gates. Pupils in key stage 2 learn to play both woodwind and brass instruments. They have many opportunities to engage with sporting activities and to visit the theatre. Pupils learn about world religions and different families. Through the personal, social and health education programme, pupils are taught to understand and celebrate diversity. That said, there are very limited opportunities for pupils to take on positions of leadership and responsibility in school.

Governors know the school well. Their knowledge of the school and the local area enables them to hold leaders to account for the quality of education that they provide. Leaders have prioritised the well-being of the school community, including the staff. They have worked with staff to reduce their workload. Staff are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are kept up to date with their safeguarding responsibilities through regular training. They know how to recognise that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They report any potential concerns quickly. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to rapidly get the help that pupils and their families may need.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including around open water and on the roads. They learn how to administer basic first aid. Pupils work with local police officers to encourage safe traffic organisation on the roads around school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified precisely enough the essential knowledge that teachers need to deliver. In these subjects, pupils do not develop the deep insight needed to allow them to make secure connections in their learning. Leaders should ensure that the key facts are identified and sequenced appropriately in all subjects so that pupils can build on what they already know.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to take on leadership responsibilities within the school. This hinders some pupils in developing as active citizens. Leaders should ensure that pupils are provided with more opportunities to take on positions of responsibility within the school to further prepare them to play their part in modern Britain.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2014.

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	111169
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10291407
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Karl Ashton
Headteacher	Richard Jackson
Website	sec.hillview@haltonlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative education providers for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- As part of the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons and looked at pupils' work, spoke to teachers and spoke to some pupils about their learning. She also observed some pupils reading to a member of staff.
- The inspector spoke to subject leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. She had a meeting with members of the governing body.

- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. She spoke with the designated safeguarding leader. She spoke with staff about their understanding of how to keep pupils safe.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed behaviour at lunchtime and spoke to pupils about their views of the school, behaviour and bullying.
- The inspector reviewed documentation including minutes of the governing body meetings, leaders' self-evaluation and school development plans.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text responses.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Niamh Howlett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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