

Inspection of Mill Hill Primary Academy

Sunnyside Avenue, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 6ED

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

The principal of this school is Adele Mills. This school is part of the City Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Carl Ward, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Melanie Sproston.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are quite rightly very proud of their school and all the wonderful things that they learn and experience. They receive a high-quality education across the curriculum and benefit from an incredibly rich programme of personal development. Parents and carers are very positive about the school. One captured this, saying, 'All staff put their heart and soul into providing the best education and care for all pupils.'

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Everyone understands the staff's high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils, and children in the early years, excel in every aspect of their education. They embrace the school's values of 'work hard, dream big and never give up'.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are fully attentive in lessons. They work hard without any distractions or disruption. Pupils across the school thrive in a harmonious and caring environment. The school promotes equality and respect for everyone. Pupils have a good understanding of each other's differences and celebrate them. They are confident that staff will swiftly resolve any concerns that they may have. Pupils are kind and caring towards one another. They feel happy and safe.

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

The school has designed an exemplary curriculum for all pupils. From the early years to Year 6, leaders have ensured that the curriculum flows seamlessly. Staff make sure that pupils get plenty of practice to revise and revisit their knowledge in different contexts. Pupils talked enthusiastically about what they have been learning in geography, history and science. They did so articulately and confidently, demonstrating a deep understanding of what they had learned.

Staff routinely check pupils' prior knowledge across all subjects. They build on this learning, enabling pupils to access more complex content with confidence. In lessons, teachers pick up on pupils' misconceptions and close any gaps. As a result, pupils deepen their subject-specific understanding over time.

Pupils with SEND are swiftly identified. Staff adapt learning astutely to the needs of all learners so that they receive the same carefully designed curriculum. They provide accurate targeted support for pupils with SEND. This enables them to progress through the curriculum as well as their peers. The school's welfare, inclusion and SEND hub (WISH) provides exceptional pastoral care for pupils to ensure that there are no barriers to learning so that all pupils can flourish.

The school has cultivated a love of reading. Pupils read widely and often. They enjoy the rewards they receive for doing so, such as receiving a book from the school's vending machine. Younger pupils practise reading with books that closely match the

sounds that they have learned so that they can develop their fluency. Staff check carefully what sounds pupils can remember and provide effective support for anyone at risk of falling behind. As a result, pupils are confident and fluent readers.

The school gives children an exceptionally strong start in the early years. The quality of learning is evident in every activity. Adults prioritise developing children's communication and language. Children have eloquent conversations about their learning. They are inquisitive and show high levels of concentration and engagement.

The school has rigorous systems in place to make sure that pupils attend regularly. Staff have developed strong links with parents, and everyone understands the importance of good attendance.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is exemplary. Across the curriculum, pupils learn about different careers they may wish to pursue. Staff encourage pupils to set their sights high. Staff go beyond the expected to develop pupils' moral qualities and prepare them exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. Supported by the trust and driven by the school's ambition to dream big, they enable pupils to take part in extraordinary experiences. For example, a group of pupils represented their school by travelling overseas to New York to make a presentation at a climate change conference. Pupils as young leaders have put lots of their great ideas into practice. For instance, pupils supported a local care home to improve the outdoor areas through litter picking and gardening. There is a high take-up of the wide variety of after-school clubs. These clubs help pupils to develop their talents and interests.

Governors and trustees contribute greatly to the school's drive for excellence by supporting the school to ensure that all pupils thrive academically and personally. Governors and trustees hold leaders to account effectively. Staff receive high-quality professional development. Their workload and well-being are fully considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	141405
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10290615
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	439
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Melanie Sproston
Principal	Adele Mills
Website	https://clt.millhill.coop
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined The City Learning Trust in December 2017.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the trust.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing committee and trustees.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked to pupils and examined their work in art and geography.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of governing body meetings were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors talked to parents at the start of the school day and considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Cathy Young, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Susan Ray	Ofsted Inspector
Allyson Brown	Ofsted Inspector

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