

Inspection of Ashby Hill Top Primary School

Beaumont Avenue, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 2NF

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

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	Outstanding

The executive headteacher of this school is Sylvie Newman. The school is part of the Symphony Learning Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Tim Sutcliffe, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nigel Harrison.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since April 2013.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are deeply proud to be 'Hill Toppers'. They explain that they all live together well because they accept and value each other. Everyone belongs. Pupils are completely confident that their individual needs are understood by staff and peers alike. They feel safe to be themselves and are absolutely sure that all adults will help them if needed.

The school's rules of 'be ready, be respectful, be safe' are understood by all. The youngest children resolve disagreements amicably. Older pupils explain how they accommodate each other with grace. Pupils lead projects to make the school even better through small changes such as recycling pens and larger projects such as refurbishing the library. Those about to leave cheerfully accept that they may not benefit from the improvements they have worked so hard to realise. Instead, they are happy that they have made the school better for others.

Parents are fulsome in their praise. They say that staff 'go the extra mile' to make sure that all pupils feel welcome. Comments such as 'They have the interests of the child and their happiness at heart, which ultimately results in them wanting to learn more and succeeding,' are typical of the many expressed during the inspection.

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

The school wants every child to have 'the brightest of beginnings'. This starts right from their earliest days in Reception. There is a plethora of opportunities for families to get to know the staff before their children start full time. The school gets the right help in place for children's additional needs so that they settle straight away.

Staff have the highest expectations of all. Routines for learning are deeply embedded. Children know exactly what to do as they get involved in activities independently. For example, they use a range of different media to draw their own sunflowers. Children choose their equipment thoughtfully. They explain how they make colours. They cooperate with each other extremely well.

The youngest children are completely absorbed in phonics lessons. They recall their learning with ease. Immediate checks are made on what they know in mathematics and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported extremely effectively to build their knowledge well. Children move seamlessly into activities where they practise what they are learning about ways to make '10'.

The curriculum has been carefully crafted. Pupils understand deeply the locality of Ashby and their place in the world beyond. Through tightly sequenced teaching, staff have made sure that in every mixed-age class all pupils build securely on prior knowledge in mathematics. Teachers make well-thought-through adaptations for pupils with SEND. This means that they can take part alongside their peers.

Pupils' knowledge is rich. Older pupils' discussions demonstrate how they understand complex abstract concepts. For example, in religious education, pupils understand how some Christians' beliefs about creation incorporate scientific elements, too. Pupils use what they recall about the immune system to help them with scientific enquiry. They explain that they feel ready for 'new adventures, new learning and new experiences' when they move into a different year group.

The school's values of 'belong, thrive, succeed' are understood by all. Pupils develop an exceptionally strong understanding of fundamental British values. They can explain how in this country everyone 'has to follow the rules, but you are free to have your own beliefs too.' The personal, social and health education curriculum is extremely detailed and thorough. Pupils revisit learning about how to take a moment to keep calm. There is a very wide range of clubs and activities. These are provided at different times of the day. All pupils can develop their talents and interests through this offer.

Pupils are keen to come to school every day and attendance is strong. Parents believe that their children are ready for secondary education. They say, 'They were so well prepared when the time came, and I realised the role that the school played in this.' Pupils have detailed knowledge of the dangers they might face and what they should do.

All staff say that 'children are at the heart' of everything that they are asked to do. They say that judicious decisions are made so that any changes are manageable and do improve the school. They feel very well supported by leaders. Since joining the multi-academy trust, subject leaders have built supportive networks with other schools. Governors make sure that staff get opportunities to develop professionally. Staff value this highly. Everyone shares an aspiration to do their best for the school and to serve the local area, too.

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	138804
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10324152
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Harrison
CEO of the trust	Tim Sutcliffe
Headteacher	Sylvie Newman
Website	www.ashbyhilltop.leics.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 April 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Symphony Learning Trust on 1 September 2022. There have been changes in leadership since the previous inspection.
- The school uses registered and unregistered alternative provision.

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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives into the following subjects: early reading, art and design, geography, mathematics 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 samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector listened as pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered a range of evidence about other curriculum subjects, such as religious education, computing and history.
- Inspectors spoke with parents. They also considered the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke with members of staff throughout the inspection and considered the opinions they expressed through the online survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Throughout the inspection, inspectors spoke with groups of pupils, including during non-structured parts of the day, such as playtimes and lunchtimes.
- The lead inspector met with governors and trustees. Inspectors met with senior leaders of the school and considered a range of documentation provided.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Adair

Ofsted Inspector

Moira Dales

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