

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Hilton Primary Academy

Hilton Avenue, Blakelaw, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE5 3RN

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Inspection dates:

24 and 25 April 2024

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Andrew Cowan. This school is part of Northern Education 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, Rob Tarn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Sanders. There is also a senior executive principal, Deb Murphy, who is responsible for this school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils' daily experiences at Hilton Primary Academy are built on a culture of celebration. Leaders ensure that pupils' achievements and successes are recognised. This recognition ranges from applause moments in lessons to certificates awarded in weekly assembly. Pupils are rewarded for their efforts in mathematics, reading and attendance, among others. Individual pieces of impressive work are celebrated weekly in 'proud', where pupils are personally rewarded and congratulated by staff. Pupils are invested in their own success and that of their peers. This culture of celebration means that pupils develop in confidence and are keen to aim high.

Adults have high expectations of pupils' conduct and achievement. Pupils enjoy working hard to meet these expectations. Even the youngest children understand the expectations to listen and follow clear routines. Pupils understand what bullying is. They explain it would not be tolerated in school. Pupils are confident that adults in school will help them and keep them safe.

Pupils learn important lessons about equality and difference. They explain that everyone is treated fairly in school and that they are all unique. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they get to follow their interests. The clubs they can do in school are often based on their opinions or requests, for example cookery and boxing.

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

The school provides a curriculum that is designed to prepare students for life beyond Hilton Primary Academy. The curriculum identifies important knowledge that pupils will learn to make sure they are equipped to be successful. Leaders have mapped out this knowledge precisely, across subjects, so that pupils can build knowledge confidently and securely. This ambitious content is enriched by memorable moments that bring the curriculum to life for pupils. These include visits to Beamish, video calls with authors and a science and engineering fair.

The school has ensured that reading is woven seamlessly through pupils' daily experiences. Pupils are enthused about reading. They talk with excitement about the books that they love. They enjoy ticking off different genres that they have read in their reading passports. Books are prevalent throughout school and pupils take advantage of this. Pupils choose stories to take outside with them at breaktime. Parents are regularly invited in to read stories with their children.

The school has introduced a new phonics scheme. Pupils build up their phonics knowledge steadily. They read books that are matched to the sounds that they know. Some staff teach phonics more effectively than others.

Across the curriculum, the school has a clear lesson structure in place that teachers use consistently. They use high-quality modelling first and then support pupils to attempt tasks independently. This is particularly true in mathematics. Pupils recognise familiar routines in lessons, including moving from guided discussions to tackling problems on their own. Challenge tasks and targeted adult support in lessons mean that all pupils can succeed from their own starting points. The school uses assessment effectively to identify gaps for pupils and guide future teaching.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in all aspects of school life. Adults ensure that pupils with SEND have the support that they need to succeed. Staff understand the needs of pupils well. Staff focus on building the independence of pupils with SEND so that they are prepared for their next steps.

Pupils behave well in school. They are attentive and engaged in lessons. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff. Pupils of all ages attend exceptionally well. The school ensures that pupils and parents understand the importance of attending school regularly. High attendance is emphasised and celebrated in school.

The 'child-centred' ethos of the school means that the wider development of pupils is carefully considered. Leaders want to ensure that all pupils, from all backgrounds, have access to enriching experiences. These experiences are woven through the curriculum that pupils learn, but also encompass a range of wider projects for groups of pupils. Pupils are involved in projects working with poets, artists and photographers to produce pieces of art about their local area. The school ensures that pupils learn about a wide range of careers so that they are aspirational for their futures.

Staff are proud to be members of this school community. They are committed to providing pupils with the best start in life. Staff value the support and development opportunities that the trust provides them with. Staff are confident that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Staff say that leaders listen to their opinions and support them well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Not all staff deliver phonics with the same level of expertise. This means that some pupils are not benefiting from the most effective support when learning to read. Leaders should ensure that all staff have sufficient training to deliver phonics to the same high standard.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in June 2018.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138995
<b>Local authority</b>	Newcastle upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323041
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	439
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mark Sanders
<b>Principal</b>	Andrew Cowan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://hpa.northerneducationtrust.org/">https://hpa.northerneducationtrust.org/</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	7 and 8 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Northern Education Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a provision for two-year-olds.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspector met with the principal, the vice principal, the executive principal and the deputy chief executive officer during the inspection. They also met with representatives from the academy council and spoke with the chair of the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector 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 inspector also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work from some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector met with staff responsible for personal development and attendance. They also met with the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector observed the behaviour of pupils at social times.
- The inspector considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Katie Spurr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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