

Inspection of a good school: Hillyfield Primary Academy

Higham Hill Road, London, E17 6ED

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 June 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this kind and welcoming school. They are excited to learn and are extremely happy. Although this is a large school split between two sites, there is a strong sense of community. Staff know the pupils well and working relationships are extremely positive.

Leaders have high expectations and are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have created a calm and very positive environment where pupils are safe. Behaviour in lessons and around the school site is exemplary.

During lessons, pupils are hardworking, inquisitive and highly focused on their learning. Leaders have developed a well-constructed character programme. This helps pupils develop the necessary life skills to enable them to be successful. Pupils are polite, friendly and confident at the school.

Pupils have access to an extremely broad range of wider opportunities in the school. Most pupils access the many clubs on offer. These include a variety of sports and music groups, gardening and tap-dancing clubs. All pupils in the school learn a musical instrument and benefit from links with professional ensembles. Pupils regularly take part in fund raising events to raise money for both national charities and the local community.

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

The curriculum is extremely ambitious and sequenced to ensure that pupils build knowledge over time progressively. This helps to deepen pupils' subject knowledge and skills over time. For example, in geography, Year 3 pupils learn how to use basic compass

point and grid references. In Year 4 this progresses to learning how to use eight compass points and then six figure grid references in Year 6.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and present information clearly. They make effective adaptations during lessons so that pupils with SEND access the curriculum successfully. Teachers are highly skilled at checking pupils' understanding and addressing any misconceptions swiftly. They routinely ensure that all pupils have a secure understanding before moving onto new learning. In the early years, teachers are highly skilled at ensuring children develop their communication skills. This includes regularly checking of and developing the children's use of new vocabulary.

Leaders have placed a sharp focus on the teaching of early reading. All staff are well trained in delivering the phonics programme. Staff teach phonics consistently to a high standard. They are highly skilled at identifying any pupils that fall behind the pace of the programme. Effective support is put in place for these pupils to ensure they catch up. This enables pupils across the school to read with confidence and fluency.

All pupils regularly read a wide range of books. Staff and pupils read stories to each other daily. All pupils take books home that are matched closely to the phonic sounds pupils know. The school welcomes authors to talk to pupils about new books. Pupils enjoy having expressive reading of stories to help ignite their imagination of stories and plots.

Pupils concentrate extremely well during lessons. They consistently demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning. In early years, children are motivated, share and cooperate well with each other. The attendance of pupils in school is very high. Leaders work effectively with parents and carers and have robust strategies in place to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

The school's personal development curriculum has been carefully planned to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding deepens and builds over time. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including online. All pupils attend a wide range of outings that offer both academic and cultural experiences. These include visits to museums, performances and residential activity centres. Leaders adapt these opportunities to ensure all pupils, including pupils with SEND participate. Pupils contribute to the school community through a variety of leadership opportunities. These include the 'Hillyfield Arts Council', 'Pupil Advocates' and peer readers.

The governing body understands the strengths and priorities of the school and carries out its role effectively. It has a clear strategic vision and provides appropriate challenge and support. Leaders have developed extremely strong relationships with parents. They can access a number of workshops to help support their children at home including reading, online safety and family fitness.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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

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| Unique reference number | 136413 |
| Local authority | London Borough of Waltham Forest |
| Inspection number | 10323368 |
| Type of school | Primary school |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1140 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Chana King |
| Headteacher | Roddy Fairclough |
| Website | www.hillyfieldacademy.com |
| Date(s) of previous inspection | 11 and 12 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is split across two separate sites.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 18 pupils with autism spectrum disorder. There are currently 16 pupils who use this provision.

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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and a range of staff. They also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a

sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, discussed with pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was also considered.

- 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.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Simon Conway, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Jackson

Ofsted Inspector

Tom Hart

Ofsted Inspector

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