

# Inspection of Hill Top Primary Academy

Batley Road, West Ardsley, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF3 1HD

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of this school is Joanne Lancaster. This school is part of Leodis Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Joanne Barton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nicholas O'Donovan.

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

Pupils love to attend this caring and inclusive school. They enjoy extremely positive relationships with adults. Pupils know that if they have a concern, they can turn to any adult for help. They flourish in this helpful environment. Pupils are proud to attend Hill Top Primary Academy.

The school has very high expectations for all pupils. Pupils rise to these expectations with enthusiasm. They achieve highly at the end of key stage 2. Pupils respond positively to the school's ambitious behaviour standards. They are excited to learn. Pupils respond quickly to instructions. They value the calm learning environment and behave exceptionally well.

Pupils model the values of the school, such as care and confidence, extremely well. They pride themselves on showing great empathy for their peers. Their care and kindness for others significantly contributes to the positive culture in the school.

Pupils enjoy being rewarded for living out the values of the school. They earn Hill Top pounds. Pupils spend these pounds at 'Harper's Market'. They can choose to spend the pounds immediately. Alternatively, they can save them and delay their reward. This teaches pupils important lessons about how rewards do not have to be instant.

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

Pupils are passionate about reading. They enjoy their class reading books. One pupil represented the views of many when they said, 'Reading is like a holiday for the mind.' Pupils in Year 4 discuss their class reading book, 'The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane', excitedly. They describe the story in depth and explain what they have learned from it. These pupils understand how, despite life taking different paths, home is always important.

Highly trained adults help pupils learn to read well. Pupils who struggle with reading are identified swiftly. They receive support from adults in school. However, the school does not have a precise way of measuring how this small group of pupils is progressing. Sometimes, these pupils are given books to read which do not contain the sounds they have been taught. This slows their progress.

The school's curriculum ensures pupils build and apply their knowledge over time. In mathematics, for example, pupils have regular opportunities to use their knowledge to solve complex problems. Children in Nursery benefit from a well-sequenced curriculum. They are quick to recognise numbers to 5. The school's support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensures they reach the same ambitious endpoints in the curriculum as their peers. For example, in the early years, a counting frame helps children with SEND to develop their knowledge of the different ways to make the number 5.

The school has redeveloped the curriculum over the last two years, including in the foundation subjects. The knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils must learn are outlined clearly in curriculum plans. In music, for example, pupils use ambitious, subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils in Year 1 discuss pitch. They describe clearly how instruments can produce notes in different pitches. This curriculum content progresses sequentially. In Year 2, pupils explore lower and higher ranges of pitch.

Pupils with SEND benefit from very effective support. There is a harmonious partnership between the school, pupils' families and the pupils themselves. All agree ambitious targets and any support needed to achieve the targets. The school ensures adults know how to support pupils with SEND effectively. Pupil passports outline key information, including precise support strategies, for pupils with SEND. Staff use these skilfully to ensure the curriculum is matched to pupils' needs.

Children in the early years enjoy a nurturing environment. The school ensures that staff know children and their families before they join their class. Children are very quick to settle into school. Children enjoy reading. The recent story of 'People That Help Us' sparked children's interest in different careers. Visits from police, firefighters, nurses and radiographers help bring this aspect of the curriculum to life. Children confidently share the job they would like to do when they are older, such as a nurse or vet.

The school places significant value on its exceptional personal development curriculum. It is passionate and resolute in the aim to develop the whole child. The 'Leodis Pledge' ensures all pupils access a breadth of varied and exciting opportunities by the time they leave the school. Children in the early years learn vital teamwork and communication skills in the forest school. Pupils in Year 3 build dens to learn about survival skills. The school's curriculum carefully addresses local risks, such as those presented by a local reservoir. It pledges to support pupils in key stage 2 to be proficient in swimming up to 25 metres by the time they leave. Pupils are well equipped to stay safe.

Adults in the school appreciate that their workload is always at the forefront of leaders' decisions. They are proud to work at the school. The school, governors and trust unite to provide all members of the school community with a very positive experience. They are relentless in their focus to provide a broad and happy education for pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school does not have a precise system to identify how well some pupils at the early stages of reading are progressing. This means that some reading books are not well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge. The school should improve how it checks on pupils' early reading progress and how it uses the information to maximise pupils' progress.

## 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>	142427
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346574
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Nicholas O'Donovan
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Joanne Barton
<b>Principal</b>	Joanne Lancaster
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hilltopprimary.org.uk">www.hilltopprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is one of five schools in the Leodis Academies Trust.
- The school does not use alternative providers of education for its pupils.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a change of principal at the school.

## 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. 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.
- An inspector looked at pupils' work in English and history, too.
- An inspector visited the forest school.
- 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 lead inspector met with members of the trust board, the CEO of the trust and members of the local governing board, including the chair. The lead inspector also reviewed documentation relating to governance, including minutes of meetings.
- The lead inspector met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the principal and the deputy principal of the school.
- A range of school documents were reviewed, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils through meetings held with them.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff through meetings and through their responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Andrew Gibbins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Pritiben Patel

Ofsted Inspector

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