

Inspection of Hillbourne Primary School

Kitchener Crescent, Poole, Dorset BH17 7HX

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Laura Bennett. This school is part of Hamwic Education 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), Robert Farmer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gary Plummer.

What is it like to attend this school?

Hillbourne Primary is a welcoming place to learn. The child is at the heart of this inclusive school. Everyone is valued and cared for. Pupils talk of the 'family' feel of the school. They appreciate the strong relationships they have with staff. Pupils are safe. They have confidence in staff to sort out any worries they have.

The school's values are, 'Be ready, be respectful and be safe.' These qualities are evident in school life. Pupils behave well. They are respectful of one another. Pupils of all ages play happily together. This makes social times enjoyable. Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils respond positively to this.

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. They value the school's commitment to the education and well-being of their children. Parents appreciate the supportive atmosphere and know that staff will make time to listen to them.

The school's approach to pupils' personal development is exceptional. The school carefully considers how to support every aspect of pupils' personal growth. Pupils benefit from a rich variety of opportunities to develop their interests. For example, pupils visit the local university to learn about future possibilities in higher education.

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

Aspiration for each pupil is at the heart of the curriculum. Recently, the school has brought about improvements to the curriculum design. It is a broad and ambitious curriculum that helps pupils to build knowledge and skills from Reception Year to Year 6. There is clarity over precisely what pupils should learn and when they should learn it. For example, in mathematics, pupils practise multiplication strategies regularly to help them to solve increasingly complex calculations.

Running through the school's curriculum are the carefully considered threads of reading and oracy. The school's English curriculum is designed around carefully chosen books. Pupils read a wide range of literature and enjoy class texts that support their learning in other subjects. Children learn to read as soon as they start school. Skilled staff share stories and rhymes with children to develop their language skills. They support children to pronounce words correctly. Children quickly develop the listening and attention skills they need to be successful learners. Books are well matched to pupils' knowledge of phonics. Pupils develop both confidence and fluency in reading. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors.

In most subjects, pupils learn the important knowledge that they need over time. However, in some subjects, the way in which the curriculum is taught does not support pupils to develop their knowledge securely. Where this is the case, pupils' understanding is not fully developed. In many subjects, teaching includes precise and regular checks on what pupils know and remember. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not use what they know from their checks of pupils' understanding to inform subsequent teaching. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not promptly rectified.

The school is steadfast in the way it serves families in its community. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in the school. These pupils have their needs accurately identified and they achieve well. Parents agree their children are well supported.

The school has strengthened its behaviour policy. Staff apply this fairly. Pupils know the school values and behave well. Consequently, the school environment is calm and orderly. Work completed by pupils is of a high quality, reflecting pupils' positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils collaborate well with one another. This starts in early years where children learn about the importance of sharing, working together and supporting each other. The school takes effective action to improve pupils' rates of attendance. Analysis is used to gain an understanding of the causes of any absence. Staff work closely with families to address barriers to attendance. As a result, most pupils attend regularly.

Inclusivity and cultural diversity are promoted through deliberate curriculum design. Pupils are highly knowledgeable about the beliefs and faiths of others. Pupils have a personal commitment to fairness and equality. They value and respect the views of others and understand that everyone should be treated fairly. The school helps pupils to develop a sense of responsibility through leadership roles, such as house captains and librarians. Pupils develop a deep understanding of fundamental British values, such as the democratic process. They connect these to what they have learned in other subjects. For example, pupils reflect on how democracy in ancient Greece established voting rights for citizens.

The school and those responsible for governance invest continually in the professional development and prioritise the well-being of staff. Leaders at all levels go above and beyond for all pupils. They evaluate and review their work rigorously. Leaders have deliberately designed a highly engaging curriculum which builds pupils' aspirations and empowerment. They go above and beyond in their commitment to ensure all pupils make accelerated progress from their starting points. Exceptional leadership at all levels underpins the success of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, assessment lacks precision. It does not identify whether pupils have secured the skills and knowledge they need. Therefore, some pupils develop gaps in learning. The trust should ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge to use assessment to inform adaptations to teaching and consolidate pupils' understanding over time.

- In some subjects, the way the curriculum is implemented does not routinely help pupils build on their existing knowledge. Consequently, pupils do not learn as well as they should. The trust should ensure that all staff have pedagogical knowledge they need to implement the curriculum as intended.

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	148926
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10344858
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gary Plummer
CEO of the trust	Robert Farmer
Headteacher	Laura Bennett
Website	www.hillbourne.poole.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Hamwic Education Trust.
- There is a school-run breakfast and after-school club.
- The school currently does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, subject leaders, members of the local governing body, the CEO and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. 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.
- 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 considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors also considered responses to the pupil survey and the staff survey.

Inspection team

Liz Geller, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Carl Thornton

Ofsted Inspector

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