

Inspection of Hilton Primary Academy

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

Inspection dates:	16 and 17 September 2025
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 principal of this school is Andrew Cowan. This school is part of Northern 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), Jane Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Sanders.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in a safe, caring environment at Hilton Primary Academy. The school has very high expectations for pupils from the moment they join. The exceptional provision across all areas of the school means that these are achieved. Staff care deeply about pupils and support them effectively. Relationships are strong and supportive across the whole school community. Pupils enjoy learning and achieve exceptionally well.

The school ensures that pupils are 'world ready and not just Hilton ready'. Pupils benefit from a tremendous range of exciting experiences. These include many after-school clubs, residential trips, visits to the opera and exploring places of worship. Careers education is woven into the curriculum and is brought to life through visiting speakers. Many pupils take on additional responsibilities. These include becoming pupil librarians, playground leaders, members of the school council or part of the junior leadership team. These opportunities develop pupils' confidence, cultural awareness and personal growth.

Respect and tolerance are part of everyday life at the school. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show kindness and care towards each other. Pupils develop into positive, confident young people, who are very well prepared for their next steps in life. They are justifiably proud of their school.

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

The school's core 'entitlement' curriculum is highly ambitious. It is carefully constructed to ensure that pupils build and develop their learning over time. From the early years onwards, the school has identified the specific knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. The order in which this information is taught is well considered. There is a keen focus upon the development of vocabulary. This supports pupils to be able to discuss and deepen their learning confidently.

The school provides a highly effective programme of training and support for staff. Teachers have a strong knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. They adapt resources appropriately to ensure that pupils can access the learning. Teachers use assessment to identify and address misconceptions quickly and effectively. There are regular opportunities for pupils to revisit learning. Teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding across the curriculum. As a result, pupils remember what they have learned and build their knowledge deeply.

Children in the early years are eager to learn. They benefit from well-considered resources and activities that support them to learn well. As pupils move through the curriculum, their knowledge and understanding builds rapidly and successfully. The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They receive the help that they need to learn the curriculum well. Pupils' mathematical fluency and confidence is strong. They write confidently, independently and accurately. Pupils take pride in their work and books are presented immaculately.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Staff expertly deliver the phonics programme to a consistently high level from the start of Reception. Children read confidently and enthusiastically. Teachers check individual pupils' reading frequently and closely. Where pupils need more support with their letter sounds, they receive the help they need quickly and effectively. Pupils develop a love of reading from the early years onwards. They enjoy choosing books from the 'reading routes' library. They talk excitedly about reading books at home as well as in school.

The school teaches pupils the importance of politeness and good conduct. This is reflected in their high level of motivation and focus within the classroom and their courtesy towards others during social times. Breaktimes are purposeful. Many pupils sit at the 'Hilton hotspot' benches, where they use a series of discussion prompts to talk meaningfully with one another. The school analyses patterns in attendance well. It uses this information to make further improvements to support pupils and families. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. The school is quick and effective in its actions if a pupil is absent too frequently. Attendance across the school has improved as a result.

The school's 'Life' curriculum is carefully constructed. It builds pupils' wider development exceptionally well. This begins in the early years. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They talk knowledgeably about world faiths and religions. Pupils embody the fundamental British values of tolerance and respect. They are clear that everyone should be treated equally and that differences should be celebrated. Pupils participate widely in the many extra-curricular opportunities the school offers.

Leaders at all levels are relentless in their drive to ensure the best possible education for pupils at the school. Staff from the trust support school leaders well. Development planning is sharply focused upon the right areas and there is no sense of complacency. Trustees and representatives of the academy council know the school well. Staff are universally proud to work at the school. They value the way that the school supports their professional development. They also feel well supported in managing their workload and well-being. Parents and carers speak very positively about the support that the school offers their children.

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	138995
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10379378
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	395
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Sanders
CEO of the trust	Jane Wilson
Principal	Andrew Cowan
Website	https://hpa.northerneducationtrust.org
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 April 2024, under section 8 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.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

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 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to senior leaders, including representatives from the board of trustees and the academy council.
- Inspectors also met with the trust's CEO.
- 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 put pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in writing and history. They reviewed pupils' work in these subjects.
- Inspectors met the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, spoke to pupils with SEND and reviewed plans to support these pupils. They visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes from academy council meetings and trust board meetings as well as the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour and attendance. They observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and at social times.
- The views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered. Inspectors also spoke with groups of staff and pupils to gain their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also spoke with some parents on both days of the inspection.

Inspection team

Tim Johnson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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