

# Inspection of a good school: Hillside Primary School

Field Avenue, Baddeley Green, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST2 7AS

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Inspection dates:

19–20 November 2019

## Outcome

Hillside Primary School continues to be a good school.

There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love learning in this hardworking school. Pupils are very happy at work and play. Their attendance and behaviour are very good.

Leaders and other staff are ambitious for pupils. They set pupils interesting work and encourage them to think hard. They teach pupils to learn in different ways. Leaders take great care to ensure that pupils learn effectively. A well-organised curriculum helps pupils achieve high standards.

Older pupils show considerable intellectual curiosity. They love challenges and always want to know more. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils learn with impressive concentration. The behaviour of these older pupils is exemplary.

Staff know each pupil very well. Warm and trusting relationships underpin the school's high aspirations. Pupils are kind to each other. Bullying is rare. Pupils who struggle with friendships get help straightaway. Great teaching and concern for welfare ensure that all pupils thrive at Hillside.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get very regular support. Like all other pupils, they enjoy effective teaching and individual care. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well.

Parents trust staff to do what is right for their children. They appreciate the great effort the school makes to interest all pupils in learning. Communication between home and school is very good.

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

Children settle quickly when they start in early years. Specialist and enthusiastic staff get children off to a great start. They provide imaginative resources that help children learn with enjoyment. Care for children is very good. Children's experiences in Nursey and Reception prepare them very effectively for Year 1.

Early reading is a priority for the school. Staff are expert in teaching pupils to read. Pupils learn to read using phonics as soon as they arrive at school. This continues into key stage 1 and pupils usually do very well in the phonics screening check. A few pupils who did not achieve the expected standard in the 2019 check are now catching up in Year 2. Very few pupils in the school fall below the standard expected for their age in reading.

Leaders and staff promote a love of books across the school. As a result, pupils relish reading. They enjoy dipping into the many book boxes sited around school. They are excited about the new 'big reading bus' bought by the school. New, shared reading lessons are helping pupils read even better. Pupils' results in the key stage 2 reading tests are good.

Pupils learn mathematics very well. Many say it is their favourite subject. The curriculum is tightly organised across all years. Teachers organise learning carefully and provide stimulating resources to help pupils learn. Teachers' subject knowledge is good.

Pupils develop mathematical fluency and reasoning from the early years onwards. They practise their mathematical knowledge often. They particularly enjoy using mathematics to solve problems. Overall, effective teaching makes sure that pupils become confident mathematicians. In turn, pupils achieve very good outcomes in the key stage 2 mathematics tests.

Pupils enjoy learning the science curriculum. It is exceptionally well organised. Any new work builds well on prior learning. Most science work builds knowledge and develops skills of enquiry. This helps pupils become confident scientists. During their time at school, pupils learn a good range of scientific knowledge and skills.

Subject leaders in the school are terrific advocates for their subjects. They make sure pupils have ample opportunities to learn their curriculum. They give teachers great ideas about how to teach each topic. They organise interesting trips for pupils that foster a love of their subjects.

Staff have a detailed understanding of how much English and mathematics pupils remember. They are now turning their minds towards how they can check that pupils remember enough in the other subjects.

Pupils have plenty of opportunities to grow into well-rounded individuals at this school. For example, older pupils provide leadership for younger pupils. They raise money for local, national and global charities. Pupils learn outside the classroom by going on a wide variety of fun trips. Most days involve outdoor activities, which all enjoy. The school enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

Pupils with SEND get enough help. They learn well from their starting points. They receive plenty of personal help. Disadvantaged pupils do well at this school.

Leadership is very strong. Leaders have improved the school since the last inspection. They are very organised. Alongside their high expectations, they show great care for all staff and pupils' well-being. The governing body is very experienced. It shares the headteacher's vision and ambition for the school. Governors have a robust grasp of the aims of the school's curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school is a safe environment. Leaders assess local and wider risks to pupils at regular intervals. Leaders and their staff are vigilant. They act without delay if they have concerns about a pupil. Liaison with other agencies is timely. Safeguarding training for staff and governors is up to date. All staff and governors are trained in keeping pupils safe from extremism.

Pupils feel safe in school. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they use the internet. They know they should speak up if they are worried. Safeguarding records and arrangements are of high quality.

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

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

- Subject leaders are looking at how they can further improve assessment in science and the foundation subjects. They already make regular checks to ensure that pupils are studying enough subject content. They also keep records of how well pupils do specific tasks. They keep 'big floor books', for example, to show what pupils can do. However, apart from in English and mathematics, they are not always sure if pupils remember the detail of what they learn over long periods of time. Leaders should ensure that work continues so that subject leaders are fully confident that all relevant learning in these subjects is retained.

## **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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 11–12 January 2011.

## **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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124024
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-on-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111778
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	239
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mr Derek Gray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Karen Schonau
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hillsideprimary.org.uk">www.hillsideprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 February 2016

## Information about this school

- No significant changes to the school have occurred since the last inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- I visited all classes in the school. I spoke with pupils about their learning and daily experiences. I listened to pupils read. I observed their behaviour in lessons and around the school. I visited playgrounds at playtime.
- I looked at early reading, mathematics and science. I also looked at curriculum plans for foundation subjects. I observed a breakfast club and lunchtime activities. I scrutinised key documents, including safeguarding documents. I spoke with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers, other staff and governors. I also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- I spoke with parents and carers during a consultation afternoon. I also took account of 54 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, including 29 written responses.

## **Inspection team**

Mike Cladingbowl, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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