

Hillside Primary School

Lords Lane, Bradwell, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 8PA

Inspection dates

11–12 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leadership team share high expectations and a clear understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning. They lead with drive and rigour. Their ambition for the school is shared by the staff and governors.
- Governors are knowledgeable, they are well-informed and have an accurate understanding of the school's development needs. They have recently reviewed their role and now offer leaders high-quality challenge and support.
- The provision for all groups of pupils has improved, leading to better overall achievement. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are making good progress from their different starting points.
- Parents are positive about the school. They recognise its quality of care and the dedication of teachers. The overwhelming majority of parents would recommend this school to others.
- Pupils' conduct and behaviour around school is very good. The consistent approach by all staff means that pupils always know what is expected of them throughout the school day.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective, all staff understand their roles and responsibilities. The overwhelming majority of pupils feel safe and well cared for while at school.
- Strong subject leadership in English and mathematics has ensured high-quality teaching, resulting in Year 6 pupils' attainment being consistently higher than the national averages.
- Pupils value their learning and enjoy coming to school. However, attendance remains stubbornly below the national average for primary schools. The leadership team continues to work closely with parents and other agencies to address this issue.
- Planning across the early years is insufficiently focused on progression and next steps for learning, especially in the activities that children choose for themselves. Consequently, teaching is not strong and children do not make the progress that they are capable of.
- The school's curriculum is being reviewed. Consistent systems for planning and monitoring are not fully established. Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics do not have a full understanding of progress and standards in their subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership in the early years, to ensure that:
 - teachers clearly plan for progression from Nursery through to Reception and that the provision of equipment, resources and activities in the outdoor learning area is appropriate for children of all ages
 - there is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities and that learning builds on children's interests
 - all adults, through their interactions with children, are able to assess progress and to intervene effectively to move learning forwards.
- Continue to develop the role of subject leaders in subjects other than English and mathematics, so that they have the skills and subject knowledge to secure the progression of skills and knowledge across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders' evaluation of the school is accurate. There is a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards even further. All staff share the headteacher's belief in continuous improvement and work closely as a team. Staff share the values that the leadership team promotes, and all are proud to work in the school.
- The school's leadership has successfully addressed the areas for improvement following the previous inspection. The headteacher has built dedicated teams and reorganised the way that provision for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils is monitored. New classroom assessment systems enable leaders and staff to identify individuals and groups of pupils and check on their progress in learning. This increased focus has contributed to a better understanding of the learning needs of individuals and has improved teaching. As a result, gaps in attainment are diminishing.
- Additional funding is used well to provide support for disadvantaged pupils. The school's leadership team is committed to overcoming any barriers to learning that may exist for this group. Enhanced provision, which includes additional in-class support and weekly learning conferences, is tailored to match individual pupils' needs. The school's strategy continues to develop successfully and attainment for this group is closely aligned to that of all pupils.
- The headteacher has introduced a SEND team which has created joint accountability and improved outcomes for pupils with SEND. The team runs enhanced pupil-progress meetings that ensure that the provision for those pupils with SEND is appropriate and effective. These changes have had a positive impact on outcomes for pupils and, additionally, have allowed the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) to focus more on the quality of provision in the specialist resource base (SRB). This provides specialist teaching and support for pupils with learning and cognition difficulties from other local schools.
- The SENCo has a good overview of the SRB and has a strong understanding of the needs of all pupils in the setting. Communication with pupils' home schools ensures that continuity of learning is in place.
- The school uses the physical education (PE) and sport premium grant to promote healthy lifestyles and to enable pupils to take part in interschool tournaments and activities. The grant has also been carefully used to provide training for staff members, as well as providing specific pieces of equipment. Sports coaches are used well. For example, there is a growing enthusiasm for cricket in the school. Leaders are flexible in their plans for spending the sports premium grant so that they can remain responsive to pupils' developing skills and interests.
- The school is in the process of reviewing the content and organisation of its curriculum, subject leaders have been involved in in-depth conversations about the use of essential vocabulary, the progression of skills and time allocations. This is a work in progress and is understood by staff to be an important development area. Subject leaders are enthusiastic about this work and look forward to enhancing their roles further.
- Leadership and management in the early years requires improvement. Children in the

Nursery and Reception classes enjoy learning but do not make good progress. Organisational changes have presented challenges in ensuring consistency in teaching and curriculum planning. There is ongoing improvement work in the school's early years setting, and staff are currently reviewing the design of their curriculum. Senior leaders have provided additional staff to support children's speech and language development.

- Memorable trips and learning opportunities, a wide range of popular after-school clubs, celebratory displays, assemblies and regular visits from local clergy all make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a trip to the borough council's town hall, pupils were able to learn about services provided to the community and the function of local democracy.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is very visible and active in the life of the school. Governors represent a wide range of skills and experience and use their training and knowledge to provide increasingly effective challenge and support.
- Governors' understanding of the school's development needs is accurate. They have good systems in place that allow them to regularly check on the progress pupils make. For example, governors are represented on the SEND, disadvantaged and safeguarding teams. They join the school's senior leaders to evaluate the quality of provision in these areas.
- Following their planned visits, governors produce high-quality monitoring reports which are discussed in meetings. In this way they have developed good insight; they are able to celebrate strengths as well as identify weaknesses and areas for improvement. For example, in a recent visit, a governor reported on the use of reading records and arrangements for additional teaching for pupils with SEND. The headteacher followed up any important points that were raised.
- Governors are mindful of their legal obligations, particularly with regard to safeguarding, and ensure that these are properly met and that systems are fit for purpose.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's leadership team has made sure that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff are vigilant and proactive. Leaders work closely with parents, carers and other agencies, such as the local multi-agency safeguarding hub, to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Leaders have ensured that appropriate staff training is in place. Safeguarding issues are discussed as necessary in staff meetings. The quality of the school's record-keeping is strong.
- Governors regularly check safeguarding procedures. They are aware of their own development needs and have accessed training appropriately. Governors ensure that recruitment processes are secure, and all legal requirements are met.

- An overwhelming number of pupils feel safe in school and say that there are adults they can talk to if they are worried. Bullying and discriminatory behaviour is very rare.
- The premises are a safe environment and pupils are always appropriately supervised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They have established positive and trusting relationships and ensure that their classrooms are well ordered and calm. Effective teaching assistants support pupils well. The majority of pupils make strong progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Strong leadership in mathematics has played an important role in improvements in this subject. It is taught consistently well across the school. Staff have readily adopted an approach that puts reasoning and resilience at the heart of mathematics teaching. Teaching staff have benefited from visiting other schools and sharing practice. The subject leader analyses pupils' progress and has developed a clear plan for further improvements. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and make good progress.
- Much of the curriculum is delivered through topic activities and most writing activity stems from this learning. Writing is taught effectively. Pupils have clear success criteria to measure their progress against and teachers assess with accuracy. School staff hold regular learning conferences with pupils to reinforce themes such as handwriting and spelling. Pupils have a good understanding of how to improve their work.
- Pupils enjoy learning together and in many lessons teachers ask pupils to collaborate and work as learning partners. This works well. In a Year 3 computing lesson pupils worked with partners to programme and develop an interactive game and the work was focused and productive. They were able to jointly discuss their work and reflect on past errors, 'We have to take all the skills we have learned and put them in this game.'
- The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is effective. Pupils' progress in phonics is regularly and rigorously checked so that teachers can be sure that learning is at the right depth of difficulty. Reading in key stage 1 is strong and pupils use their phonic knowledge to break unfamiliar words down into shorter sounds to read them. They enjoy reading and demonstrate good comprehension skills. They are encouraged to share their books regularly at home. Books are arranged carefully in graded book bands to ensure that pupils are able to access texts that are suitably challenging yet not too difficult.
- Teaching in the SRB is organised into group and individual sessions. During the inspection pupils had the opportunity to go horse riding as well as take part in a cookery lesson. Pupils also worked independently, for example in mathematics. They showed a positive attitude towards their work, discussing their calculations and working through their methods. Adults ensured good progress by focusing on pupils' reasoning skills.
- Work in English and mathematics books shows careful planning for a progression of skills and knowledge through the year. However, this is not the case in the pupils' topic books, where learning is not as carefully organised and progression across the range of subjects is not evident. Many activities in these books lack challenge and do not extend and deepen pupils' skills and understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils believe that their teachers listen carefully to them and that they are taught to treat everyone fairly and equally.
- Pupils enjoy school. They uphold the school's values in their open and welcoming behaviours. They are tolerant and understand the importance of being respectful to others. Throughout the inspection, pupils were keen to talk about learning and those aspects of school they most enjoy.
- Pupils in the SRB are calm and focused in their work and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
- Parents and pupils say that bullying is very rare. Pupils believe in the school's ability to keep them safe and ensure their well-being. Parents praise the care given to their children and comment on their children's increased resilience and confidence.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They have been taught about e-safety and workshops have been offered to parents who know about the rules for working online safely.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is extremely good. The kind, caring and happy pupils are a credit to the school and community.
- Pupils are polite and friendly towards each other and to the adults who work with them. They listen carefully in their lessons and try hard to do their best. As a result, learning is not compromised, and teaching time is seldom lost to poor behaviour.
- Parents have no well-founded concerns; the overwhelming majority agree that behaviour is managed well, and the school responds well to any concerns that are raised.
- Virtually all pupils would recommend this school to a friend. However, despite enjoying and valuing their school, the absence rate for Hillside pupils remains above the national average. The school uses a wide range of strategies to support attendance and reinforce the importance of coming to school. Regular checking of attendance data enables the leadership team to identify pupils and families that are of concern, and to act swiftly to provide support.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' attainment in key stage 2 was above average for reading, writing and mathematics in 2018. The school is ambitious for all its pupils and current attainment in key stage 2 is high. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that the improvements that have been made to the progress assessment systems have allowed a sharper focus on individual learners. Teachers plan more effectively and

offer pupils specific support. This has contributed to sustaining the improvements in attainment.

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check dropped to be below the national average in 2018. The English subject leader has successfully addressed this by redeploying staff to ensure additional support as necessary. Teaching has been reviewed and a more multi-sensory approach introduced where pupils use all of their senses as they learn. This is working well, with pupils in Years 1 and 2 making good progress with their phonic learning.
- Teacher assessments for the current end of key stage 1 show that pupils continue to make strong progress in reading and mathematics. Better planning and resourcing together with more systematic teaching has increased the percentage of Year 2 pupils attaining greater depth.
- In mathematics, the school's approach to teaching strongly develops reasoning skills. Teachers are keen to use apparatus and practical activities to support learning and promote a deeper understanding. Pupils are able to use a range of practical and mental strategies to solve problems. Year 5 pupils were able to discuss their work about angles using technical vocabulary referencing their learning from previous lessons. Work in books shows good progress for all pupils and excitement and enthusiasm for the subject.
- Pupils learn to join their handwriting early on in Year 1. Teachers' attention to detail means that standards are high. Throughout the school, pupils' handwriting is well developed, and presentation is careful. Work in Year 6 pupils' books demonstrates consistent progress. Spelling is almost always accurate. Pupils accurately use speech marks, commas, semicolons and apostrophes.
- Pupils achieve well in English. Work in pupils' English books demonstrates that progress is being made and that pupils are becoming confident writers. Pupils write at an age-expected level in a variety of genres. Pupils are given meaningful opportunities to write and edit their work. In Year 6, pupils were exploring emotions having studied a war poem, and they wrote moving letters home as if from the trenches.
- Pupils in key stage 2 are articulate and will readily share their thinking. In Year 4 pupils were learning about advertising, particularly the use of persuasive writing. When writing and discussing catchy slogans pupils recognised that they will 'stick in your head' and that 'they have rhythm and rhyme'.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are encouraged to do so often. They are able to use their phonic knowledge to decode unfamiliar words and self-correct when necessary. The careful deployment of support staff ensures that pupils receive the support they need in order to make progress, and reading records detail the progress that pupils make. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading. They enjoy the school's use of a programme that monitors the amount they read and their development of fluency and comprehension. Year 6 pupils maintain the school library with pride.
- Whereas pupils make consistently good progress in English and mathematics, this was not evident in other subjects. Teachers follow curriculum maps but the work in books showed little progression beyond developing topic-related knowledge. Activities for the majority of year groups were very similar, for example sorting and classifying, but did not address the development of subject-specific skills.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children join the Reception Year with broadly typical skills and knowledge for their age, with the majority having been enrolled in the school's nursery for the previous year. The proportion of children who go on to attain a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year has been consistently close to the national average since 2016. They enjoy their learning, but do not make all the progress of which they are capable.
- The staff team has a developing understanding of what children know and can do. However, adults often do not pay close enough attention to the quality of their questioning and so miss opportunities to move learning forward.
- The outdoor learning environment mixes provision for Nursery and Reception children. They move between activities irrespective of age or appropriateness. Leaders do not plan sufficiently carefully to discriminate between activities and ensure age-appropriate learning for both age groups.
- Outdoor activities do not fully engage children, this is because the provision is not matched to their abilities and enthusiasms. For example, one group of boys found it hard to maintain their focus and moved rapidly from one activity to another. This reduced the opportunity for sustained concentration and deeper learning.
- Children in the Nursery are calm, they all engage with activities. This was commented on by a parent who was very happy with the transition arrangements that the school had put in place. However, the majority of activities in the Nursery were adult-directed and there were too few child-initiated opportunities for learning.
- Phonics teaching in the early years has some strengths. Children were engaged in their learning, enjoying the familiar routines of these sessions. When learning was strong effective strategies for learning were being used. The children listened carefully to each other and took turns appropriately. However, teachers did not model learning in enough detail, and consequently pupils were unable to complete their sentence writing activity successfully.
- Leaders' assessments show that writing is an area for development. This is being addressed particularly with a focus on developing boys' enthusiasm. A daily writing session is having a positive impact, early years staff are increasingly confident about identifying progress and next steps for learning.
- Attention has been paid to the early years setting to ensure that it is safe and that arrangements for parents to bring and collect their children are robust and effective.
- Nursery and Reception children are very confident around the school. They use the library and join in the weekly reading assemblies in key stage 1. New nursery parents visit the school and stay with their children for transition sessions. They value this arrangement.

School details

Unique reference number	120982
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10054388

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Trevor Wainwright
Headteacher	Mr Simon Minter
Telephone number	01493 661399
Website	www.hillside.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	head@hillside.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2018

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with SEND is similar to that found in most primary schools nationally. The proportion who have an education, health and care plan is average.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is low.
- The school has specially resourced provision for eight pupils with cognitive and learning needs. These pupils come from local schools and attend school on a part-time, four-days-a-week basis.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection followed a section 8 short inspection in March 2018. The section 8 inspection identified areas for improvement that the school was asked to address as a matter of priority. The school was also informed that its next inspection would be a full section 5.
- The inspectors looked at teaching in all classes. They were joined by the headteacher and deputy headteacher for many of these observations.
- Pupils were observed during lessons and at playtimes. They were spoken to informally in the classroom and during lunchtimes. An inspector held a formal meeting with the school council. They discussed their learning and opinions about issues such as behaviour. Inspectors also listened to pupils read. Throughout the inspection, inspectors checked work in a wide range of pupils' books.
- Discussions about school activities were held with four governors, a school improvement representative from the local authority, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff members, including the SENCo.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's website and looked at a range of the school's documents, including those relating to development planning, assessment, special educational needs, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors considered the 69 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 31 responses to the staff questionnaire and 41 pupil responses.

Inspection team

James Richards, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Pedlow	Ofsted Inspector

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