

Inspection of Hill View Academy

Fernside Avenue, Almondbury, Huddersfield HD5 8YE

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Hill View Academy is a school that has gone through a period of rapid transformation. Throughout school, the 'R' of respect is highly visible through the way pupils interact with each other. Pupils are surrounded by adults they know care deeply about them and want the best for them. Leaders' ambitions for pupils academically and socially are beginning to be realised more consistently.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They enjoy being in lessons and learning with, and alongside, each other. They build strong relationships with adults in the school. Relationship building has been at the heart of what leaders have developed and improved in the school over the recent past. These secure relationships mean that pupils feel confident to share concerns with adults, and to ask for help when they need it. If bullying does happen, pupils rightly have full confidence in staff to deal with this and address it.

Leaders know that for pupils to be successful, pupils need to be in school. Attendance has been a challenge for several years. Leaders have worked to improve attendance for all pupils. This has made a difference, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, some of the strategies for identifying families and pupils who need support around attendance need further development.

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

The new leadership team has raised the expectations and ambitions for what pupils can achieve in the curriculum. Pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Leaders have made sure that pupils are taught a curriculum that is carefully taught in an order to help them remember more over time. Pupils are very positive about their learning. For example, they talk enthusiastically about the different time periods they have learned about in history. Staff have received significant amounts of training to develop their understanding of the curriculum. In some areas of the curriculum, the activity choices and way that teachers teach sometimes do not give pupils the best chance of being successful in their learning. The work leaders have undertaken is beginning to have an impact on outcomes at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.

Reading is cherished at this school. A clear phonics curriculum is taught consistently by staff. Pupils have regular opportunities to read books matched to the sounds they have been taught. Any pupils who need help with their reading are quickly identified and supported. Staff have regular training to understand how to teach early reading. Pupils in key stage 2 who still need phonics are well supported. Leaders have worked to begin to develop a culture of reading across the school, for example through a consistent approach to how books are attractively displayed in classrooms. Pupils enjoy reading in this school and see its importance.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the changes leaders have made in the school. Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom. Leaders consider pupils' wider development to be as important as their academic achievement. Leaders make sure that all pupils benefit from this extensive range of clubs and activities. Staff use the personal, health, social and economic (PSHE) curriculum to help pupils develop a strong understanding of mental and physical health. Staff spot when pupils have particular interests and talents. They signpost them to a range of internal and external opportunities. Leaders are determined that pupils will value difference and respect individuality.

Children build strong relationships with adults in the early years. They are introduced to routines and expectations to develop their independence and resilience. Staff have high expectations about how children should behave. They clearly teach children how to develop positive learning behaviours. In the Reception Year, children get a strong start in their early understanding of number and in early reading. Children with SEND are quickly identified and supported. In some areas of learning, the knowledge and vocabulary that leaders want children to learn is clearly defined. In some areas of learning, this has not been as clearly defined. Where this is the case, adults sometimes miss opportunities to take children's learning further.

There is a consistent and shared vision from leaders at all levels about where they want to take the school next. Experienced and skilled governors offer high-quality challenge and support to school leaders. Trustees, governors and senior leaders in school work cohesively together to continue to move the school forwards. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where it needs to continue to improve. Staff feel well supported by leaders. Parents, in particular, speak positively about the positive impact of the changes made by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong commitment from all staff to help keep pupils safe. Staff receive regular training to help them to understand the risks that pupils and families may face. There are clear systems for reporting concerns. Leaders follow up these concerns quickly. Leaders work closely with other agencies to provide support for families and pupils. Leaders carefully analyse safeguarding incidents and patterns. Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils are taught important knowledge about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are taught how to stay safe online and how to recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pedagogy in some foundation subjects is not securely embedded. As a result, some activity choices do not give pupils the best chance of achieving the ambitious end points of the curriculum leaders have designed. Leaders should

continue to support teachers to develop clear pedagogical approaches relevant to each subject they teach.

- Leaders' system for increasing attendance and reducing persistent absence, while making a positive difference, is not as rigorous as it could be. As a result, barriers that prevent some pupils from attending school as often as they need to are not quickly identified. Leaders should ensure that their systems for monitoring and improving attendance for all groups of pupils are highly responsive, pro-active and designed to quickly identify the barriers to attendance for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent.
- The early years curriculum is not clearly enough defined across the seven areas of learning. As a result, there are missed opportunities in adult interactions and in provision to develop and enhance children's learning. Leaders should ensure that the early years curriculum is clearly defined with the knowledge, vocabulary and skills that leaders wish children to benefit from, beginning from their time in Nursery to when they leave the Reception Year.

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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	148134
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10267782
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Reddy
Headteacher	Ben Normington
Website	www.hillviewacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Impact Education Trust.
- The school joined the trust in September 2020.
- When the predecessor school, Almondbury Community School was inspected by Ofsted in 2018, it was judged to be inadequate.
- A new leadership team was fully established in the school in September 2022.
- An executive headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The headteacher was appointed in April 2022.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke to senior leaders, members of the local governing body and trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors spoke to the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, early reading, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teacher, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding officer and scrutinised relevant policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online questionnaires for staff and pupils. They also consider the view of parents via Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Liam Colclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jo Bentley

Ofsted Inspector

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