Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Hill Farm Academy

Foster Road, Radford, Coventry, West Midlands CV6 3BL

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Dawn Wilson. This school is part of the Castle Phoenix 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), Michele Marr, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Coache.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are extremely proud to attend this happy and friendly school. Every pupil is nurtured and included, whenever they join the school. This means that pupils feel a strong sense of connection with the school community. They look after each other well and have impeccable manners. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of the school's five core values of 'live without harm, equality, altruism, resourcefulness and navigate the world'.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. These are realised. Pupils have a high level of commitment to their learning. They are proud of their attainment and the progress they make. Pupils achieve well. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language.

Pupils trust staff to support and guide them. They know that staff will help them if they have any worries. Pupils feel safe in school and are able to voice their opinions. They behave extremely well. Adults model positive relationships to pupils. The playground is a hive of activity, where pupils socialise well and get along together.

Pupils have rich and varied opportunities to develop their wider talents and interests, through a wealth of clubs. These include baking, choir and sports.

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

The school has designed a highly ambitious and stimulating curriculum. Leaders have sequenced the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that they want pupils to know and when. Teachers present information in an exciting and engaging way. There is a focus on pupils learning key ideas and subject vocabulary. For example, in history, when studying Ancient Egyptians, pupils learn about excavations, pharaohs and the use of canopic jars in burials.

Pupils make links with their learning, such as the location of Rome in geography when studying the Romans in history. Supported by the oracy work, pupils are keen to talk about their learning. They are confident and express themselves articulately. Work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils shows that pupils' work across the whole curriculum is consistently of a high quality.

Staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND swiftly. Pupils with SEND achieve very well from their individual starting points because staff provide excellent support, adapting the curriculum where necessary. Staff work well with a range of professionals to support these pupils and pupils who are disadvantaged. Pupils attending the specially resourced provision are expertly supported. They are integrated into school life and their learning is of the highest quality.

Pupils achieve well in reading. From early years, children have many opportunities to enjoy stories. The school has developed a culture of reading for pleasure that is clearly evident throughout all classes. Younger pupils appreciate the extra reading practice they have with older reading buddies. The school has ensured that the phonics programme is taught consistently well. Pupils who need more support with learning letters and sounds receive urgent and systematic support. This helps to rapidly close the gaps between them and their peers. Pupils foster their love of reading in frequent visits to the school's excellent library. They enjoy the reading parties the school organises to celebrate achievements in reading.

Pupils know and follow the school's expectations of behaviour well. Children in the early years quickly settle into routines that help them learn. Pupils consistently demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. The vast majority of pupils attend school well and on time. When pupils do not attend as often as they should, the school works with parents and carers to address barriers to attendance. This work is highly effective.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils understand the importance of physical activity, healthy eating, good sleep routines and how these impact their long-term health. Mental well-being is developed through emotional literacy and resilience-building. The school works closely with the local Police Community Support Officers, who deliver sessions across key stage 1 and key stage 2 on topics such as people who help us, stranger danger and recognising and managing risky situations. Pupils benefit from visitors to school, such as pilots, engineers, chefs and doctors, who inspire them, enhance their learning and develop aspirations. Pupils have many leadership opportunities, such as digital leaders and values ambassadors. The school councillors

recently raised money for playground equipment. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Trustees and governors understand their statutory duties thoroughly and diligently fulfil their responsibilities. They use their detailed knowledge of the school to hold leaders to account effectively. Staff value the opportunities for training and the consideration of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in April 2015.

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	139681
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10344010
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	471
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Coache
CEO of the trust	Michele Marr
Headteacher	Dawn Wilson
Website	www.hillfarmprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Castle Phoenix Trust.
- The school makes use of one unregistered provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation of the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with members of the trust board, the local governing board, the trust's CEO and the trust's lead for the quality of education.

- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, associate headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation regarding the support pupils with SEND receive. They looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND in lessons.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes from trust and governing board meetings as well as the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspector looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. She 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.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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