

The Hill Primary Academy

Tudor Street, Thurnscoe, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 0DS

Inspection dates

5–6 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and managers have not sustained good teaching and learning and outcomes since the school's conversion to academy status.
- Too many pupils reach levels of attainment that are consistently lower than those expected for pupils of their age.
- Teachers do not use their knowledge of pupils' capabilities to plan lessons so that their different learning needs can be met.
- Teachers do not receive clear guidance on how to mark pupils' work and give them feedback to help them improve.
- Not all adults are used effectively to promote good learning.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are low.
- Governors do not consistently hold leaders to account or challenge them thoroughly enough.
- Adults in the early years do not use assessment information to inform teaching, and consequently learning is frequently too slow.
- Safeguarding is not effective. Leaders and managers have not ensured that the statutory welfare requirements for early years pupils are met. They also do not ensure that aspects of safeguarding are rigorous and are monitored effectively enough.
- Not all leaders have the skills and knowledge to carry out their role effectively. Leaders and managers do not have an accurate picture of pupils' progress.
- Too many pupils display low-level disruption in lessons, which interrupts and slows learning. Behaviour, particularly at breaktimes, is often overly boisterous.
- Members of the new trust are in the early stages of monitoring new policies and procedures. In some instances they have not acted quickly enough to tackle weaknesses.

The school has the following strengths

- Appropriate recruitment checks are made.
- There has been a marked improvement in the behaviours of some pupils.
- The new leaders and managers have an accurate picture of the school's weaknesses.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - timelines in action plans are met and improvements are then monitored rigorously to ensure they are effective
 - governors hold leaders to account for timelines and the effectiveness of improvements
 - middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and early years leader, have the skills and knowledge so that they are more effective in carrying out their roles
 - accurate information is gathered on pupils' attainment so that it can be used to follow pupils' progress and inform teachers' planning
 - safeguarding is more effective, including improved monitoring and successful implementation of procedures
 - a new marking policy is implemented effectively so that teachers give pupils feedback that will help them improve.
- Improve the quality of teaching to raise pupils' achievements by ensuring that teachers:
 - use accurate information on pupils' attainment to plan their lessons so that they can identify and meet pupils' different abilities and learning needs
 - deploy extra adults more effectively to promote pupils' learning.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
 - a greater proportion of pupils attend school more regularly
 - teachers and more pupils follow the guidance and procedures as noted in the behaviour policy.
- Improve outcomes and ensure the welfare of pupils in the early years by ensuring that:
 - all welfare requirements are consistently met and any risks are quickly identified and addressed
 - leaders and managers in the early years are effective in identifying and prioritising actions to improve provision
 - an accurate assessment system is fully and effectively implemented and it is used to inform teaching and promote improved outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the school's conversion to academy status in 2012, little has been done to maintain or improve the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils have declined considerably.
- Many middle leaders are new to their role. They do not yet demonstrate the skills or knowledge to carry out their roles effectively. They do not support the improvement of teaching and learning well enough.
- Information on pupils' progress and attainment is not available. Assessment information from May 2016 was deemed by the new leadership team to be inaccurate, but as yet new assessment information has not been gathered. Adults do not have a clear overall picture of pupils' achievement, or how different groups of pupils achieve.
- Teachers do not receive clear guidance on how to give pupils constructive feedback to help them improve their work. Too many pupils are given the same criteria to reach at the beginning of the lesson and have little or no knowledge of how they could improve their work.
- The new trust has a very accurate picture of the weaknesses in the school. The school has a number of action plans which address weaknesses identified by the new trust. Not all of these actions are being completed in a timely manner and monitoring is not routinely rigorous enough to ensure that they are consistently effective. For example, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not currently have their needs identified or met, and the new behaviour policy has not been adopted by everyone.
- The new trust has begun a systematic monitoring of teaching so that weaknesses can be identified. This new system has not been in place long enough to be effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- The new trust also recognises that evaluations of the pupil premium and the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding have not been effective enough. A review of this funding has been completed, the recommendations of which have not had time to be implemented.
- The recent introduction of a range of exciting after-school clubs and activities such as the 'park run' have enhanced pupils' enjoyment of school. School leaders are currently piloting a new curriculum which they anticipate will engage pupils more in their learning.
- Pupils learn about other religions and how to respect the views of others. They are polite to visitors. The new curriculum is encouraging the good development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills.
- The new leadership team has a dogged determination to raise the quality of teaching so that pupils may fulfil their potential. They have raised the morale of staff through the support that has become available so that they can improve their skills. They have also already improved the behaviours of a number of pupils.
- Newly qualified teachers benefit from a comprehensive support package available through the Reach4 Trust. They consider that this has helped them develop their teaching skills further. However, it is not recommended that the school appoint newly qualified teachers.

- Parents welcomed some of the initiatives that the new leadership team have established, such as greeting the pupils in the playground in the morning. They consider that this provides a good opportunity to communicate easily and regularly with staff so that any concerns can be addressed immediately.

Governance of the school

- An interim governing body has been put in place. A review of their skills to move the school forward has been undertaken. They recognise the need for a review of pupil premium funding and this review is being undertaken.
- Governors, along with the senior leadership team and trust executives, have a very accurate picture of the school's inadequacies. The governors meet regularly to monitor the action plan and consider the effectiveness of its implementation. However, governors' monitoring and challenging of action plans is not always thorough enough and therefore timelines are not always met, such as that for the implementation of the anti-bullying policy.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Leaders and managers have not ensured that all early years welfare requirements have been met. They have not identified and dealt with potential risks quickly enough. Lack of adequate supervision at breaktimes too often leaves pupils vulnerable to accidents or potential emotional distress.
- A safeguarding audit has been undertaken by the new trust following concerns raised on conversion. Some aspects of this audit, for example the effectiveness of training, have not been monitored sufficiently and not all timelines have been met. Therefore, at the time of the inspection, many adults did not know who to approach with any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers typically give all pupils the same set of targets or success criteria at the beginning of each lesson. This means that the needs of some, particularly the most able pupils, are not being met. For example, in a Year 2 class, the most able pupils had already mastered the concepts of full stops and capital letters, yet still had this as a target.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are often too low. This lack of ambition hinders the progress of the most able pupils in particular. For instance, in an information technology lesson in Year 3, the most able pupils completed work that they had done before. They found the task easy and were offered no further challenge.
- Pupils are not given enough guidance on how they can improve their work, nor do they get the opportunity to consider and learn from the occasional comment that some teachers may make. Consequently, pupils' aspirations are too low.
- Teachers have little accurate information on pupils' attainment and progress. In particular this means that the most able pupils are often set tasks that are the same as the rest of the class and do not help them fulfil their potential.
- Less able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities often struggle with work they are tasked to complete. In Year 6, less able pupils could not complete a comprehension exercise as they were unable to read the questions. In a

mathematics lesson a pupil gained five correct answers out of 12 questions. These pupils were not given the support they needed, or a suitable task. Consequently they spent too much time in lessons waiting for assistance and not learning.

- The majority of teachers do not manage behaviour successfully and do not engage pupils by capturing their interest in lessons. Pupils often become bored and distracted.
- Some teachers do not have the skills to teach phonics well. Too many times inaccuracies are not picked up, lessons are not matched to learning needs and adults fail to model letter sounds correctly. This prevents the most able and less able pupils from learning to read and write at an appropriate rate.
- Some teachers have built good relationships with pupils and this has made pupils' learning and behaviour more positive, particularly in Year 4.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Pupils are not always safe when out at play, as supervisors are not paying attention to their needs at all times. Some pupils become distressed, and this remains unnoticed by adults. Unsafe areas are not monitored effectively and pupils are at risk of harm.
- Pupils are given appropriate attention when they need first aid. However, these incidents are not monitored for trends or patterns.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. Some pupils raised concerns that some bullying occurred in school, particularly at breaktimes.
- Older pupils have an awareness of how they should keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- In too many lessons low-level disruption interrupts learning. Frequently, this is due to teachers not engaging pupils' interest or managing behaviour well in accordance with the new behaviour policy.
- At breaktimes adults' expectations of standards of acceptable behaviour are too low. Pupils confirm that instances of physical rough play such as kicking each other are regular occurrences.
- Too many pupils do not attend school often enough and therefore overall rates of attendance in the school are low. School leaders are taking steps to address this issue. For example, recently the number of term-time holidays has fallen. However, it is too soon to evaluate if this improvement is embedded.
- New monitoring logs for behavioural incidents have been introduced. This gives the leadership clearer details of incidents. However, due to a lack of monitoring the logs are not yet consistently analysed to consider if events could be avoided in the future.
- Some adults have had a direct impact on pupils' behaviour by engaging them in activities they enjoy. For example, a small group of pupils take part in art lessons where they frequently create high-quality work. This helps them develop concentration skills and gives them pride in what they can achieve, which promotes better learning and behaviour in other lessons.

- The majority of parents that inspectors spoke to did not have any major concerns about behaviour in the school. Both pupils and parents spoke enthusiastically about a new behavioural electronic application which has supported some improvement in behaviour.
- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils has improved significantly under the new leadership. Pupils who were once unable to behave well enough to join other pupils at lunchtime now do so. Instances of exclusions for a number of pupils have reduced.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils in all key stages and in all key groups have attainment that is below that of other pupils of the same age nationally. Poor attainment in literacy skills prevents pupils from being able to access, or make acceptable progress in, other subject areas.
- The vast majority of pupils in the school do not make the progress they are capable of due to the legacy of inadequate teaching they have received. They are therefore poorly prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The most able pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils receive the same learning targets in lessons as other pupils. Therefore they are not set work that matches their learning needs and so they consistently underachieve.
- There is no evidence to suggest that the spending of the pupil premium funding has had a positive impact on the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Less able pupils and those who have a statement of special educational needs do not have their needs met. They do not have individual plans which identify their particular learning needs and help to guide adults in meeting these needs. Consequently, these pupils do not receive appropriate support and therefore make adequate progress.
- Pupils' reading skills are generally below those of other pupils for their age nationally. They have too few opportunities to read to adults. Many pupils receive their reading books several weeks into the term and therefore miss valuable learning time.
- As a result of effective training last year, pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check in 2016 greatly improved.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Children enter the early years with skills which are typically lower than expected for their age, particularly in reading and writing. Children consistently leave the early years with standards which are also lower than expected. Therefore children do not make the progress that they could make and are not well prepared to move to Year 1.
- The attainment of disadvantaged children has generally been below that of other children in the early years and other children nationally. In 2015, the attainment of these children declined further.
- The percentage of children gaining a good level of development in 2016 was 53%. Although this was less than predicted and much lower than that of other children of the same age nationally, this was an improvement from previous years.
- Currently, teachers' interactions with children do not promote good learning. Teachers' questioning skills are not effective in helping children gain a greater depth of learning.

- Adults in the early years do not use information about children's abilities to plan effective activities. Consequently, staff are missing chances to fully exploit opportunities to develop children's learning in all areas of provision.
- Children behave well and adults are building good relationships with them.
- An external consultant is currently providing support for the early years. A new assessment system is being put in place and monitored. It is not yet used effectively to plan activities to meet children's needs.
- The learning environment has been improved and children are becoming more engaged in learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that statutory welfare requirements are met. Procedures for administering medicines are not correctly followed and guidance on medication is not available. Consequently, children could be put at risk of harm.
- Parental engagement in the early years has improved very recently. 'Stay and play' sessions, home visits and library sessions have supported parents' increasing involvement in their child's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	138700
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10021546

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	Interim governing body
Chair	Mark Coppell
Interim principal	David Tingle
Telephone number	01709 892 145
Website	www.thehillacademy.co.uk/
Email address	info@reach4.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Hill Primary Academy is a large primary school.
- In 2012 the school joined the Navigate Academy Trust. The predecessor school was last inspected in December 2010 when it was judged to be outstanding.
- In May 2016 the school converted to the Reach4 Academy Trust.
- There have been extensive changes in staffing since the school became an academy.
- The Reach4 Academy Trust is currently in the process of recruiting a substantive principal.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish and meets the current government floor standards.
- Separately run provision for children aged from three months to five years shares the school site. This provision receives a separate Ofsted inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The school was inspected under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. It was inspected at the request of the regional director for the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside, acting on behalf of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector, due to concerns regarding leadership and management and pupil outcomes. The inspection was deemed a section 5 inspection on 5 October 2016.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, and the chair of the interim governing board and representatives of Reach4 Academy Trust. They also met with teaching and non-teaching staff and external consultants who are currently supporting the school.
- Inspectors visited a number of lessons in a range of subjects; many of these visits were with members of the senior leadership team. They also studied a number of books from several different year groups; this activity was also conducted alongside members of the senior leadership team.
- The school’s action plans for improvement and audits completed by Reach4 Trust were considered.
- A number of documents were studied, including those policies and records relating to the safety and welfare of pupils such as recruitment checks, the single central record, behaviour records, accident forms and pupil case files.
- No responses to the Ofsted parent questionnaire, Parent View, were received. However, inspectors spoke to a number of parents on both days of the inspection.

Inspection team

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Michael Reeves	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Susan Twaits	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Hussey	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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