

# Ellacombe Academy

Ellacombe Church Road, Ellacombe, Torquay, Devon, TQ1 1TG

**Inspection dates** 12–13 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The achievement of the pupils currently in school is good and has improved rapidly in the short time since the academy was established.
- Teaching overall is good and teaching in the Reception class is excellent. Pupils throughout the school make at least good progress from their starting points.
- The pupils are very well prepared for moving from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is significantly above national averages overall and in writing in particular.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and the pupils have an excellent attitude to learning.
- Pupils feel safe in school and enjoy coming to learn. Attendance continues to improve.
- The leadership of the executive headteacher and the senior team has quickly brought about improvements to the quality of teaching and to the progress pupils make.
- Middle leaders have received very good training and guidance and now play an active role in school. They support the work of the senior team well in the academy's efforts to raise standards in teaching and in pupils' performance.
- The board of directors, the governing body, checks thoroughly how well the school is doing to make sure the academy is improving the life chances of the pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in reading at the end of Year 6 does not match that seen in writing or mathematics which is in line with national averages.
- The progress made by those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is not yet as rapid as that made by other pupils in the school in all year groups.
- The plans for using the primary sports funding do not allow for clear ways to check if the funding is making a difference.

## Information about this inspection

- The team of inspectors saw 17 lessons, six of which were jointly observed with school leaders.
- A whole-school assembly led by the Head of Academy was observed.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Board of Directors and two other directors, and with senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with an external consultant who had reviewed the academy in June 2013.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading and scrutinised samples of pupils' workbooks.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including the academy's information on pupils' recent progress, planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements
- The inspection team also took account of the 34 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and gathered views from informal discussions with parents attending a coffee morning at the school.

## Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ann Sydney

Additional Inspector

Sue Invermee

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Ellacombe Academy is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils come from the immediate area.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than the national figures, as is the proportion of pupils who speak a first language other than English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and those from service families, is well above than the national average. Currently there are no children from service families attending the academy.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is close to the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is a little above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, the school has joined the Learning Academy Partnership (South West) with Ilsham Church of England Academy and the Little Stars Children's Centre. The academy has seen a large number of staff changes in the 5½ terms it has been open, including the appointment of a new headteacher, who is the executive headteacher across the partnership and the head of academy. The executive headteacher is a national leader of education.

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

- Improve attainment and progress in reading so that they at least match those in writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that the progress made by those pupils eligible for additional support through the pupil premium grant is accelerated further so that gaps in attainment when compared with other pupils are closed in all year groups, but particularly in Years 4 to 6.
- Ensure that the plans for how the primary sports funding is used identify how school leaders will check if it is making a difference in improving the quality of physical education and sport in the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils has improved significantly in the short time the academy has been open. There is a legacy of low attainment among the older pupils but this is being addressed robustly. The proportion of pupils attaining at or above the levels expected for their ages is improving due to the improvements in the quality of their school experience.
- Pupils join the academy with skills that are much lower than those seen typically for their ages. Through high quality teaching in the Reception classes, these gaps rapidly close and, by the end of their first year in the academy, over 80% of the children have reached a good level of development which is much higher than the national average. Children are very well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils learn the sounds that letters make (phonics) quickly and use this knowledge when reading unfamiliar words. In the national phonics check, all pupils in 2012 reached the expected level at their first attempt or in the re-sit the following year. In 2013, a greater proportion of pupils than that seen nationally reached the expected level at the first opportunity and it is expected that the others will do so next year.
- Attainment has risen for pupils by the end of Year 2. They make very good progress and their attainment overall in national assessments was significantly above the average. Attainment in writing is stronger than that in reading and mathematics.
- The attainment of pupils in Year 6 in writing and mathematics is broadly average, with good progress in the last two years. Reading performance still lags behind, although pupils are making good progress. The performance of more able pupils is rising rapidly.
- Disabled pupils or those with special educational needs are identified early and make good progress because they receive well-targeted support. Pupils are supported both in class and in well-planned intervention work in small groups or on a one-to-one basis around the school. As a result, pupils with additional needs make similar rates of progress to other pupils.
- Those pupils who are eligible for additional support through the pupil premium grant now make good progress. Gaps still remain in their attainment and in the rates of progress made in some year groups compared with other pupils. In the first national assessments at the end of Year 6, those pupils receiving free school meals were seven terms behind other pupils in reading, four terms behind in writing and five terms behind in mathematics. The academy's own information indicates that these gaps are closing significantly this year.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall, with a substantial number of lessons now being outstanding. Most of the teachers have recently joined the profession and their skills have been developed well by the school during their first year in the academy. All of the teachers bring energy and enthusiasm to the lessons so that pupils are engaged seriously in learning.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is outstanding. Activities help the children learn new skills quickly. One of the teachers appeared on video as Captain X-Ray and outlined to the children the challenges of the day and then provided feedback to individual children. One child was awestruck when Captain X-Ray told her over the video link, 'I am looking for you to write a full sentence.'
- Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers provide pupils with clear outlines that let them know what they are going to learn. These are referred to regularly so pupils can check how well they are doing and, at the end of the lesson, pupils say what they have learned or what they can now do.
- Pupils' books are marked thoroughly and provide pupils with clear feedback on how they can improve their work. Pupils then make the necessary corrections quickly to address any misconceptions.

- The academy quickly recognised the need to support the social and emotional development of many of the pupils so that they are ready to learn. To this end, the academy has built up a very strong pastoral team that helps pupils when they are faced with challenges. Classrooms are bright and stimulating and provide an outstanding learning environment with a range of pupils' work on display that is celebrated, alongside learning walls and materials that pupils can refer to if they need a little bit of help.
- In lessons, teachers are very aware of the different abilities of their pupils. Activities are aimed at making sure the tasks are not too difficult or too easy. In one mathematics lesson in Year 3, the teacher set pupils off on the task of calculating sub-zero temperatures when he felt they were ready to try the work for themselves. The teacher then monitored the progress the pupils made, drawing back into his focus group for additional help those who were uncertain.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. This is seen as a very high priority. Pupils feel safe and well looked after in school and have a very good understanding of personal safety. They have termly workshops on internet safety. This is followed up in lessons, as in the Year 6 class discussing issues around sharing photographs and video clips online and the problems that can develop from this.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare, as are incidents of unkindness. Pupils do fall out but they say that issues are dealt with quickly by staff when necessary but for the most part pupils make friends again with each other without having to go to an adult.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding and contributes extremely well to their learning in class. Pupils work on activities together and have excellent collaborative skills. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics class, pupils successfully discussed ways of solving calculations that involved using brackets.
- In the past, there has been variation in outcomes between boys and girls. The academy has made sure activities interest boys to increase their engagement. In a Year 4 drama lesson, boys were fully involved in acting out scenes from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, with boys enthusiastically taking on the roles of all of the main characters, including that of Cleopatra.
- The presentation of pupils' work is very good across the school and pupils take great pride when talking about their work. They have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and the things they need to do to improve.
- In class, routines are well known. Pupils respond to cues from teachers quickly and there is a consistent approach by all staff to managing behaviour. Movement by pupils around school is calm and ordered. The pupils showed excellent manners, holding doors open and displaying courteous behaviour.
- The academy divides pupils into family groups in which older pupils work with younger ones and discuss ideas and issues that can be presented to the senior leaders in school by the school council. Pupils of different ages are able to have a voice and share their opinions.
- Attendance has improved dramatically over the last two years and is now above the national average. Punctuality has improved as pupils are now enjoying coming to the academy.
- Pupils are very positive about the changes that have happened since becoming an academy. In discussions, they highlight the improvements in discipline and the improvements in the teaching, especially as they have specialist teachers for some subjects such as physical education and French. They enjoy the much improved library and the reading corners around the school and in the classrooms.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- Leadership and management of the academy are outstanding. The executive headteacher swiftly identified the inadequacies that were stopping pupils from achieving. Senior leaders have put in

place plans and actions that have rapidly improved the quality of teaching and are now delivering good or better outcomes for the pupils. There is a determination to provide an opportunity for all pupils to achieve.

- The academy leaders have eradicated weak and ineffectual teaching through recruiting committed staff who motivate and enthuse pupils across all year groups.
- Systems to monitor the progress that pupils make are robust and provide middle and senior leaders with a clear overview of how individuals and groups are doing. Middle leaders are then able to use this information to identify if any pupils need additional support or if teaching in a particular area is not ensuring all pupils achieve as highly as they can.
- Performance management arrangements are robust and link the outcomes for pupils to any salary increases or promotion opportunities.
- The curriculum is delivering good outcomes for the pupils and effectively prepares them for their next stage in education. Pupils have a very good range of enrichment opportunities in music, art and sport. The social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness of pupils is nurtured and developed through the academy's commitment to the development of happy and respectful relationships within the school.
- The academy has worked hard with parents to support them in helping their children learn. Regular coffee mornings allow parents who may feel isolated to meet up with others to talk and share. The school considers the support it can provide for families as being a key in helping some pupils to getting the most out of school.
- The school has clear plans to use the primary sports funding to raise the quality of physical education teaching in the academy, with coaches working alongside teachers to provide on-going training in specific sports. The school has already increased the participation rates of pupils in organised sports. The plans the academy has are well considered but require a more formalised system to review the impact of the work.
- Child protection and safeguarding procedures are exemplary and ensure pupils are well cared for in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The board of directors has a good understanding of the strengths of the academy and the challenges that lie ahead. The directors visit the school regularly and are given information by school leaders that inform them about the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make, including specific groups such as those pupils eligible for free school meals. They can then review how successful teachers are in tackling underperformance and how increases in teachers' salary and their opportunities for promotion are linked to how well the pupils achieve. The directors draw from a wide range of skills that allow them to review key aspects of the school, including the financial position of the school and how the school is using the pupil premium and the primary sports funding. The directors recognise they need to measure the impact of this funding closely to ensure it is being used wisely. Safeguarding systems are reviewed annually to ensure pupils' welfare is maintained at the highest level.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138047
<b>Local authority</b>	Torbay
<b>Inspection number</b>	399906

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	253
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	James Cross
<b>Headteacher</b>	Executive Headteacher Lynn Atkinson Head of Academy Tracey Pitocco
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01803 293040
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