



The Erme Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113254
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279126
Inspection dates 9 May 2006 to 10 May 2006
Reporting inspector Laurie Lewin AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Community		Ivybridge
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon PL21 0AJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01752 892247
Number on roll	182	Fax number	01752 698568
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Helen Maddaford
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr Simon Hall

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a medium sized school, with nearly all of the pupils being White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is just above the national average, with the proportion having statements of learning difficulty being high. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. Good leadership and management, with strong leadership from the new headteacher, enable staff and governors to work very well together to upgrade all aspects of the school's work. The school measures its own performance accurately, has clear aims and good potential to achieve these. It provides sound value for money. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children progress well and reach average standards. This good teaching and good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, by the end of which pupils attain slightly above-average standards. In recent times, pupils have not been making enough progress in Years 3 to 6. However, very effective initiatives to improve teaching to a good level have resulted in pupils' progress improving to a satisfactory level, with increasing evidence of good progress seen. However, teaching for lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties in Years 3 to 6 does not always enable them to make as much progress as others. Across the school, pupils' English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are not developed sufficiently in other subjects. The school has introduced good assessment systems to track pupils' progress, but these have not yet been fully implemented. Pupils' behaviour is good and there is a calm, happy and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils feel secure and develop confident attitudes because the school supports, guides and cares for them well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the teaching for lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties in Years 3 to 6, so that they always progress at least as well as the other pupils.
- Improve the opportunities to extend pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum.
- Fully implement the recently introduced, good quality assessment procedures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. When they start school, children generally attain below the expected levels. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, by the end of which most attain average levels. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is good, with slightly above-average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in Years 3 to 6 has not been as good as it should be in recent years. However, successful support programmes to improve teaching have resulted in rapid improvement so that overall progress is now satisfactory, with much good progress evident in lessons and in the work pupils do.

In particular, by carefully targeting the performance of different groups of pupils, the school has successfully improved the performance of boys, who had been significantly underachieving until this year. Pupils now attain average standards by the end of Year 6. The school is rightly seeking to boost Year 3 to 6 pupils' achievement further. In

particular, there is a suitable focus on boosting the achievement of lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties, who do not always progress as well as other pupils in English, mathematics and science. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for pupils' attainment and is broadly successful in achieving these.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour is good. Older pupils spoken to were exceptionally polite and friendly. Pupils have a good awareness of the need to stay fit and healthy. This is well promoted, for example, through the wide-ranging sports programme, projects to grow their own vegetables and healthy school lunches – which pupils describe as 'Just like Jamie Oliver's meals.' Pupils gain a good understanding of the importance of contributing to the community, for example, through initiatives undertaken by the school council and through the school's involvement with the events and activities in the local town. Through taking on responsibilities and showing initiative in areas such as developing their own charity fundraising projects, pupils gain a sound understanding of how to develop the skills they will need to support their future economic well-being. Pupils', moral, social and cultural development is good. However, their spiritual awareness is only satisfactory, with opportunities sometimes missed to promote this area more extensively. Pupils develop good cultural awareness, for example, through the excellent links forged with a school in Uganda.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall. Teaching for the youngest age groups is consistently good and ensures that children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 progress well. Recent significant improvement in the quality of teaching for older pupils has turned previous unsatisfactory progress by pupils in Years 3 to 6 into satisfactory overall progress. The impact of this improvement is still coming through, with further acceleration in pupils' progress becoming increasingly evident. For example, interesting and clear presentations by teachers, good use of resources such as the new interactive whiteboards and good work by the specialist science teacher helped pupils progress well in the lessons seen. The good relationships they have with staff result in pupils feeling strongly encouraged. They enjoy their learning because teachers plan interesting work. The school has introduced some good assessment systems to track pupils' progress. However, these systems are at the early stages of development and do not yet sufficiently impact on improving pupils' learning. The basic skills of teaching writing, number and using and applying mathematics are identified correctly by the school as the key areas that need further boosting, especially for the lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties in Years 3 to 6.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage where a wide range of activities enables children to make a confident start at school. There are detailed programmes of work for all subjects, but these are not always adapted well enough to meet the needs of lower-attaining pupils. Also, not enough opportunities are provided to help pupils develop their English, mathematics and ICT skills in other subjects. Good provision is made within the curriculum to develop pupils' personal, social and health education. The school offers a good range of additional activities and pupils talk enthusiastically about the visits they make linked to their topic work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good. Staff show good levels of commitment to the safety, care and well-being of pupils. Child protection arrangements are robust. Vulnerable pupils and those with physical disabilities are well supported. Recently clarified, effective procedures for rewarding good behaviour and firmly addressing any problems, along with improved systems for detecting pupils' concerns, have had a very positive impact on improving behaviour and eliminating any bullying – which pupils say is now very rare. Teachers are starting to make good use of information about pupils' progress to set targets to help individuals improve their work. However, there remains much scope for improving this area. Good examples of the improving practice are seen for the oldest pupils, who are now clear about their learning targets and well involved in the process of assessing how well they are doing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are helping the school to move forward at a rapid pace. The new headteacher has led staff and governors well in accurately evaluating and monitoring current performance and devising a clear vision for the school's future. He has created a strong team atmosphere in which staff and governors are all fully signed up to the school's development and work energetically and with strong commitment to achieve this. In particular, improvements in teaching and in pupils' behaviour have made a big impact on improving pupils' achievement. Older pupils spoken to said, 'Everything has got so much better since the new headteacher arrived.'

Very good use of local education authority support services has helped put the school firmly back on track. It has given the staff confidence to sustain developments. Improvements made to the building have also significantly enhanced the quality of education, with older pupils saying, 'It's great to have some space to work in... and we can do lots of cool new sports!'

The school has rightly set staff roles and responsibilities as a priority for development. Subject co-ordinators do not yet have enough opportunities to monitor the quality of

the curriculum or teaching and learning across the school. Governance of the school is good, with governors visiting regularly and having full involvement in all aspects of strategic development. The current momentum of the leadership and management has set down clear markers to help this to become a good or even better school in the future.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making us so welcome and helping us during the school's inspection. We especially enjoyed talking to you and finding out about how much you think the school has improved recently.

• You work hard in lessons and show interest in the tasks that you are given. • Your school is a very friendly place and you behave well. • You like your teachers and you told us, 'They are always friendly and encourage us!' We also think your teachers do a good job. • You clearly appreciate all of the extra, interesting activities that the school provides for you. • The school does a good job of taking care of you. • We were impressed to see how much you know about the need to eat healthy foods and stay fit. • Your headteacher and staff work well together to make a calm and happy atmosphere in the school.

To keep things improving we have asked teachers to look at ways of making English, mathematics and science lessons even better, especially for those pupils who find the work hard. We also think there should be more chances in different subjects for you to practise and improve your English, mathematics and ICT skills. Lastly, we think the school is right to concentrate on making better use of all of the information about your progress so that you can have even clearer targets to help you improve your work.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.