

Ernesettle Community School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	134802
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	385339
Inspection dates	29 February–1 March 2012
Lead inspector	Grahame Sherfield HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	327
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Wood
Headteacher	Aaron Meredith
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 May 2010
School address	Biggin Hill Ernesettle Plymouth PL5 2RB
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Grahame Sherfield

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sally Hall

Additional inspector

Susan Smith

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 25 lessons, taught by 12 teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils and met some parents and carers informally. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at key documents, such as the school's development plan and the minutes of meetings of the governing body, as well as considered the outcomes of a recent survey of the views of parents and carers conducted by the school in which 149 questionnaires were returned.

Information about the school

Ernesettle Community School is of above average size. It serves a largely White British community from the surrounding area. The proportions of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, including those with a statement, and of those known to be eligible for free school meals, are above average.

There has been a change in leadership since the previous inspection. A new headteacher took up the post from 1 February 2011, following a period when he was acting headteacher. The school meets the current government floor standard for the proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 and above in both English and mathematics and of those making expected progress in these two subjects.

When Ernesettle Community School was inspected in May 2010, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, the school was inspected on four occasions. At the last monitoring inspection, the school was judged to be making good progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. There has been exceptional progress and Ernesettle is now a good school where pupils flourish in a caring and friendly environment.
- Children get off to an outstanding start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result of good teaching, progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has accelerated and is now good. Pupils enjoy their learning and achievement is good.
- Teaching has improved significantly and is now consistently good. Enthusiastic teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and sequences of lessons and activities are well planned to support good progress. Teaching assistants prompt pupils to think for themselves and their contributions are well judged. Classrooms and other areas provide a consistently rich environment to support learning.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to their learning. They report they feel safe and parents and carers agree. The school has recently introduced new approaches to promoting attendance but the impact has been limited so far. The school does not routinely analyse the attendance of different groups of pupils and attendance remains broadly average.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has successfully created a culture of continuous improvement that is widely shared. The progress of individual pupils and of groups is rigorously checked. Procedures for monitoring pupils’ work, teachers’ planning and the quality of teaching are used well to check the impact of actions taken and to identify any further improvement required. The governing body, however, is not sufficiently involved in identifying improvement priorities and in checking the progress and impact of actions taken.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attendance so that it is above average by December 2012 by:
 - embedding recent approaches to promoting better attendance
 - carrying out more systematic analysis of attendance data to target the school's actions more effectively.

- Develop the role of the governing body in supporting the school's leaders and holding them to account by:
 - engaging the governing body more systematically in school self-evaluation processes
 - involving the governing body in development planning at an earlier stage and in regularly checking the progress of actions to secure improvement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

In most of the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils were enthusiastic and sustained their efforts well. Good progress was often associated with real excitement about learning generated by the teachers and with activities planned well to address difficulties in pupils' learning that teachers had identified using their good assessment of pupils' work. In rare instances where progress was only satisfactory, pupils' pace of learning slowed as the learning activities met their needs less effectively and they were not fully clear on what they were expected to do.

Children join the school with skills and knowledge that are well below those expected for their age. They make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of the significantly improved provision. Skills in reading, writing and number are developing very well. Attainment in reading was a little above that in writing and mathematics in 2011 and the school's data and inspection evidence show that progress is accelerating in Years 1 and 2. Year 2 pupils are on track to reach broadly average standards by the end of the summer term. Progress accelerates rapidly by the end of Year 6 and in 2011, attainment was significantly above average in English and mathematics with reading strong. Current pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points and the school's data and inspection evidence indicate that pupils are set to achieve broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as those known to be eligible for free school meals, make similar progress to their peers.

Almost all of the parents and carers who responded to the school's questionnaire think that their children are making good progress in the school. Inspection evidence shows that this confidence is justified.

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Quality of teaching

Good relationships are well established in all classrooms. The marking of pupils' work is frequent, of very high quality and teachers and teaching assistants contribute. There are clear indications of how work might be improved and frequently a good dialogue in the marking between pupils and the teacher. Lessons are planned carefully and are linked appropriately with the planned curriculum. In lessons observed, teaching made a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly in supporting them in getting on well together, choosing behaviour appropriate to the situation and sustaining their efforts.

The best teaching observed was outstanding and characterised by making the most of every opportunity, however seemingly small, to promote pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson on words other than 'said', the teacher asked pupils to come to the carpet in the manner suggested by one of the words the class had been discussing. Outstanding teaching was observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage where all staff worked together seamlessly to promote children's learning, and exciting and engaging activities were very well planned. Most teaching observed was good with classrooms well managed to maintain a brisk pace in learning. Good attention was given to checking pupils' understanding as lessons proceeded, for example using small whiteboards, and to meeting pupils' varying learning needs. Modelling what was expected of pupils was a strong feature, sometimes involving more active approaches. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, a pupil turned through various points of the compass to illustrate their value. Other effective examples of active approaches included a drama session for Years 5 and 6 pupils where they enacted a 'battle' prior to exploring 'Macbeth' and an English lesson for Year 5, involving a session on the playground to explore a variety of verbs before working on adverbs in the classroom. Where in rare instances teaching was satisfactory, teachers did not provide enough structure to support pupils' discussions and those who had finished their work had no extension activities readily available.

Almost all of the parents and carers who responded to the school's questionnaire think that their children are taught well. Inspection evidence supports this positive view.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils also behave well around the school. They report that bullying does sometimes take place but that this is rare and instances are tackled effectively by the teachers. The school's behaviour records confirm this picture and bullying incidents often involve name-calling only. Pupils report that they are well aware of the dangers they might encounter online, including cyber bullying. The system of rewards and sanctions is understood well. Pupils are keen to avoid the sanctions and are enthusiastic about the rewards available. Pupils in need of a little extra support are well cared for and the school makes good use of the support of

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other agencies as appropriate.

The school has placed particular emphasis on the importance of attendance in the last term or so and new incentives are on offer to reward good attendance. Although the attendance data for different classes are analysed, those for other groups of pupils are not routinely considered.

Almost all parents and carers who returned the school's questionnaire think that their children feel safe at school and that behaviour is good. Most believe that the school deals with bullying effectively. Inspection evidence confirms that behaviour is good and, when bullying does rarely occur, the school addresses it well.

Leadership and management

The commitment of the headteacher, and the core and extended senior leadership teams, to achieving the best for the pupils is strong and widely shared. Monitoring and evaluation activities are led by a range of staff and this reflects the strength in depth of expertise of leaders and managers in the school. These activities have been sustained well and continue to identify strengths to be shared and precise areas for improvement to be addressed. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school has clear and appropriate priorities for its future development. These are supported well by the new development plan format that sets out key actions in the short and longer term as well as detailed plans for each subject and other aspects of the school. The school has addressed very successfully the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and turned them into strengths. Hence, the capacity to improve further is outstanding. The governing body is now well informed about the school's strengths and areas for development and equipped to ask appropriate questions of the school's leaders. It is intending to be more closely involved in drawing up the school development plan and in monitoring progress of actions taken but this is currently at an early stage.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets pupils' needs well, particularly in developing their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children benefit from exciting approaches to all areas of learning. The curriculum and the ethos of the school contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through the personal, social and health education programme and through cross-curricular topics. While it helps pupils to prepare for life in a global society well, the curriculum's contribution to facilitating pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures in modern Britain is at an earlier stage of development. The school has good partnerships with a range of external organisations to extend the opportunities for pupils, both in their work and in their personal development. Good examples include the links with the 'Excellence Cluster' and collaboration with a wide range of agencies to provide additional support for individuals where needed.

The school engages well with parents and carers and works effectively to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabled

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pupils, make similar progress to others. This shows it is successful in promoting equal opportunities for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to achieve as well as each other. The school also strives to ensure that discrimination against any group is avoided at all times. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and all necessary policies are properly implemented.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ernesettle Community School, Plymouth, PL5 2RB

Thank you for your involvement in the recent inspection, particularly for the friendly and polite welcome that you gave us.

Some of you will know that I have visited your school regularly since December 2010 to check that the school has been improving. I am pleased to say that there have been major improvements and that the school is now providing you with a good education. This is the result of the hard work of your headteacher and the staff who have shown great determination to make things better. Here are some of the important things we found out about your school.

- The progress you make in your work has improved a lot and it is now good.
- Teaching is also much better and it is now consistently good. This explains why the progress you make has improved so much.
- Your behaviour is good and you say that you feel safe.
- Children in the Foundation Unit get off to an outstanding start.

There are two things we have asked your school to do to keep improving.

- Improve your attendance. The attendance of some pupils in the school is not very good and we have asked the school to work hard to encourage everyone to come to school as much as possible. A few of you can help a lot here by coming to school more often than you do at the moment.
- Develop the role of the governing body. The governors support the school and are keen that it should continue to do well. But they are not involved enough in checking how effective the actions for improvement have been.

Thank you again for your involvement in the inspection and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Grahame Sherfield
Her Majesty's Inspector

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