

Ermine Primary Academy

Redbourne Drive, Lincoln, LN2 2HG

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The committed and systematic work of the headteacher to improve all aspects of the school has ensured that pupils' attainment is rising and achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching is good and, at times, outstanding because all staff work effectively together to plan challenging activities.
- Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning contribute to the strong sense of community in the school.
- Pupils feel very safe and display a high level of respect for the feelings and well-being of others.
- Senior staff keep a close check on how well lessons are taught and give good advice about how to make them even better.
- Governors are very supportive of the school and expect good teaching and achievement, which leaders and managers deliver well.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with the school and the progress their children are making.
- The school is good at helping pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is not high enough.
- Teachers' explanations are sometimes too long when higher-ability pupils, in particular, could be getting on.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not make the best use of the support available from teaching assistants.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 24 lessons, three of which were joint observations, two with the headteacher and one with the assistant headteacher.
- They also observed the breakfast club, two school assemblies and made a number of other short visits to classrooms.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other staff and pupils, the Chief Executive Officer of the Academy of Lincoln Trust, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors heard groups of pupils of different ages reading.
- Inspectors took account of 33 responses to the staff questionnaire and 12 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- They looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety, together with samples of pupils' work. They also looked at tracking documentation on individual pupils' progress, pupils' statements of special educational needs, information on how the performance of staff is managed and documentation and minutes from meetings of the governing body

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Asker

Additional Inspector

Janis Warren

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ermine Academy is much bigger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for particular pupils who need it) is much higher than the national average.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is well above average. The proportions supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body.
- The school converted to become an academy in July 2011, and is part of the Academy of Lincoln Trust. When its predecessor school, Ermine Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory overall.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that teachers' introductions and explanations of learning to the whole class are brief and sharply focused
 - providing more opportunities for higher-ability pupils to engage in more challenging independent work
 - making sure that teaching assistants are always actively involved in supporting pupils' learning.
- Raise attainment in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and placing greater emphasis on the development of handwriting skills
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their basic numeracy skills in a range of different contexts.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Nursery class with knowledge, understanding and skills that are often well below those expected for their age. Because teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is good, most children make good progress in their learning and many children are achieving standards closer to average when they enter Year 1.
- Pupils' good progress continues as they move through the school. This is reflected in a steadily rising trend in attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Although broadly average, attainment has risen because a variety of programmes is being successfully taught and stimulate pupils' interest and engagement. This was clear from pupils' work and from the school's records of the progress of individual pupils.
- The school has successfully tackled inconsistencies in teaching in Key Stage 1 that have previously slowed pupils' progress. Attainment in reading is rising because the good teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is followed by a strong emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills in all year groups. However, attainment in writing and mathematics is lagging behind because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length or to use their numeracy skills in different contexts.
- The good use of teaching assistants helps to ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are helped to achieve targets that are well matched to their individual needs.
- Improved procedures for tracking pupils' progress ensure that gaps in learning are identified and tackled quickly. Pupils achieve equally well irrespective of ethnic heritage, and the few pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress in line with their peers. This reflects the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination.
- Pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium make good progress. This funding is used well to improve the support these pupils receive through, for example, additional staff and specialist literacy and numeracy resources. Gaps in attainment are closing.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to learn successfully, make good progress and achieve well.
- Teachers' good classroom management is based on excellent relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves. Such positive relationships make a strong contribution to learning because pupils listen, share ideas and are willing to try their best for their teachers.
- Teachers make good use of opportunities for pupils to work with a partner or in small groups so they can talk with and learn from each other. This helps to promote their social, as well as their speaking and listening, skills. Sometimes, all pupils are given the same explanations when higher-attaining pupils are capable of moving on more quickly.
- Teaching assistants ensure that the work given to pupils who need extra help is carefully sequenced so that all make good progress towards their learning targets. This includes disabled

pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium. In particular, the few pupils who speak English as an additional language are helped to achieve their potential and gain confidence in using the language.

- In a few lessons the best use is not made of the support available from teaching assistants because they are passively listening while teachers talk to the class for too long.
- Homework is given regularly and closely linked to work being done in the classroom. Parents, carers and pupils said that the right amount is given and that it helps them to make progress.
- When they mark the pupils' books, teachers provide constructive feedback on pupils' performance. Good work is acknowledged and helpful comments tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Teachers, pupils, parents and carers told inspectors that behaviour is good.
- This is a harmonious school where pupils are friendly and care for each other well. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other. They are polite and helpful to adults and visitors to the school.
- Pupils' enthusiastic attitudes make a positive contribution to their learning. Classroom routines such as sharing, listening to each other and taking turns are well known and well used by pupils. They are keen to take on responsibility and play a constructive role in the life of the school through the school council or as assembly monitors, for example.
- Pupils report that they feel safe, secure and happy in school. Parents and carers agree. Pupils display a good sense of how to stay safe, and are knowledgeable for their age about risk and danger.
- Pupils have confidence that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They have a firm understanding of different types of bullying, including physical bullying and persistent name calling, and pupils inspectors spoke with were unaware of any incidents.
- Arrangements to support children whose needs are complex and make them potentially vulnerable are effective. This includes the good use of specialist external agencies. Parents and carers appreciate the good quality of care that the school provides. Pupils are well cared for in the breakfast club.
- The school has successfully improved pupils' attendance. Attendance is now close to average and pupils arrive on time.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher communicates a clear vision and ambition for the continued improvement of the school. Her commitment, together with the strong support of staff, governors, parents and carers, has been the driving force in raising achievement and underpins the school's capacity for

continued improvement.

- Regular checks are carried out to improve teaching further. Teachers and other staff are well supported through training to achieve the targets set for them to improve their practice. There is a clear understanding that decisions about promotion and pay increases will be based on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
 - Underpinning the improvements seen in the school is the systematic analysis, by senior leaders, of information on pupils' progress and attainment to evaluate teachers' effectiveness and pupils' performance. Through regular meetings at which pupils' progress is closely analysed, teachers are held to account for pupils' achievement.
 - The teaching programmes promote pupils' achievement well. They are enriched through music and the arts, and by a variety of after-school clubs, visits to places of interest and residential experiences. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to apply the school's values to their everyday lives. All have a good range of opportunities to contribute to the school and local communities.
 - The partnership with the other school in the academy trust is particularly good. For example, the schools have worked closely together to confirm the assessment of pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching, and to support staff training and development.
 - Surveys of parents' and carers' views, carried out by the school, show that they are very satisfied with the quality of education provided for their children.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive and fully committed to ensuring the school's future success. Governors have successfully overseen the transition to academy status. They have a clear understanding of the link between progress and achievement and how these relate to the quality of teaching. They demonstrate a good understanding of the school's strengths and those areas in which it needs to improve. They know how its results compare with those of other, similar, schools and hold leaders to account for its performance. The governing body oversees the management of teachers' performance effectively and makes sure that pay and promotion are justified by pupils' progress and achievement. It manages all aspects of the school budget conscientiously and effectively. Governors ensure that the income received through the pupil premium is spent to raise the attainment of the pupils for whom it is intended. Consequently, these pupils achieve as well as others. The governing body ensures that training for governors is up to date and that all statutory duties are met, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils. All necessary checks are carried out to ensure pupils' safety.
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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

Unique reference number	136870
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	402744

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converters
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	437
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Stephen Hoy
Headteacher	Samantha Stewart
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01522 781030
Fax number	01522 781036
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