

Inspection of Ermine Primary Academy

Redbourne Drive, Lincoln LN2 2HG

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Andrea Norman. This school is part of the Harbour Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Richard Briggs, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jonathan Lovelle. There is also an executive principal, Claire Constantopoulos, who is responsible for this school and seven others.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is determined to 'inspire greatness in every child and to equip them with the academic achievements, life skills and personal attributes to lead happy, safe, successful lives'. Staff work relentlessly to achieve this aim. Pupils are proud of their school. They appreciate their teachers. They said, 'Lovely teachers are waiting to teach us. We always want to learn and to find out more.'

Pupils' behaviour is well managed. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils understand what bullying is. They trust that any bullying concerns will be resolved effectively by staff. Pupils particularly appreciate the 'ask basket' and 'worry box'. They said that they feel safe and well cared for.

The promotion of the love of reading is a strength of the school. There has been huge investment to ensure that pupils access beautiful books. In Nursery, for example, pupils take home 'sacks of books' to share and enjoy with their families. Each class has an inviting reading corner. There are lots of beautiful reading nooks and crannies. The monthly 'spotlight on' events provides a well-planned opportunity for pupils to study different authors and genres. Pupils said that they love books and the 'exciting worlds' that books help them to enter.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Children receive an excellent start to their education in the early years. Staff are extremely knowledgeable and skilled. The school has high ambition for what children can achieve, whatever their starting point. Children learn in a language-rich environment. They quickly develop the language skills they need to succeed. Teaching assistants contribute well to children's individual support. Children are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

The school has fully revised the curriculum. It is ambitious for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum sparks pupils' interests and enthusiasm. It builds carefully upon pupils' prior knowledge and is sequential. Pupils learn more and can do more over time. They confidently recall their learning. For example, pupils in Year 4 exhibited a thorough understanding of the five pillars of Islam and why they are important in the Muslim faith.

The school is still dealing with the impact of COVID-19. The curriculum addresses the learning gaps of most pupils effectively. However, in spite of the significant work of all staff, some pupils did not catch up in time to achieve as well as they could in the end of key stage 2 examinations in 2023.

Staff provide clear explanations and model their expectations with skill. Assessment is used expertly to identify learning gaps and adapt the curriculum. No opportunity is

missed to ensure that pupils celebrate their knowledge and are reminded of previous learning.

There are examples of extremely strong leadership, but some subject leaders require further professional development so that they can conduct the role as effectively as the best leaders do.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is highly skilled and knowledgeable. Pupils with SEND receive effective support and care in the two 'bridge' provisions. These provisions encourage pupils' independence. They help to build pupils' knowledge and confidence. In lessons, teachers use a range of strategies to ensure that learning is appropriately adapted to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils learn to read as soon as they enter the school. Staff are well trained. Reading books closely match the sounds that pupils are learning. High-quality support is in place for pupils who fall behind their peers. They quickly catch up. Some pupils struggle with their reading fluency. This is a current priority for leaders.

Attendance is a further priority. Some pupils struggle to attend school regularly or to arrive on time. Staff employ significant strategies to address this issue. Pastoral care is strong for pupils and their families. The school is often a front-line service for the community. The school takes this responsibility extremely seriously.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum. They are knowledgeable about how to keep healthy and safe. The school helps them to understand the consequences of their own behaviours. Initiatives such as 'Mini Police' support pupils' understanding of how to resolve issues calmly and with understanding.

Pupils receive a broad range of enrichment opportunities. These include after-school sports, music, dance, gardening and cooking activities. In addition to the curriculum, pupils access assemblies, visits and discussions that deepen their understanding of issues such as fundamental British values. Pupils demonstrate confidence when discussing the protected characteristics. They are very aware of the importance of fairness within school and the wider community.

The trust has experienced a period of leadership turbulence. In spite of this, school leaders have taken up the baton. They have driven the school's improvement with dedication and skill.

Staff feel well supported and valued. They are determined to improve the life chances of the pupils. They are rightly proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leadership is not consistently strong. Some curriculum areas do not have the effective oversight of others. The school should ensure that subject leaders have the knowledge and skills they need to expertly undertake their role.
- Some pupils, including the most vulnerable, do not attend school regularly enough. They are missing out on a high-quality education and strong pastoral care. The school should continue its work to ensure that more pupils, including the most vulnerable pupils, attend school regularly.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	147530
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10298544
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	391
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jonathan Lovelle
Principal	Andrea Norman
CEO	Richard Briggs
Website	www.ermineprimaryacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ermine Primary Academy converted to become an academy in September 2019. When its predecessor school, Ermine Primary Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

■ Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the principal, senior leaders and a range of school staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust, including the CEO and the executive principal. She spoke remotely with a trustee. She also met with the chair and a member of the local academy council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, religious education and English. As part of the deep dives, inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders to review the curriculum, visited lessons and considered pupils' work. They spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors met with the subject leads for geography, art and music. They reviewed the curriculum planning and pupils' work.
- Inspectors held a series of meetings with leaders to discuss the school's attendance and safeguarding arrangements. They spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- An inspector visited the 'bridge' provisions. He spoke with the SENCo and the trust lead for special educational needs.
- Inspectors visited the early years provision and met with the early years lead.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at different times of the school day, including the start and end of day and at lunchtime and breaktime. They spoke with parents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the survey for school staff.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ellenor Beighton	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Rooney	Ofsted Inspector

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