

Inspection of Ermington Primary School

School Road, Ermington, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 9NH

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Mark Mitchell. This school is part of Westcountry Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rob Haring, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Iain Grafton.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Ermington Primary School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Ermington Primary School. They epitomise the school values of care, pride and resilience. This is the result of the highly effective provision for their wider, personal development, which builds on a secure academic education.

Younger pupils view the older pupils as positive role models. Older pupils take pride in their responsibilities, which makes a difference to the school and their peers. Community and a sense of belonging is at the heart of this school. It gives pupils what they need to prepare them for a fulfilling future and to be confident, self-aware participants in their chosen communities.

Pupils attend well because they want to be in school. Relationships are strong and nurturing. Pupils say that the best thing about the school is the staff and how well they know them. They value what this gives them to enable them to learn successfully and meet the high expectations staff have of them.

Parents and carers agree with their children's high praise for the school. They praise the dedication of staff to increase their children's social and emotional development. Parents appreciate the impact this has on their children so that they can follow the ambitious aspirations the school encourages and supports them to have.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum in place. Links are made across subjects, and aspects to strengthen pupils' wider development are well represented. The successes of the curriculum begin from the very start with children in Reception. The Reception class space is designed to increase children's motor skills and personal, social skills, as well as the foundations for literacy and early mathematics. Staff promote children's curiosity through purposeful interactions. Children work together in different learning activities and persevere to solve problems successfully. Children are advancing, with increasing success, towards the demands of the Year 1 curriculum.

In many subjects, the curriculum is designed to revisit prior learning regularly and build new learning well. For example, the 10 teaching techniques, used as part of the history curriculum, help pupils to remember the curriculum over time. However, the school is alert to the fact that some pupils could achieve even better. There is not always sufficient focus and attention to ensure pupils spend enough time deepening their learning.

The core subjects of mathematics and reading, as well as wider curriculum subjects, such as history and art and design, are examples of where the school's curriculum is well established. Pupils learn successfully, achieve well and enthuse about their learning in these subjects. In a few subjects, however, the curriculum is newer in its development or being revised. Consequently, it does not make the same impact on pupils' learning or their enjoyment of the subject.

Pupils have a love of reading. They read widely and often from a rich range of high-quality texts. Pupils quickly become reading experts as they move through the school. At the earliest stages of reading, pupils learn the sounds they need, to read with increasing accuracy.

This is an inclusive school. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. Teachers have the knowledge they need to provide pupils with the necessary support to be successful learners. However, some pupils with SEND do not benefit from enough precision about how potential barriers to learning could be reduced or removed, for example making sure that there is clarity about the best support to enable pupils to learn with increasing independence.

Central to pupils' education is the school's determination for pupils to be well-rounded and well-prepared individuals for the next stage and beyond. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Supporting this is the school's design of its personal development programme. There is a clear strategy and purpose to how it is delivered. The school ensures that pupils learn about life far beyond the communities in which they live. Pupils embrace difference and diversity. It is woven through the taught curriculum and the opportunities afforded to pupils. These include residential trips for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 covering varied experiences, such as visiting London, performances, including the Prom, and a rich and wide range of clubs and curriculum enrichment. Pupils talk, with impressive confidence, about the importance of mental health and keeping themselves safe. They are highly motivated to speak up and speak out. Pupils learn about the world of work and start to consider the future paths they may take.

The quality of the educational offer is overseen effectively by the wider trust. The school is held to account so that those responsible for governance have the assurances they need that pupils at Ermington Primary School are getting the education they deserve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For a minority of pupils, there is not enough specificity and explicit design to deepen learning or reduce barriers to learning. Consequently, these pupils do not get the precise learning they need to achieve the best possible outcomes. The trust must ensure that there is a clear and intentional design for those pupils who require further practice and consolidation at a deeper level of understanding and

those who need adaptations to overcome barriers to learning because of their SEND.

- Some subjects are not as developed and embedded as others. Where this is the case, the design and the assessment of the curriculum does not make the best possible impact on how well pupils learn. Furthermore, pupils do not enthuse about these subjects as much as they do where the curriculum is well designed and inspires them. The trust should work to ensure that all subjects are as successful and embedded as they are where the curriculum is at its strongest.

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 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	148871
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10334724
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Iain Grafton
CEO of the trust	Rob Haring
Headteacher	Mark Mitchell
Website	www.ermingtonprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Westcountry Schools Trust in January 2022. The trust is responsible for a group of primary and secondary schools across Devon, Plymouth and Cornwall.
- The school is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The school does not use any 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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and the school improvement partner. In addition, an inspector met with the chair of trustees and the director of education.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and trust leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement. Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum, SEND, safeguarding and behaviour.
- An inspector listened to the views of parents at the beginning of the second day of the inspection. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments.
- Inspectors evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Craig Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

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