

# Etruscan Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133328
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stoke-On-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	316085
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Barbara Atcheson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lynn Ball
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vivien Mees
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Dundee Road Etruria Stoke-on-Trent ST1 4BS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 235711
<b>Fax number</b>	01782 235714

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is of average size and is set in a disadvantaged urban area. The majority of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. Two thirds of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and those identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than usually found. Since the school opened in 2003, it has had four headteachers, numerous staff changes and undergone major building work. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2007. In this particular inspection, inspectors were asked to make a specific note of how the school evaluates and improves the achievement of learners who are eligible for free school meals.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Etruscan Primary provides a satisfactory education. The school is improving significantly because the new headteacher is giving focused direction and has generated a momentum for improvement. This is a school which has suffered many difficulties in its short history. However, this new impetus, reinforced by the support and commitment of senior leaders and staff, has brought several improvements over a short period. The downward trend in results has been halted, standards have risen and pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. Strong pastoral care results in pupils' good personal development and well-being. The school is a thriving, harmonious community. It has an ethos which promotes aspiration and celebrates achievement. Behaviour is good and pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They take a pride in their achievements and are confident that staff will help them when problems arise. Systems are securely in place to ensure that pupils are safe and happy in school, and to support those who are vulnerable or have particular needs.

Effective tracking of each pupil's progress confirms that most pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals, are making at least satisfactory progress. This also is borne out in lessons. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress from a low base so that most reach the goals set for the end of the Reception Year. Progress slows, but is satisfactory, in Years 1, 2 and 3. There are still too few pupils reaching higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Progress picks up again in Years 4 to 6 as a result of good teaching. This means that the current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach challenging targets in English, mathematics and science.

Improved monitoring of teaching and learning means that the school leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is performing and what it needs to do to improve. Most previous weaknesses have been eliminated and this demonstrates that the school has sound capacity to improve further. However, inconsistencies remain. In some lessons, not enough is expected of the more able pupils and tasks do not always match the pupils' needs precisely enough to move them quickly to the next stage in their learning.

Senior leaders are bringing about improvements with increasing success. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses but recognise that they still have much work to do. There is an important gap in the management structure because there is no specific person responsible for overseeing provision for pupils learning English as an additional language. Whilst these pupils are generally making satisfactory progress, there is a lack of rigour in systems to ensure that their needs are being fully met.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Relationships in the Foundation Stage are excellent. Children thrive in this thoughtful and supportive setting. They join the Foundation Stage with levels of attainment which are well below expected levels. A combination of very effective teaching and good leadership means that the children achieve well from their starting points, and standards are broadly in line with those expected at the end of Reception.

Staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. Innovative planning focuses sharply on children's particular interests. Their all-round development is monitored very carefully.

Recently introduced systems effectively check on the progress of different groups to ensure that each is doing equally well.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards, particularly in Years 1, 2 and 3, by giving greater challenge to the more able pupils.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers know how well pupils are learning and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve leadership and management by establishing a clear structure to oversee the provision for pupils learning English as an additional language.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Most pupils make satisfactory progress. There is no significant difference in the progress made by different groups of pupils, including those eligible for free school meals. However, the progress of the more able pupils slows when too little is expected of them. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress so that the majority reach the goals set for the end of the Reception Year. A legacy of inadequate teaching has slowed progress in Years 1, 2 and 3. Stringent targets and measures to improve standards in reading and mathematics have recently been introduced and consequently, progress is now showing signs of improvement. The school is successfully reversing the downward trend of the last three years but the more able pupils could still be achieving more. In Years 4, 5 and 6, progress is good. Standards improved in 2007. In national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were broadly in line in English and science but remained below the national average in mathematics. A combination of good teaching and an increased focus on the teaching of mathematics means that the current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach or exceed the challenging targets that have been set.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say they really enjoy the work at this school. This enjoyment, together with good behaviour and evident happiness in school, reflects the high priority given to their good personal development. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils know right from wrong and form strong relationships both with each other and with adults. They are supportive to fellow pupils who come from abroad, and those with little English. They have a good understanding of cultural diversity gained through visits to local places of worship and celebration of festivals. Pupils' motivation and enthusiasm ensures a positive atmosphere throughout the school. They know how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle.

They enjoy taking on extra responsibility, for example by becoming members of the school council and playground leaders. They make a satisfactory contribution to the wider community through their support of charities such as Children in Need and the part that they play in local competitions and cultural festivals. Pupils' satisfactory grasp of basic skills and their ability to work cooperatively mean they are adequately prepared for the next stage in their schooling.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Improving the quality of teaching and learning has been a major priority of leadership and management, in order to raise standards and achievement. The school has challenged and mostly eliminated weak teaching. Most lessons have clear objectives for pupils' learning. Recently introduced tracking procedures give teachers effective information about what pupils know and what they need to do next to improve. However, the use of this information is not always consistent or effective. For example, the pitch of work does not always sufficiently stretch pupils, particularly the more able, and this slows their progress. In all classes, good relationships are evident because teachers manage pupils well. They use a range of techniques to encourage and motivate pupils. This approach is central to the school's efforts to raise self-esteem. Marking is generally done well. A variety of strategies is used and helpful comments in books guide pupils on what they need to do to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school has introduced a number of recent changes to the curriculum. In particular, it has implemented a skills-based curriculum in the Foundation Stage to meet the needs of all children. This has been successful, and standards and achievement have risen in the Reception Year. After piloting this approach, the school is to extend this to other year groups. Recently introduced initiatives to develop pupils' reading and speaking skills, together with a major focus on mathematics, have been important factors in raising standards and supporting underachieving pupils. However, insufficient use is made of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects. Art days have been introduced as a means of developing pupils' creative skills. These days are very popular and expand pupils' horizons and cultural knowledge. The school makes physical education a high priority and this creates a valuable contribution towards pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles. There is a good range of activities outside school hours, including many sports clubs. The school's many visitors and educational outings enhance cultural and sporting experiences for pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

There are a number of effective support systems to help ensure pupils' well-being, safety and security. Support for the most vulnerable pupils is particularly good and contributes to their successful inclusion in the life of the school.

At present, the overall responsibility for guiding those pupils who do not speak English as their first language is dispersed among a number of staff. This leads to a lack of direction and weaknesses in the analysis of the specific needs of these pupils. Teaching assistants enhance the enjoyment and experiences of those pupils who need extra care. The procedures to ensure children are protected are up to date and secure. A thorough system of rewards and sanctions to improve attendance has paid dividends. The improvement is a significant achievement, given the school's past history of poor attendance.

The school has recently introduced systems to track individual pupils' progress, but at present, this is not fully effective. Whilst it does analyse the progress of specific groups, such as those

with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the progress of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is not analysed to ensure that they are doing as well as their peers. The gathering of data on the progress of pupils is detailed, but its application to take pupils' learning forward is not consistent across the school. This means that the academic guidance given to pupils is not always sharply focused.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The new headteacher has been a driving force in bringing about significant improvement in several areas. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are now good and standards and achievement are improving throughout the school. She has raised the morale of staff and built a strong team. However, much of this work is still at an early stage and the school recognises that there is still much more to do. Senior leaders have been active participants in all of the initiatives that have been introduced and instrumental in securing rapid improvement. Subject coordinators work hard but it is early days and their roles in monitoring and evaluation are not yet fully developed. Governors are at the early stages of developing their roles. They now feel better informed about the school's work and their responsibilities. Consequently, they are beginning to play a more active part in the life and work of the school.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

28 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Etruscan Primary School, Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 4BS

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed us to your school for the recent inspection. A special thank you goes to those of you who met with Mr Parsons and let him know your views. We enjoyed talking to you and visiting your classrooms. You have given us lots of helpful information. We think your school is satisfactory, with several good features.

- These are the things we liked:
- you behave well and enjoy your lessons
- you respect the many different cultures and beliefs in the school
- the teachers look after you very well
- you support those who come from abroad, sometimes with little English, very well
- the school provides some interesting activities for you to do; I know how much you enjoy your art days!
- your headteacher leads the school well and has made some important changes to help you to do better
- children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes

There are three things we have asked the school to do now:

- help you to do even better, especially in Years 1 to 3, and make sure that those of you who find work easy are able to try harder things
- make sure that all lessons are good by using the information on how well you are doing to plan the next step in your learning
- make sure that there is someone to organise, check and improve how well those of you with very little English are doing

Thank you again. We wish you continuing success.

Yours faithfully

Barbara Atcheson Lead inspector

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Lead inspector