

Ermine Primary Academy

Redbourne Drive, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN2 2HG

Inspection dates

28–29 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the school complies with the requirements to safeguard pupils.
- Staff do not ensure that records for safeguarding and pupils' medical needs are accurate, secure or well organised. The school's designated safeguarding leaders do not monitor referrals carefully to make sure that pupils are safe.
- Staff do not follow the school's behaviour policy consistently to secure acceptable behaviour. Too many incidents of disruptive behaviour result in the use of physical restraint or pupils being excluded from school.
- Pupils in key stage 1 do not make as much progress as they should. Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1 are below the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 are not making as much progress as they should. Support for these pupils does not target their needs well enough.
- Leaders do not use information about how much progress pupils make to hold teachers to account.
- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Teachers do not always provide enough challenge and so pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders have not ensured that the early years provision is compliant with the statutory requirements. Children are given too few opportunities to develop their learning outdoors.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and understanding in all subjects.
- Middle leaders have limited impact on improvement and raising standards in their subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Improvements to the quality of teaching of reading and mathematics in key stage 2 have raised attainment and outcomes.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the year 1 phonics screening check has improved and is now above the national average.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe by ensuring that:
 - leaders review all safeguarding policies to improve their practice so that arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements
 - the designated safeguarding lead maintains full and accurate records of safeguarding issues, reviews these records regularly and follows up referrals to outside agencies with due urgency
 - governors responsible for safeguarding receive support to carry out their roles effectively and hold leaders to account for the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements
 - staff receive safeguarding training to ensure that they follow the correct safeguarding procedures
 - staff are trained to manage pupils' behaviour effectively
 - staff are appropriately trained to support pupils with medical needs
 - pupil transitions between home and school are managed securely.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the role of middle leaders is developed so that they have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes in their area of responsibility
 - leaders use information about pupils' progress to hold teachers fully to account
 - the curriculum is broad and balanced, with all areas receiving sufficient coverage.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that outcomes improve by ensuring that:
 - staff, particularly those in key stage 1, have high expectations of what pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, can achieve and provide them with tasks that build on previous learning
 - teachers make effective use of assessment information to make sure that tasks match pupils' abilities.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
 - all staff apply the behaviour policy consistently
 - the number of incidents requiring the restraint of pupils or exclusion decreases significantly.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early years by ensuring that:

- provision is compliant with the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage
- children are provided with opportunities to develop and extend their learning, especially outside the classroom.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have failed to ensure that systems for keeping pupils safe are robust and fit for purpose. Poor record-keeping has resulted in a lack of effective analysis of concerns made to the designated safeguarding lead, leaving pupils vulnerable.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that there is an effective safeguarding culture at the school. Staff are caring towards pupils, but too many staff work in isolation and there is no clear overview of safeguarding and behaviour across the school. Leaders have failed to prioritise safeguarding as part of school improvement.
- Leaders have not ensured that the procedures for safeguarding pupils are compliant with legal safeguarding requirements. No member of the senior leadership team currently has an overview of safeguarding.
- Leaders have not tackled the increasing incidents of poor behaviour. Too few staff are skilled in de-escalation techniques when pupils' behaviour becomes unacceptable. As a result, there are too many incidents of staff having to restrain pupils.
- Leaders have become over-reliant on the use of exclusions to tackle incidents of poor behaviour. Staff do not seek to understand the underlying reasons for poor behaviour, and do not provide effective support for pupils before their behaviour escalates.
- Leaders have not tackled the underachievement of pupils in key stage 1. Leaders do not use information about pupils' progress well enough to hold teachers in this key stage to account.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has not been targeted well in key stage 1. Leaders have not carefully monitored the progress of these pupils or put effective support in place.
- Middle leaders are beginning to have an overview of their subjects. However, they have had limited opportunities to carry out monitoring of the quality of teaching. They do not have a secure overview of the progress and attainment of pupils in their subject across the school.
- The curriculum is not balanced. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to broaden their learning in all subjects across the curriculum, including in the humanities and the arts.
- Leaders have tackled effectively the fall in standards in reading in 2016. A programme of professional development for teachers and teaching assistants has improved the quality of teaching of reading in key stage 2.
- Leaders' strong focus on improving teaching in mathematics in key stage 2 has resulted in pupils' progress and attainment rising above the national average in 2017.
- Leaders have monitored the teaching of phonics carefully and have given teachers bespoke feedback on how to improve their practice. This is a key factor in the increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check in year 1.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developed appropriately through circle time and assemblies. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss fundamental British values, different cultures and religions. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The trust has focused on raising standards in English and mathematics. It regularly reviews assessment information and is using this to set targets for school leaders. Leaders from the partner school in the trust are providing support for senior leaders. This heightened focus of the progress pupils make is beginning to impact on outcomes for pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a clear understanding of the progress and attainment of pupils and the actions that leaders have taken to bring about improvements. However, they have failed to ensure that systems for safeguarding pupils are effective.
- Governors have not been rigorous in carrying out checks on safeguarding procedures and have accepted what they have been told rather than fully examining the procedures that are in place.
- Governors have not followed up recommendations to strengthen processes and procedures for safeguarding pupils effectively.
- The governing body has failed to ensure that the school is fully compliant with the statutory guidance about safeguarding pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective and are not compliant with statutory guidance.
- The designated safeguarding lead and the senior leadership team do not have a secure overview of safeguarding and behaviour.
- Leaders are complacent in implementing safeguarding procedures. Referrals made to the designated safeguarding lead are not kept in an organised and secure manner. There is no clear overview or analysis of the referrals made.
- Records of referrals made to the designated safeguarding lead are not detailed or accurate. Information recorded is basic and pupils' files are frequently incomplete. Information about cases is often not recorded in pupils' files. Referrals made to local agencies are not followed up.
- Leaders have not ensured that all staff understand the signs of abuse. Staff do not have an understanding of wider safeguarding concerns and do not know how to report any such concerns that they may have, including about the actions of adults towards pupils.
- Procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe at the beginning and end of the school day are not secure.

- The procedures for supporting pupils with medical needs are not clear or thorough enough. For example, staff do not know well enough which pupils have severe allergies, and not all medical plans are signed off by medical professionals.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough and they do not provide pupils with enough challenge.
- Teachers do not consistently use their knowledge of what pupils can already do to guide their planning. Learning is not always planned well enough to challenge pupils. Pupils become easily distracted from what they are doing and not all pupils make good progress.
- Pupils do not write as well as they should because they do not have clear examples of how to develop their skills. Sometimes, teachers move learning on too quickly before pupils have grasped what they need to do. Conversely, there are times when teachers do not move learning forwards quickly enough and pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to develop their learning and understanding in different subject areas, including in humanities and the arts. Activities often lack depth and challenge.
- In some instances, teaching and expectations of what pupils can achieve across year groups are inconsistent. Teachers in the same year group do not always have the same expectations of what pupils should achieve.
- Pupils in key stage 2 are encouraged to read books in a wide range of subjects appropriate to their ability. Teachers often challenge pupils to read increasingly difficult books. This increased focus on reading is not as developed in key stage 1.
- Teaching in mathematics at key stage 2 develops pupils' skills and knowledge systematically. Pupils use their knowledge to carry out problem-solving and reasoning challenges. This approach is not as well developed in key stage 1.
- Where teaching is more effective, pupils are encouraged to set their own level of challenge. Pupils are keen to persevere with tasks and show determination to think problems through. For example, Year 5 pupils were challenged to choose the task at the appropriate level for them when solving mathematical problems.
- The development of pupils' phonics skills is systematic. Pupils are given opportunities to practise and rehearse their knowledge of sounds and apply this to unfamiliar words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.

- Leaders have been slow to respond to the reported incidents of bullying. Pupils, parents and carers say that bullying takes place. However, there are no clear records to monitor and follow up reported incidents. Some pupils say bullying is dealt with. However, a large majority of pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they or someone they knew had experienced bullying.
- Pupils do not receive sufficient opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe online. Online safety is taught to pupils in Years 5 and 6 only. Because of this, younger pupils do not have a secure understanding of how to stay safe online.
- Pupils do not always conduct themselves well around the school. On such occasions, adults have to intervene to remind pupils how to behave, including in corridors and during assembly.
- Too many lessons are disrupted by poor low-level behaviour. Pupils do not always demonstrate determination or a willingness to challenge themselves to achieve more.
- Staff are not trained well enough to support pupils who have medical needs. Not all staff are aware of the pupils who have medical needs and emergency medicines are not stored to hand in the case of an emergency.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Staff do not apply the behaviour policy consistently across the school.
- Staff are not skilled in de-escalation techniques. Too many recorded incidents of poor behaviour result in pupils having to be restrained.
- Nurture provision does not focus carefully enough on reducing the incidents of disruptive behaviour. There is not a consistent approach to support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs.
- The school's rates of exclusion are too high. Leaders react to incidents of disruptive behaviour but do not plan to prevent future incidents from occurring.
- Overall absence, including persistent absence, was above the national average in 2017. Pupils' attendance for the current year is improving slightly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils are not making good progress throughout the school. In 2016 and 2017, standards at the end of key stage 1 were below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, too few pupils entered key stage 2 well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 are not making as much progress as they should. The use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is not monitored carefully enough for pupils in key stage 1 to ensure that these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' attainment in writing at key stage 1 is not improving quickly enough. Standards at the end of key stage 1 have been below the national average since the last inspection.

- Pupils in key stage 2 are making better progress in writing than in key stage 1. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at key stage 2 has been below the national average since the last inspection, but the gap is closing. Work in pupils' English books shows that pupils are beginning to receive more opportunities to practise their skills.
- Pupils in key stage 1 are not making as much progress as they should in mathematics and the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was below the national average in 2016 and 2017. However, pupils' workbooks show that teachers are providing pupils with challenge, and pupils are beginning to make secure progress.
- Due to their limited access to humanities and the arts, pupils make poor progress in these subjects.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading improved in key stage 2 in 2017 and are now similar to the national average. However, the new approach to teaching reading has not yet filtered down to key stage 1. Pupils are not making as much progress as they should in reading and outcomes were below the national average in 2016 and 2017.
- Pupils' outcomes in mathematics at key stage 2 have been at or above the national average for the past three years. Teachers' assessments show that current pupils continue to make good progress in key stage 2.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been rising since the last inspection and is now above the national average.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Safeguarding in the early years is not effective. The designated safeguarding lead does not have a comprehensive overview of the potential risks to children's safety in the early years.
- Leaders have not ensured that the early years is compliant with the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. Children's welfare and care needs have not been met as they have not been assigned a key worker.
- Opportunities for children to access the outdoor area and equipment are limited. Children are not given wider opportunities to extend their learning outdoors. Activities outside are designed to meet the needs of older children in the early years but do not target the learning of Nursery children.
- In the classroom, children are provided with a range of opportunities to extend their learning. Most adults use prompts and questions effectively to develop children's understanding.
- Children play well together and look after the resources well. They are keen to talk to each other and to adults about what they are learning.
- Adults carry out home visits for children before they start at the school. The needs of children, including disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, are discussed and appropriate support is put in place.

For example, programmes to develop speech and language or physical development are helping children to make good gains in their learning.

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the early years is in line with the national average. A large majority of children leave the foundation stage well prepared for key stage 1.

School details

Unique reference number	136870
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10037612

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

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	439
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Hannah Spencer
Principal	Andrew Sale
Telephone number	01522 781 030
Website	www.ermineprimaryacademy.co.uk
Email address	admin@ermine-primary.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 December 2012

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Academy of Lincoln Trust.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about exclusion arrangements on their website.
- Ermine Primary Academy is a larger than average primary school.
- There are two classes per year group. Pupils are taught in 15 classes, including a nursery for pupils aged three and four.
- A very large majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- Over half the pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is well above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in a number of lessons in all classes, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils read. Inspectors talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work to gain a view of the impact of teaching over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, acting assistant headteacher, subject and middle leaders and members of the governing body and of the academy trust. Inspectors also spoke with teachers, lunchtime staff and pastoral support staff.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally and considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, including the nine responses to the free-text service.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; the school's most recent information on the attainment and progress of pupils; information relating to the health, safety and safeguarding of pupils; the school's most recent data on the attendance of pupils; and minutes from meetings of the governing body and trust board.
- Inspectors also considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

Inspection team

Helen Williams, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ann Cruickshank	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Mace	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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