

Inspection of Ernesettle Community School

Biggin Hill, Ernesettle, Plymouth, Devon PL5 2RB

Inspection dates: 19–20 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff and governors are relentless in their pursuit of excellence. Regardless of pupils' starting points, high expectations and aspirations permeate the school. Leaders and staff ensure that all pupils are equipped with the necessary tools to reach their full potential and beyond. By the time pupils leave Ernesettle, they achieve exceptionally well. Pupils who responded to the survey were very proud of their school. One pupil said, 'You simply cannot improve this school.'

Leaders and staff go above and beyond in preparing pupils as citizens in modern Britain. Pupils' work in the local community is humbling. One example, of many, is how pupils support the local care home for adults suffering from dementia. Leaders seize every opportunity to ensure that pupils embrace first-hand experiences.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent told us, 'the school is simply amazing.' This view is typical of many parents.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They told us that poor behaviour is simply not acceptable. This is because a culture of learning is ingrained in the fabric of the school. Pupils also told us that bullying does not happen. They are extremely confident that if bullying did happen, it would not be tolerated.

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

The quality of education is outstanding. Many children start in Nursery with skills and abilities well below their age. During their time in school, all pupils make exceptional progress. Leaders and teachers go above and beyond to ensure that pupils achieve great academic success. Pupils are remarkably well prepared for secondary school.

Behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils are extremely focused in lessons. Teachers have instilled a genuine thirst for and commitment to learning. This is reflected in pupils' very high attendance.

Teachers provide a curriculum that enables pupils to flourish. Pupils competently recall their knowledge and skills from other subjects. For example, in Year 2, pupils are able to compare Victorian houses with modern-day homes. They use their knowledge of materials to compare and contrast building design and construction. In Year 6, pupils draw upon their relationship with a Ghanaian school that is closely linked to Ernesettle. Pupils use this knowledge and understanding of the wider world to debate topical issues, such as discrimination.

Reading is at the forefront of the curriculum. When children start in Nursery, staff take swift action to identify if they need additional speech and language support. Leaders waste no time in providing specialist support. This ensures that any child who is behind catches up quickly. Once these fundamental skills have been established, children flourish. The teaching of early reading is very effective.

Teachers ensure that books match pupils' reading ability precisely. They organise reading books carefully to support pupils' understanding of the curriculum. Year 5 pupils can explain how the books they read help them in other subjects, such as science. There are stringent systems in place to ensure that any pupil who joins the school, who is behind, catches up quickly.

Teachers organise work for pupils skilfully. This is because they know their pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve exceptionally well, as do disadvantaged pupils.

There is a wealth of expertise within the school. A large proportion of the staff are national or specialist leaders in education who share their expertise with other schools. Senior leaders have effective systems in place to continue to grow the next generation of leaders. Staff appreciate the development opportunities that they have. All staff are positive about the senior leadership of the school. Staff morale is very high.

Governors are extremely committed to ensuring that pupils get the best possible deal. They are experienced and diligent. They know their school, and the community it serves, very well. Collectively, they provide effective support and challenge in equal measure. They understand clearly the contextual challenges that leaders face. One governor said, 'at times it can be like trying to climb Mount Everest in flip-flops.' However, this does not distract them from their core business.

The early years is a 'buzz' of excitement. This is because staff design activities that stimulate children's interests. Staff are hyper-vigilant and unwavering in ensuring that children develop the necessary skills for Year 1. The curriculum is inspiring and motivating. Children benefit from visitors from around the world, who share their knowledge of global cultures with staff so that staff can support children who are new to the United Kingdom effectively. These visitors and school staff sing songs and rhymes with the children. This helps children from other cultures settle quickly, establish warm relationships and be ready for learning. Adults are particularly skilled in ensuring that children acquire the correct knowledge and skills for success.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors ensure that any development points from external audits are acted upon quickly. Leaders provide regular and ongoing training so that staff can identify any pupil who may be at risk of harm. Leaders do all they can to keep pupils safe.

Pupils know how to stay safe. They say that the computing curriculum has taught them how to stay safe online. Visits from national organisations, such as the NSPCC, provide pupils with welcome advice on how to respond if they feel at risk. They are adamant that staff have their best interests at heart.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

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.

School details

Unique reference number	142545
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10058321
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	496
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Carol Wood
Executive headteacher	Aaron Meredith
Website	www.ecs.plymouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy in January 2016. When the predecessor school, also Ernesettle Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted, the school was graded as good.
- Ernesettle Community primary school is the founding member of the Inspire multi-academy trust. The school is currently the only school in the trust. The work of the school is overseen by the board of trustees.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the executive headteacher, head of school, subject leaders, the leader with responsibility for pupils with SEND, the early years leader and a sample of support and teaching staff.
- I held a meeting with five trustees. This included the chair and the vice-chair.
- We examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation, curriculum plans and documentation relating to the safeguarding, attendance and behaviour of pupils.

- A significant proportion of the inspection focused on ensuring that pupils are safe. We scrutinised records, tested staff’s safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. I also met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- I considered the 67 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View. We also met with parents at the start of the school day.
- I took into consideration the 69 responses to the staff survey and 71 responses to the pupil survey. Throughout the inspection, we met with many pupils from across different year groups.
- I had a telephone conversation with the person responsible for school improvement.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, history, mathematics, physical education (PE) and music. This included visiting lessons, looking at pupils’ work, meeting with senior and subject leaders and discussions with teachers and pupils. On day two of the inspection, we looked further into the quality of education in geography and science.

Inspection team

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