

Freshfield Primary School

Watchyard Lane, Formby, Liverpool, Merseyside, L37 3JT

Inspection dates 6–7 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The overwhelming majority of pupils, including pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, pupils with a statement of educational needs educated in the school's resource unit and pupils entitled to additional support through pupil-premium funding, achieve exceptionally well and enjoy their learning.
- Teaching is exemplary in all subjects and in all year groups. Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils and plan lessons which are exciting and challenging and help pupils to foster outstanding attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' attitudes towards their teachers, school responsibilities, learning and their fellow class-mates are exceptional. All pupils are highly articulate. They are proud of their school and take great pride in helping each other. Pupils have a highly developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe and say that poor behaviour is extremely rare.
- The headteacher is well respected within the school, local authority and beyond. Together with a highly skilled and experienced senior leadership team and a highly committed and involved governing body, he has ensured that the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils are continually improving.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. They are particularly happy with pupils' behaviour and safety, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Parents value the opportunities that they have to be involved in the life of the school, especially through supporting in reading, writing and the development of mathematical skills. School leaders continuously explore opportunities and actively promote greater parental involvement in the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons as well as small-group activities, parts of lessons and the teaching of phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make).
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2, 5, and 6, and held discussions with three groups of pupils from across the school.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised during lessons and separately with various members of staff.
- Inspectors took account of 55 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own surveys of parents' views. Questionnaires completed by 23 members of staff were taken into account, as well as information provided by parents.
- A meeting took place with the local authority school standards and effectiveness adviser.
- A meeting was held with seven governors, including the Chair and vice chair of the Governing Body.
- Various school documents were examined. These included school data on pupils' progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, monitoring records of the quality of teaching, development plans, external school evaluation reports, records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynne Read

Additional Inspector

Dave Blackburne

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- The school offers specialist resource provision for up to 10 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. All have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average, and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A children's centre managed by the governing body is accommodated on the school site. This offers a range of services, including pre-school provision, and is subject to a separate inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection the school has become a National Support School and is currently supporting three primary schools in the Sefton local authority. Various members of staff have shared their experience and practices with a number of schools. The headteacher is a national leader in education. Several new teachers have been appointed by the governing body and the school has undergone refurbishments.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the school's work with parents, and in-so-doing enhance the effective support that the school already receives from parents who come into school to help pupils to read, write and improve their mathematical skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Overall, standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average. This is due to high quality teaching and because pupils continually improve their understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve even further.
- The majority of children join Nursery with skills and abilities which are at least in-line with those found nationally. They get off to an exceptional start in a vibrant and exciting atmosphere where adults use their extensive knowledge of every child in the class to develop their learning exceptionally well.
- Teachers provide excellent support and care for all children throughout Reception and Year 1, ensuring that they make rapid progress by the end of Key Stage 1. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils make outstanding progress and the vast majority reach high standards by the time they leave Year 6.
- Carefully planned small-group and one-to-one activities delivered by highly skilled and committed teachers and teaching assistants ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve outstandingly well in reading, writing and mathematics in relation to their starting points and abilities.
- Resource base provision for statemented children with moderate learning difficulties is exemplary. Pupils make outstanding progress because all teaching is tailored to their specific needs. Outstanding leadership and management, high expectations, excellent individual support and challenging activities ensure that all pupils enjoy their learning and achieve to the best of their ability.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is at least equal to that of their peers in school.
- Teachers ensure equality of opportunity and consistently track the progress of pupils ensuring that there are no significant gaps in the standards reached by any group of pupils.
- The school is highly successful in monitoring and fine tuning the one-to-one and small-group teaching activities developed for pupils entitled to support through the pupil-premium funding. As a result their average point scores show that they make rapid progress and do at least as well in mathematics, reading and writing as their peers in school.
- Pupils' achievement in phonics, (the link between letters and the sounds they make), is exemplary, as are their reading skills. Inspectors were particularly impressed with the determination and perseverance of the less-able readers who used their phonic skills exceedingly well to sound out and read unfamiliar words.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and plan lessons which take into account their interests. From Nursery and throughout the school, teachers consistently challenge pupils to learn as much as they can and to find things out for themselves. This was exemplified in a Nursery lesson where two pupils worked cooperatively and for a sustained period of time to make up a story about pirates, while others used computers to 'research' cats, and sang pirate songs with their teacher.
- The overwhelming majority of lessons move along at a swift pace and captivate pupils' interests. Teachers use highly developed questioning skills to encourage pupils to think carefully about what they are learning. This was demonstrated very effectively in a Year 5 science class where pupils were asked to firstly consider, and then discuss with a partner, as many arguments for and against banning smoking in cars.
- The vast majority of lessons start with clear learning objectives followed by a variety of tasks for different groups of pupils. Lessons are only interrupted when it is absolutely necessary, usually to either remind pupils of the focus of their learning, or to discuss a misconception or probe

pupils' level of understanding. As a result most pupils make outstanding progress in lessons.

- Teaching assistants are well trained and highly skilled. They have a comprehensive knowledge of the specific support required to ensure that each pupil achieves to the best of their ability.
- Teaching and what is on offer for pupils in the school's unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties is outstanding. Learning takes place in a very well organised and caring environment in which pupils are supported in accordance with their need. All activities are short and well-focused with lots of opportunities for pupils to learn independently.
- Teachers ensure that pupils know how to apply their skills to real life situations. This was successfully demonstrated in an outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson where small groups of pupils were given different budgets and asked to plan a post-SATs party, spending as near to their budget limit as possible.
- The quality of marking is of a very high standard, with outstanding practice in a number of year groups, including Year 1, where books showed an ongoing dialogue with parents and the school in relation to targets and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils work extremely hard, and enjoy working together. Their highly developed social and communication skills are a credit to both their teachers and the strong and continually developing partnership that the school has with parents.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school, at play and in lessons is outstanding. Pupils really enjoy their school and are appreciative of its generous open spaces, 'Hobbit house', gardens and allotment, nature area and play equipment.
- Pupils are polite, courteous, curious and very proud of their school, which they take great delight in talking about. The vast majority of pupils are of the opinion that bullying in the school is extremely rare. Younger pupils are of the opinion that bullying never happens and that there is 'no meanness' in the school.
- The vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the school and say that it is highly effective in ensuring that behaviour is mostly outstanding. All staff who completed the inspection questionnaire are of the opinion that behaviour is consistently well-managed.
- Pupils have a highly developed understanding of prejudice-based bullying. They say that pupils are never treated unfairly because of who they are or where they are from, and that any unfair treatment 'would be a serious issue because the school does not approve of bullying'.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of safe and unsafe situations. The school's recent acquisition of the Silver Bikeability Award has helped pupils to stay safe while cycling to and from school.
- Pupils say that they learn about safety through personal, social and health education lessons, assemblies and circle time, and through the many visitors, such as life-guards, police officers and firefighters that come to school to talk to them about a range of issues.
- Internet safety is a strong priority for the school, which recently focused on safety issues through a national e-safety day during the spring term 2013. Regular advice is given to parents through the school newsletter on how to help their children to use computers safely.
- Safety in the school is further enhanced by the school's recent purchase of two defibrillators, and in the training of all staff, and a governor, in using them.
- Older pupils confidently take on a range of responsibilities as play leaders helping Key Stage 1 pupils and school council members enjoy having their say on various aspects of school life. For example, in contributing toward plans to reorganise the school playground and in developing a quiet area.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Together with a highly skilled and experienced senior leadership team and a highly committed and involved governing body, the headteacher has ensured that the quality of teaching and standards reached by pupils have continually improved since the last inspection.
- The school's focus on assertive mentoring has meant that pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, are continually improving their level of understanding of how to improve their learning. The decision of governors and senior leaders to significantly invest in information and communication technology has contributed to pupils' enjoyment of learning and helped to develop their exemplary skills in this area.
- Teachers say that they feel very well supported in their professional development and that observing and sharing best practice within and between schools has made a significant contribution to improving their practice.
- All staff members who completed the inspection questionnaire were highly positive about the leadership of the school. Typical responses were, 'I have been made to feel part of the team from day one.' and 'I always feel that I am able to approach senior leaders with any problems.'
- All teachers are set precise targets which are closely linked to the school's development plan. They are required to at least reach these before they move up the teachers' pay scale or secure promotion.
- Pupils care deeply about each other. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The school's links with, and staff visits to Ghanaian schools, have helped pupils to develop their understanding of world communities. Pupils' involvement in initiatives such as Show Racism The Red Card and links with regional schools have improved their understanding of cultural diversity in Britain.
- Pupils' joy of learning is enhanced by an exciting core curriculum, including English and mathematics, and exemplary Spanish, music and singing teaching. Participation in extra-curricular activities is high. Pupils are particularly keen on their drama and information and communication and technology clubs, as well as their residential experiences in Year 4 and Year 6.
- The local authority provides 'light-touch' support and has recently carried out a pupil-performance review and supported the governing body in its performance management of the headteacher.
- Safeguarding procedures are followed closely and meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a highly developed knowledge and understanding of how well the school is performing. They have very high aspirations for the school and are determined to ensure that outstanding standards are maintained for all pupils. They make sure that all finances are used properly to ensure further improvements for all pupils' achievement. The pupil premium is used to acquire teaching resources and recruit staff to provide support to pupils who require additional help with their learning. Governors know the difference this is making to eligible pupils because they spend time in school and receive regular reports on pupils' progress. Governors know that overall, teaching is outstanding because they regularly come into school to observe phonics and listen to pupils read. They challenge any staff underperformance through rigorous procedures for performance review, and make sure that pay is linked to clear and stretching targets. Governors ensure that their training is up-to-date. New parent governors say that they appreciate, and take advantage of all training opportunities offered, and that they feel fully integrated into the governing body and the life of the school. Governors hold the headteacher to account and know that the school has been successful in securing exemplary standards across the school.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	104883
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	411774

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Bennett
Headteacher	Mr V Osbaldeston
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2009
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