

Frinton-on-Sea Primary School

Fifth Avenue, Frinton-on-Sea, CO13 9LQ

Inspection dates

25–26 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders and managers, including governors have raised expectations and taken decisive action to tackle weaknesses in teaching. As a result, teaching is now good and leads to good achievement across the school.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are rising in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, pupils' attainment in reading was above the national average.
- Pupils say the school is free from bullying, and that they are helped to keep safe. As a consequence, this is a harmonious and cohesive community.
- Pupils enjoy learning. Staff maintain high expectations so that pupils behave well at all times, and no time is wasted in lessons.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The curriculum strongly promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents have every confidence in the new leaders. They are right to hold positive views about how children are cared for, especially those who need extra help to succeed at school.
- Children in the early years thrive in a vibrant and exciting environment. They make good progress and their skills are developed well in readiness for Year 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers provide sufficiently challenging work to the most-able pupils, particularly in written work for history or science, and in mathematical investigations.
- Pupils are not always given a chance use their phonics skills (the sounds that letters make) to improve their spelling or writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in eight lessons. Six observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, and looked at writing and mathematics work from across the school, much of this with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, the school's own evaluations of its work and records on behaviour, safety and attendance. They also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and anonymised records of teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.
- Inspectors met with pupils, interviewed a sample of staff, and spoke to parents. They also spoke to members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents were obtained through the school's surveys and the 49 responses to the on-line Parent View survey. Written comments from 22 members of staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Brian Netto, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Tildesley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Frinton-on-Sea is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attending the early years provision are taught full time in the Reception year.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school provides a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection, the leadership team has changed- the headteacher was appointed in January 2015, the deputy headteacher in September 2013, and the special educational needs co-ordinator in July 2013. There have also been several changes to the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding so that pupils make accelerated progress in writing and mathematics, by:
 - making sure that marking and feedback give greater challenge to the most-able pupils in writing, so that they can improve their learning, particularly in subjects like history and science
 - providing particularly the most-able pupils with mathematics activities which help them to apply their skills and deepen their learning in solving problems or investigations
 - giving opportunities to pupils to apply their phonics skills so they can improve their spelling and writing.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good because effective action has ensured that teaching is improving and is now good, and progress is accelerating. Weaknesses in teaching have been tackled and as a result achievement is good.
- The headteacher has raised ambitions for the school. Expectations of teachers reflect the aspiration to promote high achievement and good behaviour. Robust systems for checking the performance of staff ensure that pay awards are based on how well pupils achieve. Staff, including newly qualified teachers, are well supported and all take part in training. As a consequence staff morale is high.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness, and correctly identify the main priorities for improvement. Subject leaders make good use of this to check on the success of the teaching for which they are responsible. These have resulted for example in improvements in writing, particularly during English lessons.
- A vibrant and stimulating range of subjects strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Extensive use is made of the outdoor environment and regular visits to the beach, 'forest school' and journeys to London broaden the pupils' experience. Pupils reflect with excitement on their experience of building dens in the forest and one recalled how they had left letters for the fairies and received replies! These experiences promote awe and wonder.
- Pupils contribute to the local area and celebrations, for example by looking after gardens during 'Frinton in Bloom' season. Special events are held to celebrate the work of local carers and parents, and pupils enjoy serving strawberries and tea. Pupils learn also about the importance of using votes when choosing school council members. They show fascination when studying different religious traditions. Together this prepares them well for life in modern Britain and the shared values of respect and tolerance.
- Effective use is made of pupil premium funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils play a full part in school life and achieve well. Additional support is provided in class so that they do not fall behind in their work.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used to promote greater participation in sports, making a good contribution to pupils' health and well-being. Sports coaches offer a wide range of sports and partnership with a local secondary school helps teachers to gain confidence in teaching physical education.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and ensures that discrimination is not tolerated. This is reflected in the support given to disabled pupils and disadvantaged pupils to enable them to take part in all that the school offers.
- Parents are very pleased with the school, and agree that their children are kept safe and free from bullying. They say the new procedures for collecting their children from the playground contribute to a harmonious environment. Parents now have regular contact with the headteacher and teachers. They feel much more involved in school life and see the benefits this has for their children's happiness and success.
- The local authority has commissioned support for the school. Links with local schools and regular visits have enabled senior leaders and teachers with additional responsibilities to gain an accurate evaluation of the school's priorities.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding fully meet current requirements and are effective. Staff are well trained and understand their role in the protection of children.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have made effective use of intensive support from the local authority to change their roles, and take a more strategic oversight of the school. They take appropriate action to support the new headteacher as well as offer challenge when necessary. For example, they have insisted that a stronger focus is needed on providing more scope for the most-able pupils to improve. As a consequence,

leadership has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

- They have increased their checks on the school by delegating responsibilities. For example, regular visits have ensured that they are fully informed about their statutory duties in providing for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This also gives them first-hand experience of teaching. They also ensure that the school's website is compliant, and that other duties including those with regard to safeguarding are met.
- Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and so can compare the school's performance with national expectations. They ensure that resources made available to the school, including the pupil premium, are used appropriately to bring about improvements. They ask challenging questions about pupils' progress and the impact of funding. This ensures greater accountability.
- They receive regular reports so ensure that teachers' pay and progression are carefully considered in relation to pupils' progress. They also help to ensure that underperformance is tackled effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have consistently good attitudes to learning in all their subjects, and with all adults, including visiting sports coaches or other visitors.
- Frinton is a highly inclusive school. This is reflected in the way that adaptations have been made so that disabled pupils can play a full role in the life of the school. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are looked after exceptionally well.
- Staff and parents agree that behaviour is good. There have been no exclusions for three years, and the rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are managed well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying but say that it is rare in their school. They understand that language can be hurtful so are careful not to offend. Pupils appreciate 'circle time' when they can speak without fear of criticism as this enables them to share any concerns they have.
- Occasionally some pupils are not challenged, as the work is too easy. As a result progress slows, especially for the most-able pupils, as these pupils lose concentration.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Procedures for vetting staff and new appointments are thorough, and reflect recent government guidance. Signing in and out for visitors is carried out meticulously. Staff are appropriately trained so quickly pick up on any signs of concern. Pupils say that they trust staff to help them resolve any minor differences.
- Pupils willingly take on extra responsibilities around the school. They show great care and consideration for their environment, which is looked after by the 'eco-warrior' group. Along with a local council officer, the group led an assembly to inform the school about recycling and reusing waste. 'Digital leaders' help the younger ones to learn how to keep safe when using computers. Training on e-safety as well as road safety ensures that pupils feel safe and well looked after. Pupils make a strong contribution to a cohesive school.
- The breakfast club and early morning events give many pupils a purposeful start to the day in a warm and supportive environment.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are proud to be members of this school. This is reflected in their regular attendance and punctuality.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers have very positive relationships with the pupils. Teaching is good because over time pupils make good progress and are keen to learn.

- Literacy and numeracy are taught well as seen in the good quality work found in pupils' books during the inspection.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics check in the last two years show that pupils acquire skills effectively. Teaching provides pupils with opportunities to practise these skills so that they are confident in recognising common and unfamiliar words. However, not all pupils are taught to apply these skills to improve their writing and spelling.
- Spelling and vocabulary are well developed in the Reception class. When comparing two pets, children made excellent use of vocabulary to describe the giant snail as 'slimy' as well as 'hard', and the hamster as 'fluffy'.
- Teachers ensure that regular practice helps pupils develop a good competence in using their calculation skills. Year 6 pupils for example, enjoyed the challenge of algebra, showed excellent concentration, and collaborated in groups to achieve success. As a result they made good progress.
- Pupils in Year 2 responded well to questions and problems which probed their understanding of patterns in mathematics. They enjoyed the challenge even when they found the task demanding because they developed deeper understanding of number patterns and shapes, and used a number of different mathematical operations at the same time. One pupil reflected that mathematics was not just about getting the right answer.
- However, not all teachers provide activities which are more demanding, particularly for the most able, or help these pupils to deepen their understanding through mathematical investigations.
- Teaching assistants provide high quality support particularly for the least-able pupils. Well produced resources help to ensure that these pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Marking and feedback give pupils help with what they need to do to improve their learning. However, they do not always receive the same guidance in improving their writing in subjects outside English, such as history or science.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment at the end of Year 2 has been in line with national averages for three years in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014 pupils in Year 6 attained standards in reading above the national average, and around the average in writing. Although standards in mathematics and in spelling, punctuation and grammar dipped in 2013, Year 6 attained average standards in these areas in 2014.
- Progress is good for all groups of pupils. Work is planned at different levels and pupils can choose work which is not too easy or too hard.
- Pupils' performance in the phonics screening check is around the national average. They are confident in applying their skills to identify unfamiliar words. However, some struggle to use this learning in their spelling.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally make good progress in line with their classmates. They receive good support in small groups or one-to-one from teaching assistants and this meets their needs and helps to narrow any gaps in their learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school achieve well. Although in 2014 Year 6 pupils' attainment did not compare well with others in the school, overall their progress was good. In reading, the attainment gap was around six months behind the others, in writing it was 12 months behind and in mathematics it was nearly 16 months behind. Compared to other pupils nationally, the gap in reading was around four months behind, in writing around eight months behind, and in mathematics around 14 months behind. In other year groups disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their different starting points so gaps are closing.

- The most-able pupils' attainment was around the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Activities provide challenge and often help them to deepen their understanding. However, some do not make the progress expected of them, especially in writing in subjects other than English, and in mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- Children have skills typical for their age when they join the Reception class. They are provided with a rich and stimulating environment which helps to develop their skills. Routines are quickly established so children make good progress. Most reach a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leadership has been strengthened and is now good. The local authority provides well targeted support to ensure that teachers make accurate assessments of the children's skills. Record keeping is regular and accurate. Parents get involved in recording 'wow' moments as their children learn new skills at home. This helps teachers plan further stimulation and ensure no one falls behind in their learning.
- Teaching is good and is particularly strong when teachers lead the whole class. Children were in awe as they compared a giant snail with a hamster as two pets. This inspired many of them to draw pictures of the snail showing accurate features. They made good suggestions about the different needs of the two animals, as effective questioning helped to deepen their awareness of similarities and differences.
- Children also learn well when they have chosen an activity. For example, they designed possible habitats for different pets using a wide range of materials including cardboard boxes. Some continued this at lunchtime with the help of Year 6 play leaders. Children showed good levels of concentration as they tried out the materials.
- Children's behaviour is good because they can choose from a range of activities which engage their attention. They work well together and listen carefully to adult instructions. As a result they feel safe and thrive in their learning.

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	114723
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	453683

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Lowe
Headteacher	Amanda Barlow
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2013
Telephone number	01255 674007
Fax number	01255 851686
Email address	admin@frintononsea.essex.sch.uk

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