

Frobisher Primary and Nursery School

Frobisher Drive, Jaywick, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 2QH

Inspection dates 16–17 April 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Achievement in reading and mathematics is not yet good. Pupils' basic reading and mathematical skills are gradually getting better but the rate of improvement is not fast enough.
- The school has not yet resolved how best to support children arriving part-way through the Reception year and Year 1 in their reading. Results in the phonics (letters and their sounds) screening check are below average.
- Teaching is not consistently strong enough to close the gaps in pupils' previous learning.
- Teaching does not always have high enough expectations of what pupils' can achieve. As a result, some classes do not always make as much progress as they could, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- Feedback from teachers does not consistently give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work in line with the school policy and occasionally mistakes are not addressed.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has prioritised a number of effective improvements and is committed to ensuring all pupils achieve the best that they possibly can.
- Newly appointed senior leaders and governors make purposeful and good use of data to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their education because better teaching, leadership and management are good.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop good social skills. Those appointed and/or elected to positions of responsibility enjoy their roles and take them seriously.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are proud of their school and the part they play in making it a welcoming place to visit.
- Pupils feel safe at school and learn how to keep safe.
- All members of staff show a determination to do their best for the children which provides a solid platform for this school to improve further.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are now well provided for and are beginning to catch up with other pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 29 lessons, including examples of teaching in every year group, as well as an assembly. Three lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspection team looked at pupils' learning journals and books across a range of subjects to establish their progress and the quality of their work over time.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils as well as individual pupils during lessons and at playtimes to find out their views about the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them about the books they enjoy and observed their behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors talked informally with parents at the start and end of the school day to gauge their views of the school, took account of 25 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent view), analysed 88 responses to the school's own parental questionnaires and 29 responses from a staff questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, two deputy head teachers, senior leaders and subject leaders, governors, the local leader of education supporting the school and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses and plans for improvement, external monitoring reports, records of checks made by leaders and information on pupils' attainment and their progress. They also scrutinised teacher's planning, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, records of checks on the quality of teaching and the setting of targets for teachers to improve their work, and minutes of meetings of the governing body,
- Ofsted received a qualifying complaint on 9 October 2013, relating to behaviour and safety at the school and the inspection team gave this matter careful consideration during the two days.

Inspection team

Desmond Dunne, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Vreta Bagilhole	Additional Inspector
Kate Robertson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is almost double the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is more than double the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Many families move into the area and a small number move away, which means that about one in five pupils in each year group arrive during the year
- The Nursery class offers part-time nursery provision. Two Reception classes provide full-time early years provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is supported by the headteacher of Writtle Junior School, and the Tendring Primary Partnership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school so that it is at least good, by making sure that all teachers:
 - pitch work at the right level so that it is not too easy or too hard, and always provide good challenge for all pupils, including the most able
 - help teaching assistants to be clear about what pupils can achieve
 - use assessment information during lessons to ensure that all pupils move on fast enough and that pupils' misconceptions are rectified quickly and those experiencing difficulties receive the support they need
 - consistently show pupils how to make their work better when marking it and provide enough time for all pupils to respond to their guidance.
- Raise standards and help pupils learn at a faster rate in reading and mathematics by:
 - allowing them more opportunities to read beyond guided reading sessions, so that they can self-select from a wide range of reading material, locate and select information, explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to solve problems in real-life contexts, to help them develop a broader range of mathematical skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has brought about significant improvements to the school since the last inspection. She has built up an effective senior leadership team by appointing two new deputy headteachers and developed the skills of other leaders. She set about ensuring an improvement in pupils' behaviour across the school and successfully tackled the improvements needed in the quality of teaching.
- Senior leaders and governors are now more effective than they were because they use assessment data much more purposefully to challenge class teachers about the attainment and progress made by their pupils. Members of the senior leadership team are very approachable and have gained the enthusiastic support of all staff, confirmed by responses to the staff questionnaire analysed by inspectors. Senior leaders' evaluation of the school is honest and accurate.
- Subject leaders have received training and on-going help and guidance from senior leaders to ensure that curriculum plans lead to imaginative lessons that motivate the pupils to learn. Subject leaders' checks on the quality of teaching in their subjects are rigorous and include regular observation of lessons and the analysis of lesson plans and the work in pupil's books.
- Senior leaders regularly check records of behaviour incidents throughout the school to ensure consistent application of the school's procedures. These rigorous checks and attention to detail about incidents that take place have led to much improved behaviour over the last two years. The headteacher and governors regularly check attendance data and the school liaison officer's report on this because attendance is not improving as fast as they would like.
- Leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of the school's performance and rigorously check the impact of all aspects of the school's work on pupils' learning and well-being. As a result, achievement and teaching have improved gradually over the last two years, but not as fast as the improvements in behaviour.
- The school's procedures for setting targets for leaders and class teachers to improve their work support continued improvement. The headteacher has not been afraid to tackle robustly any weaknesses in teaching and balances this well with rewards for success.
- Funding for the school's Acorn Enhanced Provision classroom is effective because it contributes well to the social and emotional development of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. Funding for the family liaison officer and the community centre is effective because they provide parents and carers with some necessary help, guidance and challenge.
- Where members of staff have not reached the high standards expected, the headteacher and other senior leaders have provided support and training. In some cases this has been successful but, where it has not, the headteacher has worked with governing body to take further action. This has led to recent changes in staffing.
- The school's new curriculum places emphasis on learning English and mathematics through interesting topics and themes to help raise standards. Teachers are now planning imaginative approaches to engage boys in learning. The work in pupil's books shows that they are producing better quality work than they were last year, particularly among boys.
- The school is taking appropriate steps to ensure that it uses pupil premium funding effectively. The extra teacher in Year 6, the development of Acorn Enhanced Provision, the employment of a family liaison officer and a chartered psychologist, as the special educational needs coordinator, have enabled many pupils to achieve more than they had done in previous years. This funding is very carefully monitored and staff are held to account for the progress made by eligible pupils.
- Pupils learn important skills, as preparation for life in modern Britain, when completing applications for positions of responsibility. They also experience democracy and the chance everyone has to succeed when electing their classmates to these roles. This has helped to develop pupils' understanding and respect for

each other. Discrimination is not tolerated.

- The school meets national safeguarding requirements and its arrangements are effective in keeping pupils safe. All adults are regularly trained and individual cases of concern are followed up thoroughly. The family liaison officer works well with a number of families to provide help, guidance and challenge when necessary. She also appropriately uses a range of external agencies when needed.
- Additional funding to improve pupils' participation and ability in sport has been used effectively to enhance teaching and learning in physical education. Inspectors observed specialist coaches lead high quality sports sessions during the school day, which the pupils not only enjoyed, but also provided them the opportunity to practise newly developed skills.
- The local authority is providing good support through its regular monitoring visits. The headteacher makes good use of a strong network of local schools which provide good support through guidance on leadership and the quality of teaching.

■ The governance of the school

- Governance is more effective than it was at the time of the last inspection. The governing body knows much more about the performance of the school through its interpretation of assessment data. It links that well to the school's data on the quality of teaching. Governors are effective in holding the headteacher and senior leaders to account and provide good levels of challenge in meetings of the governing body and when they visit the school. They are under no illusions about how difficult it is to raise standards and that they need to continually challenge and support the school's leaders to ensure that all staff are contributing consistently to the school's improvement.
- Governors have strongly supported the developments made by the headteacher. They are well informed about the school's procedures for setting targets for teachers. The governing body knows about the quality of teaching across the school and is fully supportive of the different ways that the senior leadership team is tackling the remaining weaknesses in teaching.
- The governing body has made appropriate arrangements for the use of pupil premium funding and is very well informed about how the money is used. It is holding leaders to account for ensuring that these students make better progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Children in Nursery and Reception classes settle quickly because of good routines and caring adult support. The children behave well and clearly feel happy, safe and secure. They make a good start to their education.
- The school's Acorns Enhanced Provision, funded by the pupil premium, enables pupils in Year 1 and 2 who are having difficulty coping in the classroom to develop self-control and self-awareness skills. As a result, they are reintegrated into classes alongside their classmates. Pupils who had spent time in 'Acorns' said they were much more able to maintain good relationships with both adults and their peers.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they enthusiastically talk about the interesting lessons they now have. Teachers throughout the school know their pupils well, and pupils say they are confident about approaching teachers for extra help.
- Pupils conduct themselves very well in lessons and show a pride and respect for their school. They take pride in their achievements. 'Meeters and Greeters' in every class welcome visitors, while other pupils are courteous and polite. Pupils have many other opportunities to take on roles of responsibility, such as school ambassadors, members of the school council and house captains. They were very excited to tell inspectors that 'Frobisher friends', playground leaders that help and support pupils at break and lunchtime, are to receive new bibs and badges.
- Almost all staff and parents agree that the behaviour of pupils is good. Inspectors carefully considered the critical comments made by a minority of parents. In the past, incidents of poor behaviour were common, but pupils and staff provided convincing evidence that behaviour has improved considerably in the last two

years. The number of exclusions has reduced dramatically in the current school year compared with 2013/14.

- Pupils say that the 'Let's solve the problem together' system, which allows them to think carefully about poor behaviour and making good choices, is carried out consistently by staff and ensures that behaviour across the school continues to improve. Pupils' awareness of right and wrong is an indicator of the success of the school in effectively promoting their moral development.
- The attendance of a small number of pupils is very poor and this has had an impact on overall attendance, which is improving but remains below the national average. Although most pupils respond well to the school's promotion of good attendance, senior leaders recognise that the persistent absence of a few is still an issue for the school.
- Pupils who face difficult circumstances receive good academic, emotional and social support. The help and guidance provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. The school works well with external services to provide additional support for pupils where this is appropriate.
- Pupils say that bullying is now very rare. They understand bullying in all its forms, including that which is prejudice-based, which they say tends to be name calling and more serious incidents of homophobic bullying. Pupils were quick to explain how incidents had been dealt with by adults when they occurred, saying, 'Teachers are friendly and supportive when anyone has problems.'

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school meets all national safeguarding requirements at a very thorough level. Social and emotional family liaison is good with successful rates of intervention and support for pupils and their families in need.
- Pupils say they feel safe and understand what constitutes unsafe situations. They were keen to communicate that lessons and assemblies, provided by the school, make them very aware of how to keep themselves and others safe. The assembly observed by inspectors about being safe when close to dogs is typical of the guidance they receive.
- Appropriate risk assessments are in place and pupils were keen to tell inspectors about their recent projects with the police about ways to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not good because the planned use of 'Mild', 'Spicy', 'Hot' and 'Scotch' activities for pupils of different abilities in each class is not working well in the majority of classrooms. Sometimes the work is too easy for the most able pupils and sometimes too hard for other pupils, who subsequently struggle to complete the tasks set. This slows their learning.
- Teachers do not check pupils' work quickly enough during lessons and miss some of the mistakes or lack of understanding shown in their books. The written feedback in pupil's books from some teachers is not as good as the best examples produced by senior leaders and some subject leaders.
- Teaching assistants do not have sufficient impact on learning because some class teachers do not provide good enough guidance for teaching assistants about what they should expect pupils of different abilities to achieve by the end of a lesson.
- In literacy, teachers expect pupils to present their work well with good handwriting, correct spelling and accurate use of grammar and punctuation. In one lesson, the pupils confidently used the 'Four rules for punctuation' when using speech marks. However, some minor mistakes by a few pupils, such as the use of capital letters after commas placed at the end of speech marks, were not picked up by the class teacher.
- Pupils lag behind other pupils nationally in reading because, beyond guided reading sessions, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to select and make use of information from non-fiction books.

Teaching does not place enough emphasis on pupils confidently explaining what they remember and understand after reading a section from a fiction books.

- In mathematics, imaginative approaches are used to engage and motivate pupils, such as working on maps placed at different places in the playground and solving fractions through the use of money problems. However, this does not always build on prior learning or tackle gaps in pupil's understanding. Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-solving challenges.
- Some teachers adopt effective strategies to increase the pace of progress. For instance, in a geography lesson the teacher used a wide range of short, sharp, timed activities to ensure pupils had to work at a very high pace. Pupils were encouraged to work hard, through praise when their efforts deserved this, and teaching assistants were clear about their role in supporting targeted pupils in the lesson.
- Teachers use questioning well to check understanding and probe pupils for more detailed answers. Recent training has focused well on how to make good use of authors, musicians and artists to raise pupils' aspirations.
- Relationships are strong and teachers celebrate pupil's achievement through the production of a lively and colourful learning environment, using a wide range of resources, including pupil's work.
- Teaching enhances pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils appreciate that they are taught about different religions and they enjoyed the work they completed on how cultural influences have shaped our own British heritage. Pupils' developed a strong sense of the school's place within the local community when they worked with the 'Jaywick Neighbourhood Team' on marine conservation and the design of logos. They were encouraged to express and justify their own opinions and they listened to each other's viewpoints very respectfully.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- When children enter the early years classes some show weak social emotional development and poor, communication and language skills. Adults address this by regular conversations that help develop the children's confidence in speaking and listening.
- Staffing difficulties and the arrival of new pupils in each class part-way through the year mean that progress in Years 1 to 6 has not been as rapid as it could be. Some of these pupils have since caught up and are now achieving comparatively well. This also explains why attainment in phonics has been below national average for the past two years. The teaching of phonics is good and the school have not yet resolved how it can improve attainment by pupils in Year 1, although all pupils in Year 2 retake the test successfully.
- All pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress in writing, including the most able, because this was a high priority development across the school over the past two years. However, pupils' books and the analysis of progress data over a period of time show that progress in reading and mathematics is not improving rapidly enough. Pupils in the current Year 6 had experienced weaker teaching when they were in Years 3 and 4, although improved teaching in Years 5 and 6 is helping them to catch up.
- Pupils' attainment in reading in Year 2 is well below the national average. This gradually improves as the children move through the school. However, older readers still lag slightly behind what would be expected nationally of pupils in Year 6.
- The school promotes equality for everyone to succeed by ensuring that boys, girls and all ability groups have the opportunity to work together. Boys initially lag behind girls, particularly new arrivals part-way through the year. The way activities, events and roles of responsibility are designed to include everyone enables them to start catching up.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making faster progress than their classmates. This is because the new special educational needs co-ordinator has identified more effective ways to support these pupils. Analysis of data shows that they are making more progress now than they

were two years ago.

- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils left Year 6 nearly two years behind their classmates in mathematics and over a year behind in reading and writing. They were nearly a year behind other pupils nationally in reading but less than a term behind in writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils in the current Year 6 are less than a term behind their classmates in reading and mathematics and just more than one term behind in writing. While the gaps in achievement are closing, the school is aware that it needs to do more to close them further.
- The most-able pupils, the 'Frobisher flyers', are provided with difficult tasks, such as making a school newspaper, designing a roller coaster or doing 'Bear Grylls' mathematics by working outside on 'chilli-challenges' to complete work with three-dimensional shapes. However, this is not entirely effective as only one third of these pupils achieve more than the national average attainment.

The early years provision is good

- Many children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with specific difficulties in speaking, communication and social development. The school is quick to identify these children, and provides a good range of timely and well-targeted help and guidance. All abilities make good gains during their time in early years classrooms and progress is good and improving year on year.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception year was close to average. Assessment data for the current children in the Reception year indicate that it will move to above average in 2015. Achievement in the early years is good and children are well prepared for their future learning in Year 1.
- Teaching is good and well supported by a team consisting of a higher level teaching assistant, a learning support assistant and other teaching assistants. The children engage in a variety of activities, currently related to the seaside and visiting the beach. These are carefully and purposefully planned to meet the needs of different children. For example, there is an emphasis on developing children's language skills and adults engage them in conversation at every opportunity.
- Both the inside and outside areas provide a safe learning environment. Resources are easily accessible to the children and the outdoor environment is used well to encourage the development children's whole body movement as well as the development of hand to eye coordination.
- The teaching of phonics is now a strength in the early years. Teachers provide a variety of activities for all groups enable children to read and spell sounds or words, sing songs and develop their speaking and listening skills. The continuation of this into Year 1 has been a concern, because of the numbers of children who join during the Reception year and Year 1. Good communication between staff has led to a much smoother transition.
- There is good leadership and strong teamwork with staff receiving good training about national initiatives. The progress of children is backed up by careful observations and assessments recorded by all members of staff. The staff meet regularly and use assessment information well to plan what children need to do next.
- A recent priority, in line with whole school development, is to improve boys' achievement and staff have creatively developed a range of resources to motivate and engage them, such as interesting topics for boys alongside the use of computers, remote control cars, metal detectors and the provision of tool belts with pencils, crayons and pens, similar to a workman's tool belt to encourage writing. Girls have also engaged enthusiastically with these resources.
- Parents are involved in their children's learning from the start. They are encouraged to contribute to the content in children's learning journey folders, invited into class for weekly family days and celebrate achievement through the award of 'Wow' vouchers as well as attending other events and performances, such as the 'Skeleton Dance'.

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	114757
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	462111

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	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Baird
Headteacher	Julia Hall
Date of previous school inspection	24 April 2013
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