

Freemantle Church of England Community Academy

Mansion Road, Freemantle, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 3BQ

Inspection dates	13–14 September 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders, managers, governors and staff do not monitor closely enough the progress made by pupils. Leaders in particular have not ensured that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Governors do not challenge leaders and managers rigorously enough about the progress of different groups of pupils. They do not ensure that the school's website is up to date.
- Teaching is not consistently good, particularly of reading and writing. Teachers do not all use assessment information well to inform their planning. Teachers' expectations, particularly of the most able, are not high enough.
- Sometimes pupils are bored and this leads to them distracting others.
- Teachers do not all demonstrate a good understanding of how best to meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Teaching and support staff are not sufficiently knowledgeable about teaching phonics. Consequently, pupils' phonics skills are underdeveloped.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading and writing across the school; too few reach a high standard.
- Although the difference in the achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is reducing, improvements in this area are slow, particularly in reading and writing.
- Support staff are not all sufficiently well trained in how best to support the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Transition arrangements for pupils between Reception and Year 1 do not take sufficient account of pupils who are not ready for key stage 1.

The school has the following strengths

- The school provides a happy and safe haven, especially for its most vulnerable pupils.
- The vast majority of pupils are gentle, kind and respectful. They have learnt about the value and importance of respecting and caring for the natural environment.
- The quality of provision for children in pre-school is good.
- Senior leaders ensure that pupils' progress in mathematics is improving well and that pupils' handwriting and personal development are good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of pupils, particularly in reading and writing, so that more reach and exceed the expected standard for their age by the end of key stages 1 and 2 by:
 - improving transition arrangements between Reception and Year 1, especially for those pupils who did not meet the early learning goals
 - ensuring that pupils develop their phonics skills from an early age and are encouraged to use their phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) to help them with their reading and writing
 - providing greater levels of challenge, particularly for the most able
 - ensuring that the progress made by disadvantaged pupils accelerates so that they catch up more quickly with their peers.
- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in reading and writing, so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information to plan work that is well-matched to the interests and different needs of pupils
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able
 - developing teachers' understanding of how best to meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language
 - ensuring that teaching and support staff develop their ability to teach phonics effectively
 - developing the knowledge and skills of support staff so that they are well trained to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring that governors hold the school to account more rigorously about the learning and progress of different groups of pupils
 - making sure that leaders and governors maintain an overview of the contents of the school's website to ensure that it is kept up to date, and includes all the information it should
 - ensuring that leaders and managers, at all levels, monitor closely the progress made by all groups, particularly in reading and writing.

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

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken to assess the effectiveness with which this additional funding is used.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Several leaders and managers are new in post and have yet to fully develop their role. Consequently, they have not yet monitored closely enough the progress of different groups of pupils, including in subjects beyond English and mathematics.
- The school has undergone a significant programme of building work. The building programme has diverted the attention of some leaders away from their core purpose of improving the overall effectiveness of the school. However, the result of the building work is that the school can accommodate more pupils and is now fit for purpose.
- The school's website was updated during the course of the inspection, but had been left with some key policies that were out of date for most of last year. The website is now compliant and includes all of the information that it should.
- In the last year, senior leaders have become a strength of the school. They now have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and the areas in need of improvement. They have produced an ambitious plan which has been shared with staff and governors. As a result, all understand and share the same priorities to help the school to improve.
- In the last year, senior leaders have monitored regularly the effectiveness of the quality of teaching and learning. They provide teachers with helpful feedback about what they do well and what they could do better. Teachers welcome this feedback and the subsequent training and coaching they receive.
- Senior leaders now hold teachers more closely to account for the progress by their pupils. They challenge underperformance of teaching and learning rigorously. This has already led to the improvements seen in mathematics, the quality of pupils' handwriting and the personal development of pupils. Aspects of teaching are also improving well as a result of the work of leaders, such as the use of questioning. As a result, senior leaders are successfully rebuilding a culture focused on raising standards. However, this has yet to lead to good outcomes at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Newly-qualified teachers spoke very positively to one of the inspectors about the good quality of support and training they receive and how this is helping them to improve their practice.
- Leaders and managers have correctly identified the need to provide additional training for staff, for example on the teaching of phonics and on the revised policy about equalities.
- All new members of the senior leadership team are developing their roles well. The special educational needs coordinator has identified, for example the need to improve the accuracy with which the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is tracked.
- Leaders have ensured that staff receive good professional development about the teaching of mathematics; this has led to significant improvements in the quality of teaching in the subject, particularly at key stage 2. A focus on pupils' handwriting and presentation has also led to improvements in these areas.
- Senior leaders keep a close eye on the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and how this compares to their peers. They recognise that the difference between the

achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others, while reducing, is still too great. Initiatives funded through the pupil premium are kept under review. Where these are found not to be sufficiently effective they are modified and changed.

- The impact of the additional funding through the physical education (PE) sports premium has led to more pupils receiving high-quality teaching in PE provided by specialists.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well at the school. This has helped to secure a good level of social integration among pupils who come from a broad range of different backgrounds.
- Senior leaders have introduced a new curriculum that is broad and balanced. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to be creative. They learn through a topic approach whereby different subjects are linked. However, the curriculum is not having a good enough impact on raising standards of reading and writing. Nevertheless, it helps pupils to benefit from memorable learning experiences. Visits to places of historical interest and visitors to the school from a range of different backgrounds all contribute well to pupils' cultural development.
- The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and fundamental British values. Staff ensure that pupils understand the rule of law, the consequences when rules are broken and what it means to live in a democratic society.
- While the majority of parents would recommend the school to another parent, a minority do not believe the school is well led and managed. In their written responses to the online survey, a few parents indicated they would like the school to improve the timeliness with which information is communicated.
- Most staff at the school believe the school is well led and managed. They enjoy working at the school and are proud to be a member of staff.

Governance of the school

- Governance at the school requires improvement. New governors are developing their role, but recognise that they still have a way to go in order to become highly effective in helping the school to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Governors recognise the need for them to check more rigorously on the implementation and impact of agreed policies.
- Although governors challenge senior leaders about the progress made by different groups of pupils, they have not always done this rigorously enough or followed up on questions asked at meetings.
- Governors work effectively with senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching through the management of teachers' performance. This also contributes well to tackling weaker teaching.
- Governors have been rigorous in their monitoring of the school's expenditure. They have supported the school to make the necessary changes to improve the learning environment and to restructure the school's leadership team.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- There is a strong culture among staff and pupils of helping pupils to stay safe. Staff receive annual refresher training about child protection and safeguarding. All staff at the school recognise that the safeguarding of pupils is a responsibility shared by all. They know what to do should they have a safeguarding concern about a pupil.
- Outside agencies regularly visit the school to help pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are taught about the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The school completes all of the required checks to verify the suitability of adults to work with children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers' subject knowledge, particularly in the teaching of reading and writing, requires improvement.
- Teachers do not use assessment information about pupils well enough to plan lessons for the different needs of their pupils. As a result, pupils, especially the most able, the disadvantaged and those who speak English as an additional language, do not progress as well as they could.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in reading and writing are too low.
- Some teaching makes effective use of a range of strategies to support the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language, such as visual cues and bilingual support. However, too many teachers do not demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding of how to ensure that pupils learning to speak English as an additional language can access the curriculum fully and make good progress.
- Teaching and support staff do not all possess a good level of knowledge and skills about the teaching of phonics. This slows the pace of learning and progress that pupils make, both in their reading and their writing, particularly for those of lower ability.
- There are some skilled adults at the school, who provide effective additional support for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, not all support staff who work with this group of pupils who have received sufficient guidance and training. Consequently, they are not all sufficiently aware of the best way of helping the pupils they support.
- Teachers provide pupils with both oral and written feedback. Where this is most effective, teachers identify and respond to errors and misconceptions in pupils' work and help pupils to recognise how to improve. However, the quality of feedback to pupils is inconsistent across the school.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is improving well, particularly at key stage 2. In a mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils used a range of mathematical resources to help them to compare numbers up to 10 million. Pupils experimented in the positioning of different numbers in order to create the largest number. This helped to deepen their understanding of the value of digits in relation to each other and how the value changes if the number is moved within a sequence.
- Teaching, particularly of mathematics, often includes questions to challenge and extend pupils' learning.
- Some teachers engage and motivate their pupils very well. They do this through lively

and dynamic teaching and by providing interesting and practical activities. A good example was observed in a Year 3 English lesson, with the class teacher miming 'doing words' to help pupils to recall the meaning of what a verb is.

- While the majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are positive about the quality of teaching, a minority do not believe that teaching is good or that their child receives appropriate homework for their age.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils come from an array of different social and cultural backgrounds. They have all integrated well and most play and work together very well.
- The school is particularly adept at helping pupils to develop into confident and self-aware young people.
- Pupils know about the importance of caring for the environment as well as looking out for each other.
- The school caters particularly well for pupils' cultural development through visits to theatres and places of historical interest such as Portchester Castle.
- Pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils take part in daily acts of worship during which they give thanks, for example, for their friends, family and school. They are encouraged to appreciate the natural world and its beauty.
- Pupils benefit from visitors to the school from a wide range of backgrounds that help to raise their aspirations of what they can achieve. For example, pupils enjoyed the performance that took place from a gospel singer at the time of the inspection.
- The school also uses visitors to help challenge stereotypes. A good example is that of a chef who talked to pupils about his job as a chocolatier; this raised boys' awareness that cooking could be a career for men as well as women.
- Pupils say that they are happy at school. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- There is particularly good provision at the school for pupils with emotional needs and those who are most vulnerable and live in challenging circumstances. The sensory room and lunchtime clubs provide areas of refuge where vulnerable pupils can enjoy a quiet space and receive support if needed. Staff have noticed the difference this support has made in helping pupils to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Staff also commented that in turn, pupils receiving of this support subsequently engage more positively with their learning.
- The school's programme of personal, social and health education focuses appropriately on promoting the relationship between having a healthy body and a healthy mind.
- Healthy school meals are prepared on the premises; they also serve as an example to pupils about healthy eating.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy the wide range of apparatus and activities available to them in the playground. Specialist physical education coaches ensure that pupils receive high-quality teaching to promote their physical development.

- Although staff actively promote equality of opportunity, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wide range of people who live in Britain is underdeveloped.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The vast majority of pupils are kind and polite. However, a few are not always respectful to adults.
- Where teaching does not fully engage the interests and needs of pupils, this sometimes leads to some low-level disruption by a few pupils. This at times disturbs the learning of others.
- The vast majority of pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Older pupils recognise that they need to set a good example for younger pupils.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is extremely rare at the school. They are confident that if they have any concerns or problems, there are adults in the school they trust and can talk to.
- Although levels of absence have significantly reduced, they are still a little above average. Nevertheless, the school has worked successfully with targeted families to help them to improve the attendance of their children. Staff ensure that they understand the reasons why pupils are not attending regularly to see if there is anything the school can do to help.
- Those staff and parents who responded to questionnaires agree with pupils that, overall, the behaviour of pupils at the school is well managed.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- The progress that pupils make given their different starting points requires improvement. Last year the school did not meet its own targets for the proportion of pupils expected to meet age-related expectations by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils nationally. Although the difference is beginning to reduce, this is happening slowly.
- The progress and outcomes of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is very variable across the school. Those pupils with social and emotional needs progress well. However, those who experience difficulties academically do not always progress well.
- Although the progress pupils make from key stage 1 to key stage 2 is broadly average, a lower proportion than in most schools reach the expected standard for their age by the end of Year 6, especially in reading and writing. Furthermore, too few achieve the higher standards.
- Last year's test results in phonics went up, but current pupils of lower ability do not have secure skills to help their reading and writing. The phonics skills of pupils currently, especially for pupils of lower ability, are not secure. This slows the progress that pupils make in both their reading and writing.
- Having previously been broadly average, current standards in writing at key stage 1 are below age-related expectations for all groups. This is largely due to many pupils

having joined Year 1 in the past, without being sufficiently well prepared by the end of the early years.

- Evidence of work seen in pupils' books shows that some of the teachers at key stage 1 successfully help pupils to catch up with their learning. This has enabled pupils in the past to reach standards expected for their age by the end of Year 2, despite their low starting points.
- Intervention for disadvantaged pupils at key stage 1 is helping this group of pupils to make significant progress in reading and writing.
- The most able pupils make better progress than their peers in reading and writing at key stage 2. However, those of low ability, the disadvantaged and those who speak English as an additional language achieve less well. This is largely due to their vocabulary being less well developed.
- The work seen in pupils' books at key stage 2 highlights that pupils are becoming increasingly secure in spelling words correctly and understanding how to use grammar and punctuation accurately. However, they are not always provided with opportunities to apply their learning, so their written work does not improve as well as it could.
- As boys' reading improves, the difference between their achievements compared to that of girls is reducing. This is due to the improvements made to the quality of reading materials. Pupils particularly appreciate the new books introduced to the school library this year; this is helping them to develop a love to reading. Pupils really enjoy using the library and made comments such as: 'I want to be a librarian because I love reading books and I want to help younger pupils'.
- Pupils develop good handwriting skills as a result of a strong school focus on this by staff.
- Outcomes in mathematics are improving more rapidly at key stage 2 than at key stage 1. This is one area in which boys outperform girls.
- The most able pupils make better progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. Provisional data shows that in 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the highest standard in mathematics was in line with the national average.
- The work seen in pupils' books shows that older pupils are doing work that is appropriate for their age in mathematics such as comparing numbers up to 10 million.
- The extent to which pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education requires improvement at an academic level, particularly in reading and writing. However, pupils leave school as confident and resilient young people who believe, as pupils put it, that 'anything is possible'.
- While parents are mostly positive about the school, a minority do not believe that their child is making good enough progress or that they receive enough information about what their child is learning and how well they are progressing.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- At the time of the inspection, the outside learning environment for the early years was being redeveloped and was not accessible to children.
- The proportion of children that achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years has been below the national average since the school was last inspected.

There has nonetheless been a rising trend, although typically boys and disadvantaged children do not achieve as well as others or girls.

- Children cannot write well. Their phonics skills are not sufficiently well developed. There are still too many pupils that are not sufficiently well prepared to start Year 1.
- Staff have become more adept at tracking the progress children make. However, there is not enough rigour in checking the difference that the use of additional funding, through the pupil premium, is having on helping disadvantaged children to catch up with their peers.
- Transition arrangements from Reception to Year 1 are limited. This includes for the most able who are ready to access the key stage 1 curriculum early, as well as those who join Year 1 but have not met the early learning goals.
- Although the quality of teaching in the early years still requires improvement, particularly in Reception, it is stronger than has previously been the case. Nevertheless, expectations of the most able children are not always high enough and the teaching of phonics is not sufficiently rigorous or thorough.
- Children do not associate readily enough the shape of letters with the sound they represent. Some were observed becoming confused when teaching focused on the name of a letter as opposed to the sound.
- Children in the early years are well behaved. Their personal, social and emotional development is a strength. This helps them to develop self-confidence and self-awareness quickly and to manage their feelings and behaviour well. Staff help them to make relationships and to develop a good understanding of the world around them.
- Children were observed joining in with songs, repeated refrains and using actions about sausages in a pan, to help them with counting as well as to develop their vocabulary. They were captivated by the colourful images and animations used by teachers on the smartboards.
- Teachers use technology and practical resources well to help children develop their knowledge and understanding of numbers up to 10, the names of different shapes and the name of different colours.
- When both classes in Reception were observed, the amount of time children were expected to remain seated resulted in some losing concentration. Those that were keen to move on to the exciting activities that had been laid out for them became fidgety and distracted.
- Staff work closely with parents to help children to settle quickly and make a smooth transition from pre-school. Staff also work well with speech and language specialists to support the development of pupils' communication and language skills effectively.
- The leader of the early years, having recognised that children typically enter Reception with low levels of development for their age, has ensured that pre-school prepares children well for when they begin Reception. Consequently, children's levels of development on entry to Reception, having previously been below those typical for their age, are now broadly average.
- Staff are very knowledgeable about what children need to learn in pre-school. They take full account of children's emotional and physical dependency on adults, particularly that of two-year-olds. They give children time to be in a familiar and small group. Staff are patient and attentive, listening to and responding to children's verbal and non-verbal communication.

- Children were observed playing together happily in the home corner, playing with puzzles and learning to count cubes and objects.
- There is particularly effective bilingual support for Polish children in this part of the school.
- Staff in the early years are particularly adept at supporting the welfare of pupils. Safeguarding arrangements in this part of the school are effective.

School details

Unique reference number	136641
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10019828

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

Type of school	All-through primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	480
Appropriate authority	Freemantle Trust
Chair	Alison Saunders
Headteacher	Kevin Barnett
Telephone number	02380227925
Website	www.freemantleacademy.com/
Email address	head@freemantleschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2012

Information about this school

- Freemantle Church of England Community Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high, and over one third speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. There are fewer pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan than in most schools.
- There have been some significant changes to staffing and governance at the school since the last inspection. Staff changes include a restructuring of the senior leadership team.
- Many experienced staff have left, often for promotion, and have been replaced by less

experienced staff, including 19 newly qualified teachers in the last four years.

- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team and how it is structured since the previous inspection.
- There has been a significant building programme to enable the school to accommodate rising numbers and to create a learning environment that is fit for purpose.
- The school now has provision for pupils up to the end of key stage 2.
- The school does not meet the current government floor standard for 2015.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in 20 lessons or part lessons. Eight of these observations were done alongside a member of the senior leadership team. An inspector attended one act of collective worship and visited a nurture group. The inspectors listened to a range of pupils reading from across the school.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and on display in their classrooms and around the school.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and also spoke to pupils at playtime to seek their views about the school.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, staff and members of the governing body including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone to a representative from the diocese.
- The school's website was carefully scrutinised, as were many of the school's documents and policies. Policies and documents covered information about the progress of pupils, their behaviour, attendance, and the school's policy on equality of opportunity. Minutes of meetings held by the governing body, the school self-evaluation and raising attainment plan, as well as notes of visits from a local authority officer and a representative from the Department for Education were also reviewed.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's systems for checking the suitability of staff to work with children as well as the safety and security of the school site.
- Inspectors took account of the 49 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent view) as well as 40 questionnaires completed by staff.
- No pupil questionnaires were received during the inspection, but inspectors took account of the views of pupils during the course of the inspection.

Inspection team

Gehane Gordelier, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Old	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Hills	Ofsted Inspector

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