

Freemantle Church of England Community Academy

Mansion Road, Freemantle, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 3BQ

Inspection dates

16–17 October 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leaders have made considerable improvements to the school. Staff share the high aspirations of senior leaders.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. By the end of key stage 2, pupils attain in line with the national average in reading and writing. Attainment in mathematics is above average.
- Governors provide rigorous support and challenge to school leaders. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas still to develop.
- The quality of teaching is strong. Teachers are well trained and have good subject knowledge. Assessment is effective. But teachers do not always challenge most-able pupils to deepen their understanding in reading and writing.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school. They say that their children feel safe and well looked after.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons, pupils are keen to do well. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong.
- Children make good progress during their time in early years. Around a similar proportion to that found nationally reach a good level of development. In Reception, phonics work is not always well matched to children's needs. This is particularly for those children who are at an early stage of learning English. Leaders are still refining baseline assessment procedures.
- The curriculum is well designed. It provides pupils with a broad range of experiences. Leaders make good use of technology to engage pupils in their learning.
- Pupils' progress in reading and writing in key stage 1 has not always been strong enough to enable them to catch up with others nationally.
- Middle leaders are still developing their roles. Currently, they are not focusing enough on the progress that pupils are making.
- Some disadvantaged pupils do not attend as well as they could.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening the role of middle leaders, so they focus more on the progress that pupils are making within their areas of responsibility
 - improving the attendance of some disadvantaged pupils, so that it is at least as good as that of their peers.
- Improve standards in reading and writing by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are further challenged to deepen their understanding with work that is well matched to their abilities
 - pupils in key stage 1 catch up, so that a higher proportion attain in line with the national average.
- Strengthen provision for children in early years by:
 - reviewing the baseline assessment procedures for children entering Nursery and Reception and using that information to show the progress that children make
 - matching phonics work to children's abilities in Reception, especially for those who are at an early stage of learning English.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has improved rapidly since the last inspection. Senior leaders have been diligent in addressing the areas that needed to change. They have ensured that the school now provides a good quality of education. By the end of key stage 2, pupils attain at least in line with the national average.
- Staff are supportive of the changes that have taken place. Teachers say that the extra coaching they have received has improved the way that they check pupils' learning. All staff who responded to the questionnaire said that the school challenges pupils to make good progress.
- Parents say that they are pleased with the school. They use words such as 'supportive', 'kind', 'caring' and 'engaging' to describe the school. Many parents praise the dedication of the staff, including the headteacher.
- Staff have created a school with a very hospitable atmosphere. The school has received awards for the warmth of the welcome it provides to new pupils, including those from different cultures. As one new pupil said, 'I have settled in well – teachers are so kind here and this school is amazing.' There are many pupils who enter the school at an early stage of learning English. Leaders have arranged for a specialist Polish teacher to help these pupils to develop their skills in English.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leadership of special educational needs (SEN) is strong. Staff follow carefully individualised education plans. They put in place the right resources for pupils to do well. Funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well used. Some parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, consider that, 'The provision for children who need extra support is excellent.'
- There is a clear intention that the curriculum will give pupils a broad range of experiences. It prepares them well for their future lives. Leaders use technology effectively to engage pupils in their learning. For example, staff use an online app to encourage pupils to read more. The school provides virtual reality headsets to bring learning to life. Pupils say that they find these experiences 'amazing'. Pupils have the opportunity to run the school's radio station. This develops their speaking skills and self-confidence. Pupils develop a good commercial awareness: for instance, they collect and sell eggs from the school's hens. Pupils enjoy forest school, where they engage in exciting experiences, such as toasting marshmallows over an open fire. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Off-site visits include trips to theatres and animal parks.
- The leader responsible for physical education and sport uses the funding effectively. Participation rates of all pupils in a range of sports have increased. Many more pupils now represent the school in competitive games.
- Some middle leaders are still developing their roles. Currently, they are not checking enough on the progress that pupils are making within their areas of responsibility.

Governance of the school

- Governors fulfil their roles effectively. They know the school's strengths and areas still to improve. They acted swiftly on the findings of the review of governance following the previous inspection. They put in place an action plan to address the areas that needed to improve. Governors are proactive. They commissioned another review to confirm that their systems for holding leaders to account for pupils' progress were effective. Minutes of meetings confirm that governors challenge leaders well, for example regarding the school's use of pupil premium funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils' well-being is given the highest priority. Pupils say that they feel safe and that, 'staff care about us here'. Pupils know whom to go to if they are worried or concerned about anything.
- Staff are well trained. They know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Leaders are tenacious in logging and following up any child protection concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good. Staff have taken full advantage of the support provided. Now staff have a much clearer understanding about where each pupil is in their learning. Staff provide work that usually matches pupils' needs.
- Pupils across the school make strong progress in developing their mathematical skills. Work provided is challenging. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and they ask pupils searching questions. Pupils often have to explain their reasoning using mathematical language. Pupils say that they enjoy using practical materials.
- In English in key stage 2, teachers develop most pupils' skills effectively. In writing, teachers develop pupils' imaginations well. This was shown in a selection of poems that pupils in Year 5 had written about the industrial revolution. Pupils read regularly. They enjoy both fiction and non-fiction books. As they move through the school, pupils develop the skills to read with fluency and expression. However, the most able pupils do not always make strong progress in reading and writing. This is because they are not always challenged by teachers to deepen their understanding. Work provided is sometimes not well matched to their abilities.
- Teaching develops pupils' skills to think scientifically. Pupils in Year 4 were fascinated by the topic on the digestive system. They said that they enjoy conducting experiments. One example of this was where they recreated the digestive process, using potato mashers as teeth.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of art and different artistic styles. They learn a range of skills using paints, collage and clay.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of the work that they produce in their books. They say that teachers now give them much clearer guidance about how to do well and be a successful learner.
- Parents say that the school has helped their children to feel safe and well cared for. A typical comment was, 'If we have any concerns, they are resolved efficiently, effectively and entirely to our satisfaction.'
- The school encourages pupils to take on extra responsibilities. These include acting as house captains or members of the school council. Some pupils become 'Freemantle friends', and make sure that all pupils have someone to play with at lunchtime. Residential opportunities from Year 3 upwards help to develop pupils' self-confidence and independence.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying. They say that it is very rare at this school. Pupils feel confident that should any bullying occur, staff would sort it out quickly.
- Pupils understand how to keep safe, including when online. They know about not giving out personal information, such as their address or full name, which may identify them.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a friendly and calm start and end to the day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have had a positive impact on improving standards of behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour both in class and around the school is good. School records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour.
- Overall attendance is similar to the national average. Rates of persistent absence are continuing to fall. However, despite improvements, the attendance of some disadvantaged pupils is still too low. This has an impact on the progress of these pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes have improved since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is now good and as a result, standards are improving. Pupils make good progress from their average starting points in Year 1.
- Pupils who are in the early stages of learning English make a good start to developing early reading and writing skills. This is due to the effective support from staff, many of

whom are bilingual. These pupils also make strong progress in developing their mathematical understanding.

- Standards in phonics are improving. In 2017, the percentage of Year 1 pupils who met the expected standard was above the national average. Results dipped a little in 2018 due to a larger proportion of pupils who were at an early stage of learning English. Current pupils make strong progress in developing their phonics understanding. They use their skills confidently when reading new words.
- In key stage 1, results are improving steadily. Pupils attain similarly to the national average in mathematics. However, despite improvements, attainment in reading and writing remains below average. Leaders recognise that there is still a little way to go before pupils currently in key stage 1 make consistently strong progress in their reading and writing.
- Pupils make strong progress in key stage 2. Attainment is rising and is above the national average in mathematics. It is similar to the average in reading and writing. Assessment information and work in books show that current pupils make good progress in key stage 2 across a range of subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. Senior leaders check how well these pupils are achieving on a regular basis. They put in place effective support to make sure that no one falls behind, including extra help when pupils have been absent from school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve well. These pupils have well-targeted interventions that provide support that is well matched to their needs.
- Most-able pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. A larger proportion of pupils reached the higher standard in mathematics when compared with the national average. However, most-able pupils do not always make strong progress in developing their reading and writing skills. A lower proportion of these pupils reach the higher standard when compared with the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get a good start to their education in early years because of the warm and caring atmosphere created by staff. Children are happy to come to school and they settle in well. Parents are positive about the support their children receive. They appreciate the good levels of communication. Parents have many opportunities to contribute to their child's learning, such as through 'stay and play' sessions.
- Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. They behave well and play happily together. They listen carefully to their teachers. Children enjoy playing their part in tidying up at the end of a session.
- Teachers provide children with a range of exciting activities. They introduce new ideas that stimulate children's curiosity and imagination. For example, children read to 'Cyril the squirrel'. They enjoy learning about the world, for example by making models of famous buildings. Children learn to be independent and they select and use different resources confidently.
- In most cases, teachers provide work that is well matched to children's different ability

levels. For example, children have the right level of work that builds on their understanding of numbers. However, phonics sessions in Reception are not always effective. This is because teachers sometimes provide work that is too hard, especially for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.

- Leaders provide an exciting curriculum. The inside and outside areas have been developed imaginatively and include a mud kitchen, story circle and construction area. Children's imaginations are stimulated by huge model dinosaurs that are situated in some of the playgrounds.
- Baseline assessment procedures for both Nursery and Reception are not always clear. Staff are at an early stage of using this information to show the progress that children make. Work in books and learning journals indicates that children usually make good progress during their time in early years. A similar proportion to that found nationally reach a good level of development. Children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Funding for disadvantaged children is well used, for instance to develop communication skills.

School details

Unique reference number	136641
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10053256

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	375
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Valerie Caldwell
Headteacher	Kevin Barnett
Telephone number	02380 227925
Website	www.freemantleacademy.com
Email address	info@freemantleschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 September 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in each year group, except Year 5 which has one class. Provision for children in early years consists of two Reception classes and a Nursery class.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. Over a third of pupils speak English as an additional language. Many are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is similar to average.
- The school converted to a stand-alone academy in April 2011. The school is overseen

by members of the governing body. All trustees are elected from the governing body. Trustees and governors work together to set the strategic direction of the school.

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school was judged to be good at its last section 48 inspection in July 2017. A section 48 inspection reports on the religious character of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons and conducted learning walks in all year groups. Many observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6. They also asked them about what it was like to be a pupil at this school.
- Inspectors reviewed 113 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View. There were also informal meetings with parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors reviewed the 36 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other leaders. There was a meeting with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included development plans, information about pupils’ progress, the school’s checks on the quality of teaching, and reviews of its own performance. Records of pupils’ attendance and behaviour and safeguarding documentation were also checked.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kusum Trikha	Ofsted Inspector
Robert Howell	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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