

Inspection of a good school: Freegrounds Junior School

Hobb Lane, Hedge End, Southampton, Hampshire SO30 0GG

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2023

Outcome

Freegrounds Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to learn in this caring and inclusive school. They enjoy coming to school and are rarely absent. Pupils are happy, feel safe and say that all adults are kind. The school's values of aspire, believe and achieve are ingrained throughout the school. Staff have high aspirations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to the challenges set. They work hard in their lessons and listen well.

Pupils are respectful towards one another and all adults. They know adults have high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils move around the school in a calm and purposeful manner. Support and nurture are given to pupils who do struggle with their behaviour. Pupils know that adults will listen and help with any concerns or worries they may have.

Pupils are proud of their school. They value the many opportunities to take on roles of responsibility and contribute to school life. For example, digital ambassadors help to raise awareness of internet safety. Pupils enjoy the various school trips and residentials the school offers them. Pupils talk of visiting the Houses of Parliament, and Year 4 pupils were enthusiastic about their recent trip to an art gallery.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has a clear vision for every pupil to achieve their best. Leaders have designed a broad, ambitious and engaging curriculum. The school has ensured that the learning is well sequenced and builds progressively over time. It has carefully thought about when the key knowledge and skills are taught. Teachers ensure that they check what pupils know and remember at the start of each lesson. This enables any gaps in pupils' knowledge to be addressed before new learning is introduced. The school has recently brought in a new mathematics scheme and reviewed some subjects across the curriculum. The changes made have yet to be fully embedded in order to ensure that pupils learn well in all areas of the curriculum.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Staff recognise that some pupils enter school with gaps in their phonics knowledge. As a result, they are struggling to become fluent readers. The school has recently introduced a new phonics programme. Leaders have ensured that staff have received the appropriate training to deliver it effectively. Teachers frequently check what phonics knowledge pupils have remembered. This helps teachers to identify and address what pupils still need to learn. Consequently, weaker readers are catching up with their peers. Across the school, pupils' love for reading develops through studying and listening to a wide range of quality texts. Pupils relish the opportunities to read to their parents in the reading café.

The school is highly ambitious for pupils with SEND. These pupils learn well. There are effective procedures for the early identification of pupils with SEND. The school ensures that staff know how to support pupils with SEND, such as through adapting how the curriculum is taught. Pupils are taught helpful strategies and given useful resources to help them work independently.

Pupils' personal development is a high priority for the school and is woven into daily school life. Pupils' well-being is central to the school. Pupils can explain how the 'trick box' promotes their positive mental well-being by giving them strategies that help them to be confident, calm and creative. They can talk about the importance of eating healthily and being fit, and they know these have an impact on their emotional well-being. Staff encourage pupils to be reflective of their actions and those of others. Pupils understand the importance of respecting others. They celebrate uniqueness. Pupils talk knowledgeably about different religions and cultures.

Staff know that leaders are genuinely concerned about workload. The well-being committee listens and acts on staff opinions about how to reduce workload, such as in relation to how reports are written. Governors are aware of how all groups are progressing with their learning. They support and challenge leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some recently adapted curriculum planning is newly in place, and the impact of this change on pupils' learning is not fully evident. The school should ensure that the updated curriculum is delivered consistently well so that pupils learn equally successfully across all of their subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	116000
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10287883
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jerry Hughes
Headteacher	Ryan O'Hearn
Website	www.freegrounds-jun.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8th March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: early reading, religious education and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning. The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult and talked to those pupils about their reading.
- The inspector reviewed curriculum documents and pupils' history and geography books.

- The inspector met with the inclusion leader to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads, reviewed records of recruitment, met with the safeguarding governor and reviewed safeguarding records.
- The inspector met with four governors and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour and how leaders support staff with their workload.
- Pupils were talked to throughout the inspection to gather their views about the school. The inspector considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View. The views of staff and pupils were also considered through Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Becky Greenhalgh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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