



Freshford Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109195
LEA Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number 278153
Inspection dates 4 November 2005 to 4 November 2005
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Freshford
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bath
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		BA2 7WE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01225 723331
Number on roll	142	Fax number	01225 722832
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Curwen
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Ann Forest

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Freshford Church of England Primary is a small school. Most of the children come from the villages of Hinton Charterhouse, Midford and Freshford and the surrounding area. The number of pupils at the school is increasing and a significant number join the school after the Reception Year. All children speak English as their first language but a small number are from minority ethnic groups. The number of children identified as having special educational needs fluctuates from year to year, but is usually broadly average. Attainment on entry to the reception class is wide but above average overall. The number of children eligible for free school meals fluctuates with the intake of pupils.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Freshford C of E Primary is a very effective school that is constantly looking for ways to improve the education of its pupils under the excellent leadership of the headteacher. The school is particularly successful in developing outstanding standards in pupils' personal development, which have a significant impact on their attainment.

In the Foundation Stage and throughout the school, pupils of all abilities make good progress in their learning. They achieve standards that are often above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. A stimulating and initiative curriculum has a significant impact on pupils' progress and on their thorough enjoyment of learning.

Freshford is a small school and the comparatively small number in each year group creates fluctuations in standards and progress from year to year. The school has recognised the need to develop its procedures for monitoring pupils' progress further to ensure that consistently good progress is made over time.

The school's partnership with parents is strong. Most parents are very supportive of the school and recognise its many strengths, especially the very good care given to the pupils. Freshford is an evaluative school and the inspection agrees with the staff's view of its effectiveness, which is good. It provides good value for money and has the capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop strategies for evaluating their work so that pupils' standards and progress are consistently high.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards and progress of children in the Reception class are good. Standards by the end of Year 6 are often well above average. Pupils' attainments in mathematics and science are particularly strong. Freshford is a small school, however, and the small number of pupils in each age group can cause disproportionate fluctuations in standards from year to year. Pupils' progress has also varied in the past but is now good, due to good teaching, exciting programmes of study and the pupils' tremendous interest and motivation.

Pupils of all abilities are well supported so they achieve well and meet challenging targets. Special programmes of work and additional activities are prepared for pupils who are especially gifted or who have special talents. Similarly, those with learning difficulties are identified early and are well supported so they make good progress, not only towards their own personal targets, but also towards average standards in the national tests.

The school's innovative styles of teaching and its success with pupils who have learning difficulties have resulted in many new pupils being admitted to the school after the Reception Year. This sometimes has an impact on overall standards and comparative progress.

The school has good systems for monitoring pupils' standards and progress and is in the process of developing them further so that interim targets are used to ensure that consistently good progress is made from year to year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, especially their ability to take initiative, show responsibility and care for one another, is outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Their behaviour is exemplary and their attitudes to their work are extremely positive. Pupils of all ages concentrate well and persevere with their tasks, trying hard to do well.

Pupils interact very well with one another and their social and emotional development is of a very high order. Older pupils are enthusiastic about their role as mentors for children in the Reception Year. They say bullying is not an issue. Pupils feel confident to share their ideas, which are regularly discussed as part of 'philosophy circles', within the school council and when reviewing their work.

The 'Play Project' developed with all pupils has had an outstanding impact on pupils' collaborative and problem-solving skills, their ability to negotiate and to make effective choices. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the activities they plan. They have many opportunities to make a positive contribution to the school and to the wider community.

Pupils are encouraged very effectively to embrace healthy lifestyles and they make changes in their lives accordingly. Several pupils commented on what they now choose to eat because it is healthier. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good throughout the school and it stimulates pupils' learning. The school has researched ways in which pupils respond to different teaching styles and this knowledge is used effectively to encourage pupils' good understanding, independence and motivation to learn. Activities are well devised and challenge pupils' ideas, developing their creative thinking and their ability to solve problems.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' participation and the working atmosphere is purposeful, constructive and often exciting. Pupils are fully engaged and so they behave very well. Teachers clearly identify what is to be achieved in each lesson. This

is shared with pupils so that they evaluate how well they are learning. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and plans for future lessons are adapted to meet their needs.

Pupils who have special talents are well provided for and pupils with learning difficulties are supported and encouraged so they find success.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum provided for pupils of all ages and abilities is outstanding. It fully meets all national requirements and is adapted so that it meets pupils' different learning needs very well. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage extends their learning in all areas, particularly in their personal and social skills.

Teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum is secure and used very well to plan exciting and stimulating activities that motivate pupils to learn. The curriculum successfully promotes their very good understanding of how to keep safe and develop healthy lifestyles.

There is a strong focus on developing pupils' thinking skills and pupils play an important part in reviewing and adapting topics of work. The curriculum is enriched by many additional activities, including sport, music and French. The local community and external agencies are used very effectively to support pupils' learning and to extend their experiences. The strong focus on developing pupils' creative thinking has significant impact on the progress they make across all subjects. Their very good standards in English, mathematics, science and computer skills, together with very good interpersonal skills, prepare pupils extremely well for their next stage of learning and for the world of work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The very good levels of care and support given to all pupils play a significant part in the enjoyment they derive from their time at the school. Pupils' welfare is of the utmost importance to all staff and, consequently, pupils feel safe and secure and are eager to learn.

Pupils say staff encourage them to discuss their ideas and they would confidently share any worries with staff. Teachers know their pupils well and respond successfully to their intellectual and personal needs. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to evaluate their own work and there are successful strategies for encouraging pupils to discuss their ideas with each other and with members of staff.

Tracking systems are used to monitor pupils' attainment and progress thoroughly and to identify those pupils who need greater support as well as those who would benefit from greater challenge. Parents have no concerns about their children's safety. Procedures for monitoring and ensuring child protection and health and safety are effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is outstanding. She has a strong educational philosophy that is successfully shared with all staff and is responsible for the exceptional standards of pupils' personal development.

The headteacher has given the lead in developing a rich and exciting curriculum that stimulates pupils' interest and enriches their learning. The headteacher's clear focus supports teachers and encourages their expertise, so teaching is good through the school and pupils make good progress.

Management procedures are good. There are thorough systems for monitoring pupils' standards and progress. Data is used well to identify their learning needs and support is provided. During the year, much of the monitoring is based on teachers' continual assessment of pupils' learning. However, they do not always discover the underlying causes of the fluctuations in the rate of achievement.

The school is continually searching for ways to improve its pupils' education and it embraces new ideas that are well rooted in research. The school improvement plan clearly identifies areas for further development. However, the criteria for evaluating whether initiatives are helping to raise standards further are not always sufficiently clear.

The school has made very good progress in addressing significant difficulties in the past to do with staffing, accommodation and finance. This has been achieved with the considerable support of the governors, whose expertise in many areas has ensured success. They made good improvements since the previous inspection and has the capacity to improve even further.

Parents are very supportive of the school and many have nothing but praise for it. One parent said "Freshford School is an extremely well run, forward-thinking school with a dedicated team of professionals providing high-quality education". The school provides good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Freshford Church of England Primary School Freshford Bath BA2 7WE

5 November 2005

Dear Children

I am writing to say thank you for making Mrs Potheary and me feel so welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you. Mrs Potheary particularly enjoyed the assembly performed by Joyce class. I thought you would like to know what we found out about you and the school.

Your headteacher runs the school very well. Mrs Potheary and I agree with Ms Forrest that you have a very good school and that you are a super group of children. I can see that most of you really enjoy school and you try very hard with your work. We think you behave very well and are especially thoughtful and kind to one another. We think you do a lot to help make the school a better place where everyone can be happy.

Our report tells your parents that you are doing well in your work because teachers make your lessons very interesting and your activities are often great fun. We think the teachers really challenge your ideas and help you sort out problems. They help you to understand how you are getting on and what to do to become even better at your work. Teachers help you to make sensible choices about keeping safe and you have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. We can see that most of your parents think the school is doing a really good job at helping you become confident and grown-up.

We have asked Ms Forrest and the other staff to carry on doing their very good work and to make sure they continue to help everyone to do their very best.

Thank you again for helping us find out about your school.

Best wishes

Mrs Callaghan Lead Inspector