

# Frinton-on-Sea Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114723
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	311677
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth Frith

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Mary Lowe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Joan Dear
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Fifth Avenue Frinton-on-Sea Essex CO13 9LQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01255 674007
<b>Fax number</b>	01255 851686

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average size primary school is situated in the seaside town of Frinton-on-Sea. Nearly all pupils live nearby and each year more pupils apply for places than can be admitted. The majority of pupils are White British and come from families representing a range of socio-economic backgrounds. Of the few from minority ethnic groups some speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is below average. Children's attainment on entry to school is similar to that usually seen in children of this age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There have been frequent changes in staffing over the last few years, including changes of headteacher. The current headteacher has been in post for four terms and the deputy headteacher for two terms.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education following a period of instability caused by frequent changes of headteachers and other staff. The headteacher provides good leadership and has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on effective and thorough monitoring and self-evaluation. The school's accurate judgements closely match with the inspection findings and priorities for improvement are appropriate. Several new initiatives have been put in place to improve the quality of provision and raise standards. The full impact of these is yet to be seen but early signs are promising and the school has good capacity to improve further.

Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout their time in school and typically reach average standards. Standards in Key Stage 1 show a slight downward trend, particularly in reading and writing, but during the inspection some good progress was seen in Year 2. Some Year 6 cohorts reach above average standards and the current Year 6 are expected to build on the improved standards of 2007. This reflects the increasing number of good lessons. Pupils' art work on display is of a high standard, as is their singing. Teaching and learning are improving but remain satisfactory overall. This is because sometimes the pace of learning is slow and teachers are not fully skilled in using assessment information to plan lessons which closely match pupils' abilities and ensure good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team to support the individual needs of pupils and put much effort into making lessons exciting and creative.

Pupils' personal development is good. They respond well to the expectations set by staff, develop good relationships and show consideration for views and ways of living different from their own. The personal, social and health education programme, as well as some subjects, for example, science, ensures that pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils are also encouraged to contribute well to the school and wider community. The school provides an interesting curriculum and pupils enjoy their learning. Consequently, they behave well and develop good attitudes. Care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils feel safe and happy in school and readily make friends. Attendance is satisfactory. The school provides good pastoral care but academic guidance is weaker. The school is at an early stage of using assessment, marking and target setting to ensure pupils have a clear understanding of how they can improve. The curriculum remains only satisfactory, because it is not yet fully effective in ensuring good progress throughout the school. There are weaknesses in the way pupils learn how the alphabet works and the sounds that letters make (phonics) due to inconsistencies in teachers' approach and understanding.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. Effective financial management has ensured that the school no longer has a deficit budget and now provides satisfactory value for money. New expectations have been placed on middle managers although they are not yet fully effective at using data to track pupils' progress and improve standards and provision. The school works well with outside agencies to improve its practice and recent work with the local authority is aiding school improvement. Managers are now setting more challenging targets based on a secure view of what should be expected of pupils.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children settle well because the induction programme is good and effective links are forged between staff and parents. Staff build on the children's readiness to learn and quickly establish expectations and procedures. They are particularly effective in ensuring children's personal, social and emotional development and progress here is good. Children are happy, behave well and enjoy their learning. Developments in the curriculum are needed as progress in other areas, particularly in communication, language and literacy, is less rapid. Accommodation for the Reception children is rather cramped and staff and senior managers need to follow up on previous efforts to provide an outside covered area for learning. A good range of resources maintains children's interests and the small outside area has been developed well to enhance learning opportunities.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure consistent good teaching by making better use of the information gained from tracking pupils' progress, assessing and marking their work and setting targets.
- Ensure that activities and assessment systems in all areas of the Foundation Stage are equally effective.
- Review and develop the school's system for teaching phonics in the early years and Key Stage 1 to ensure good progress in reading and writing and higher standards.
- Extend the role of subject leaders so they become more involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and raising standards.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children make at least satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage so that, by the time they enter Year 1, standards are similar to those expected nationally and sometimes above, for example, in their personal, social and emotional development. In 2007, standards by the end of Key Stage 1 were broadly average and continued the slight downward trend of recent years. Considering the pupils' starting point this indicates broadly satisfactory progress although inadequacies in the English curriculum affect pupils' achievement. Pupils in Key Stage 2 sometimes achieve above average and occasionally high standards. Data supplied by the school indicates that the 2007 Year 6 made better than average progress to reach standards that, although still broadly average, were higher than the previous year, particularly in science. The school met its targets last year and the recent focus on raising expectations of what pupils can achieve has encouraged staff to identify more challenging targets for future years. Groups of pupils with different abilities, including

those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make a similar rate of progress to their peers and generally reach standards in line with similar pupils nationally.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good, and parents correctly think that empathy and respect for different cultures and beliefs are strengths of the school. Pupils are rightly proud of their recently awarded 'Healthy School' status and are able to demonstrate good knowledge of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They particularly appreciate the wide range of 'energetic' sports activities made available. Behaviour in lessons and on the playground is generally good with pupils acting in a safe and considerate manner towards each other. Most pupils are articulate and confident and make visitors and pupils new to the school feel welcome. They show an admirable commitment to good causes, for example, in addition to raising money for a charity that brings clean water to developing countries, pupils and staff have featured in a promotional DVD.

Pupils are prepared soundly for the future world of work through their satisfactory progress in basic skills and by working well with others. Staff recognise the need for further development of the 'pupil voice' in their plans to revamp the school council. There is also a need to give them greater responsibility for their own learning by involving them more in the evaluation and improvement of their work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and have improved. The number of good lessons is increasing. Where teaching is more successful, planning is good and takes into account the varying needs in the class and the pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils know what is expected of them and the challenge provided ensures they can succeed. Expectations are high and the pace of learning brisk. In the lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, these elements are not as well established so pupils' progress is slower. Teachers do not use information from assessing pupils' work and progress to plan effectively work which matches pupils' abilities and consequently learning is not as good as it could be. Also, the marking of pupils' work is not fully effective as it frequently fails to indicate what pupils should do to improve. A successful feature of all teaching is the good relationship staff have with pupils and this, in turn, supports the good management of behaviour and friendly, supportive atmosphere in lessons. Staff go to great lengths to make lessons interesting and enjoyable and the recent improvements in information and communication technology, together with the use of experts in some lessons, help pupils' learning and motivate them to do well.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with a number of key strengths. These include the wide range of clubs and enrichment activities as well as provision for the creative arts and physical activities. The expertise of staff, parents and teaching assistants is used well to enhance curriculum opportunities, for example the award winning gardening club, the production of exciting art work which has been displayed at nearby Walton Tower and links to the local literary society which have led to pupils' benefiting from working with authors and poets. Recent improvements to the science curriculum have already helped to raise standards and staff have recognised the

need to continue to improve opportunities for more practical investigations. The school's phonic programme is not as effective as it should be because there are inconsistencies in approach so good progression cannot be guaranteed.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils have confidence in the staff who consistently provide good role models, demonstrating to the pupils how they wish them to behave. Good relationships between adults and pupils and initiatives such as the 'worry box' encourage pupils to share their concerns and this helps them to feel safe. Although a number of parents raised the issue of bullying, pupils report that bullying is rare and that when it does occur, staff, and especially the headteacher, can be relied upon to 'sort it out'. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because their needs are recognised and effective support provided. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including child protection and general health and safety, are securely in place.

Academic guidance through, for example, target setting and enabling pupils to evaluate and improve their own work, is not yet effectively embedded in everyday practice. Consequently, pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work or what to aim for.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has given clear direction for the future development of the school and staff and governors share her vision. Key areas of strength and weakness have been identified through a rigorous and insightful self-evaluation process and new strategies and procedures, such as tracking systems, have been introduced recently. Greater responsibility and accountability are given to subject leaders but insufficient time has passed for them to be fully effective in their new roles, particularly in the areas of monitoring and raising standards. Governors support the school well and are now having a more active role in monitoring and evaluation. The headteacher is aware of some parental concerns, for example about bullying, and in response has arranged to develop a clear anti-bullying policy this term in consultation with pupils and parents.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

**Annex A****Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	<b>3</b>
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

12 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Frinton-on-Sea Primary School, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 9LQ

Thank you for making Mr Hewett and me feel so welcome when we recently visited your school and also for speaking to us about your work, and what you do. We have listed below some of the things we particularly like.

- You enjoy school and behave well because you are interested in what you are doing.
- You take part in lots of activities and particularly enjoy the clubs, sports, visits, music, art and ICT.
- You get on well with each other and make good friends.
- You know a lot about how to stay healthy and safe. Many of you are doing several activities to keep fit.
- You support the school and local community well and raise funds to help good causes.
- All the staff are working well together as a team and teaching is improving.
- You feel safe in school. We were pleased to hear that you know what to do if there is any unacceptable behaviour like bullying, and also that you would talk to a member of staff if you had problems.

Ms Dear has made several changes since she became headteacher and she is leading these developments well. The staff are helping her to make the school even better. They have agreed to make better use of assessment information to set targets so you have a clearer idea of what to aim for. They will also look at the way they plan work and teach the younger children, particularly the way they help you to read by teaching you the alphabet and the sounds that letters make. Each teacher also has responsibility for some of the subjects you are taught and they will be looking at how well you are doing and trying to make sure that you do the best possible work. We know you will respond well to their efforts and try as hard as you can.

We left your school confident that it will continue to improve and wish you all well.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith Lead Inspector