

# Freegrounds Junior School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116000
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312140
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Sinclair

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	355
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Roberta Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Malcolm Barrett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Hobb Lane Hedge End Southampton SO30 0GG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01489 782295
<b>Fax number</b>	01489 790282

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' rates of progress in English and mathematics, teaching and learning, leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), observation of lessons, teachers' assessments and pupils' work and school documentation. Discussions took place with pupils, staff, governors and parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in equal detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments as given in its self-evaluation were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

This is a large junior school serving an area where pupils' social and economic circumstances are generally advantaged. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average and there are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry is above average. The school holds the following quality marks: Artsmark, Active mark, Healthy Schools and Leading Aspect award (for an enriched curriculum).

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Freegrounds Junior is an outstanding school. It is a strong, caring, vital community, which pupils love to attend because learning is so much fun and they know how highly they are valued. Parents too are fully aware of how good the school is and overwhelmingly their comments reflect this - 'fantastic school', 'excellent educational experience', 'outstanding provision'. All staff, including teaching, office and caretaking staff, are deservedly praised by parents but the greatest praise is reserved for the headteacher, 'He is excellent, an outstanding role model'.

Regardless of gender or prior attainment, pupils make good progress during their time in the school to reach standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Their achievement is also exceptionally good in many aspects of the wider curriculum. For example, when being inspected recently for their artsmark gold award, the inspector commented that 'it was the finest school he had seen for the quality of its art work.' All pupils learn a modern foreign language, and receive musical tuition, achieving very well in these areas. They also do very well in physical education largely because of the wide range of extra sporting activities involving over half of the school.

The school tackles any area of relative weakness quickly and successfully. For example, writing was identified as a weakness and a huge amount of effort was put into improvement. Standards in writing have risen dramatically as a result. Leaders are now working to improve mathematics still further. The school assesses pupils' performance regularly and, rigorously tracks their progress to ensure that no pupil underachieves. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported, as are those who are very able, enabling them to achieve of their best.

Teaching is good and overall learning is outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic, thoroughly enjoy what they do and are fully committed to providing a rich educational experience for their pupils. This is why pupils find learning fun, behave extremely well and have excellent attitudes to their work. For example, in a literacy lesson, pupils were fully involved and excited by the range of words they were able to make and, in a drama lesson, they demonstrated their excellent ability to collaborate with each other and work in teams. Teachers ensure pupils are clear about their targets and encourage them to assess their own work. However, marking is too general to secure ongoing improvement in pupils' work, which sometimes slows progress. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly by ensuring that those with learning difficulties are fully engaged in their learning. Parents are full of praise for the teachers and one, representing the views of many commented, 'the teachers are wonderful and are dedicated to providing a stimulating environment.' Pupils think that, 'teachers are quite amazing really, always put us first. Lessons are challenging and we all think we learn a lot.'

The school provides an excellent curriculum for its pupils. The school provides high quality opportunities in art and sport and many other activities to enhance pupils' experience, which contributes greatly to their enjoyment, creativity and physical development. This, coupled with a successful focus on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology throughout the curriculum, help to ensure pupils learn successfully. The outstanding range of clubs, visits and visitors, as well as an annual school production, are appreciated by parents with comments such as 'the school has excellent extra curricular activities', 'school productions are brilliant'. Pupils particularly enjoy the clubs and the way the headteacher tries to get everyone involved. They particularly enjoyed the visit of Jeremy Strong and the 'World of Work' day.

As a result of high quality care, guidance and support, pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, behave extremely well and are kind and courteous to each other. They are very knowledgeable about safe and healthy living, willingly and confidently take on their responsibilities as school councillors, and express their views clearly and politely. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils thoroughly enjoy assemblies, which they think get across important moral ideas in an interesting but thought provoking manner. They fully participate in the school and wider community, carefully choose charities to support and enjoy finding out about the roles of dignitaries such as the mayor of Eastleigh. Attendance is good.

The headteacher is inspirational. He successfully engages the whole school community in a learning journey to enable every pupil to succeed to the very best of their ability so that they can be well-adjusted and successful members of society. Every child really does matter to this school.

The school has very secure procedures for monitoring and evaluating its performance and all senior staff are clear about their roles within this. They set and monitor challenging targets and ensure they are met. At all levels, tracking of progress and target setting is used very effectively to assess, monitor and improve pupils' achievement. Teaching and learning are checked regularly and targets set for improvement. As a result, almost all of the teaching in the school is good or better. The school improvement plan clearly identifies priorities and sets high expectations for improvement, which are rigorously analysed, monitored and evaluated. Staff and governors share a strong commitment to continued improvement and the provision of a strong, whole school community. Issues from the last inspection have been fully addressed and successful initiatives to improve teaching and learning and raise achievement still further, for example in writing, show that the school has an outstanding capacity to improve even further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring marking is used consistently to help pupils' improve their work.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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



## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

24 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Freegrounds Junior School, Southampton, SO30 0GG

I really enjoyed visiting your school and appreciated the very warm welcome I received. I would like to thank those of you who took the time to talk to me. I enjoyed meeting the school council and was particularly impressed by your commitment to improving the school for everyone. I found your school to be outstanding and know from talking to you and your parents that you feel the same.

- You make good and sometimes very good progress to reach standards that are higher than in most schools.
- Your outstanding behaviour, attitudes to work and enjoyment of all the school has to offer reflect the very high regard the school staff have for you and the excellent provision they make for your learning.
- The enthusiasm and hard work of teachers ensure that you enjoy lessons and find learning challenging, but fun.
- You are given tremendous learning opportunities and thoroughly enjoy all the after school clubs, visits and visitors as well as special weeks such as India Week.
- Your headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior managers lead and manage the school exceptionally well.

To help the school to become even better, I have asked the teachers to ensure you are clear about what you need to do to improve when they mark your work.

Thank you once again, and best wishes for the future.

Janet Sinclair

Lead inspector