

Freezywater St George's Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102031
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	323573
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	207
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Frances Wallace
Headteacher	Mrs Annie Gaudencio
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hertford Road Enfield EN3 6NR
Telephone number	01992 764737

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2009
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Fax number

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Freezywater St George's is an average-sized and oversubscribed school. The school has become increasingly diverse in its cultural mix since the last inspection. One third of all pupils come from White British backgrounds and this is similar to the proportion now coming from Black African heritages. The next largest groups are from Black Caribbean and European heritages. A growing number of pupils join the school without being secure in speaking English. The main home languages of those speaking English as an additional language are Ibo, Twi, French and Yoruba. All families are from Christian backgrounds. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. The school has an average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities overall, but in some year groups the proportion is high. Pupils' difficulties most often relate to dyslexia or behavioural and emotional problems.

The school is undergoing major building work at the moment and has experienced some changes in staffing, which has often been due to maternity leave. As a consequence, some classes are taken by teachers who share class responsibilities during the working week.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Freezywater St George's is a good school, where pupils receive a rounded education that prepares them well for their future lives. Pupils gain good academic skills, learn how to take responsibility, think for themselves and develop a good awareness of how to be fit, healthy and safe. Overall, their personal development is good but, within this, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This reflects the high degree of racial harmony and pupils' strong awareness of the lives, beliefs and circumstances of others in the world. They make a considerable contribution to the wider community and enjoy the many activities that are provided.

Staff are dedicated to the pupils. As a result of good teaching, an interesting curriculum and high expectations, pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6 standards of work are above average, which from pupils' mostly average starting points demonstrates their good progress. Those learning English as an additional language or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and they make equally good progress.

Teamwork is impressive and there is good support for newly qualified staff. The job shares work effectively because relationships are very good and staff share their expertise and planning to ensure that pupils' learning shows continuity, good development of new skills and plenty of enjoyment. Parents support their children well; this contributes much to pupils' positive attitudes and sustained progress.

The very strong leadership, especially by the perceptive, high-profile and astute headteacher, is driving the school forward. Middle managers are keenly developing their roles. However, there is still more to do on this as several are quite new to their posts. Some are not yet sufficiently skilled in evaluating the progress and standards reached by pupils in their area of responsibility. Their development is correctly identified by the most senior leaders as being central to further developing the school.

The vast majority of parents have great confidence in the work of the school. One parent summed up the views of many when saying, 'All staff work hard to ensure that the standards are high and they care very well for the children.' Pupils also confirmed that they like school; they said, 'We are happy at school.' A few parents noted that there has been an increase in challenging behaviour of some pupils. Inspectors found pupils' behaviour to be good overall, although a very few find it hard to behave really well at times; this is often due to more complex behavioural or emotional difficulties. These pupils are well supported.

In the last year there has been a particular focus on writing and mathematics, so that more pupils can reach particularly high levels in their work. The impact of the leaders' work is clearly evident in pupils' good writing skills. In mathematics there is still more to do, as there is some inconsistency in the challenges given to the higher-attaining pupils. Governors give good levels of support to the school. There is a good capacity to continue with improvements, as is evident in the way that standards rose in mathematics in 2008 and in the recent developments in writing. Governors regularly visit classes when acting as 'Governor of the month'; they are proactive in leading developments, such as the new building extension. Some take a very active part in the pastoral care of pupils and their families.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception class is an inviting and caring place. Children settle in happily and behave well, which reflects the very good relationships between adults and children. Children's laughter and chat shows their enjoyment, growing confidence and ability to work well together; they are constantly busy and achieve well. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, standards were above average in 2008 and are on track to be maintained at this higher level in 2009. Prior to this, standards were more often average. Now, children do especially well in developing their speaking, physical, social and reading skills. Reading is aided by the rigorous teaching of letters and sounds (phonics). Children develop a very secure knowledge and understanding of the world. Many make good progress in their counting, problem-solving and creative silks, but higher-ability children could be challenged further in their mathematical development. Children enjoy writing, but opportunities are missed for adults to plan and interject writing into children's play and investigations.

Since the last inspection, children have been given more freedom and time to learn by investigating things for themselves. Adults also maintain time for children to do more formal learning activities; this combination is good practice. The improvements reflect the good leadership, good teaching and learning, and the improved accommodation. Leaders make helpful assessments about children's developments. They are now fine-tuning the way that they evaluate children's skills when they first start the Reception class so that they can more easily track children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that learning in mathematics, especially for higher-attaining pupils, is consistently challenging and exciting to help them to do as well as possible.
- Ensure that all middle managers are fully involved and skilled in evaluating data about pupils' progress and standards in the subjects that they are responsible for.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils learning English as an additional language, those in receipt of free school meals and those from Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds achieve especially well. These pupils, by the end of Year 6, are performing at an exceptionally high level when compared with the national performance for these groups. The achievement of White British pupils is not yet quite as high, but some successful initiatives are already aiding improvements. Overall pupils' achievement is good.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. As a result, there has been a pattern of standards being above average overall by the end of Year 2. They have been stronger in reading than in writing and mathematics. Most pupils continue to do well in Key Stage 2. As a result, since 2004 standards have been securely above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The school is ambitious to lift standards to an exceptionally high level. In 2008 standards in mathematics rose considerably. In particular, girls' attainment was outstanding, but there is still more to do to ensure that all higher-ability pupils are consistently challenged as they move through the school. In the last year the school's successful emphasis on raising standards in writing is evident in the samples of English work seen.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school's vision of 'Believe and Achieve' is evident in pupils' growing self confidence, positive attitudes and enjoyment of learning. Children try their best, are enthusiastic and keen to be at school; their attendance rate is high. Pupils are curious, friendly and open to sharing their ideas. Pupils gain many academic and personal skills, which prepare them well for their long-term economic well-being. They work well in groups and independently. Most behave very well. A few pupils find this harder and this is most evident in Year 6.

Pupils show respect and empathy for others. For example, they designed a card for the family of a soldier killed in Afghanistan whose military funeral was held in their local church. Pupils know about different religions. The Year 4 trip to the mosque really enhances community cohesion by helping pupils to learn about Islam. Pupils' own Christian faith contributes much to their excellent spiritual development. The very high-quality written work about life in Ghana by Year 2 was a superb example of their awareness of different cultures. Pupils take an active part in helping the local and wider world community by doing such things as singing in the choir and acting as 'buddies' to other children who need a friend. They are well-informed citizens and they take part in local 'Children's Area Partnership' conferences, which widen their knowledge of how to be safe in the world around them. Pupils enjoy many sporting activities and work hard to eat healthily. Inspectors were impressed by the way that pupils are helped to modify recipes to make them healthier.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The headteacher is correct when noting, 'Pupils in the school see themselves as learners and staff work hard to raise their aspirations.' Overall, teaching is mostly good and is enhanced by the provision of specialist teaching in music and sports. Teachers have good knowledge about how to use different styles of teaching to ensure that pupils can learn in differing ways. Relationships are very good. The effective use of different resources helps pupils to be engaged in, and understand, what they are learning about. Learning is often fun, but does not consistently have immense excitement (called the 'wow' factor), which would help to make it outstanding. Teachers work hard to help pupils to talk about their ideas and this is especially helpful when they are getting their ideas clear for their writing and for explaining their mathematical thinking. Pupils are developing their speaking skills well overall, but sometimes pupils mumble. As the headteacher says, 'They need more help in learning to speak in formal situations.' Work is usually well planned, but tends to better meet pupils wide-ranging needs in English. Not all mathematics lessons have appropriate challenges for the most-able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a strong emphasis on basic skills. The range of visits and extra activities makes a significant contribution to pupils' wider personal development and overall achievement. Leaders and staff have worked very successfully to begin to develop interesting links between different subjects and they are well on the way with this. The school is reviewing the mathematics curriculum to ensure that it better meets the needs of the most-able pupils. The curriculum

has been carefully modified to meet the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. The links with St George's church, local organisations and schools in Europe and Africa make a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of the wider world and are good for community cohesion. The school has been working well to raise the profile of White British cultural traditions in their drive to ensure equality and inclusion. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed celebrating St George's Day and they are helping pupils in Romania to learn how to cook a traditional British favourite, 'shepherd's pie'. Initiatives such as 'Playing for Success' are helping pupils to have confidence in themselves while promoting fitness and a love of different sports.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school places a very high emphasis on sensitive pastoral care. The school uses a wide range of strategies and links with other organisations to help pupils to achieve well. Since the last inspection, the school has worked on improving the behaviour policy and strengthening the support for those pupils who find it difficult to behave well. The introduction of 'The Den', which is a place to go when pupils need time to be away from others, is a good feature. The new building will provide a much needed nurture room. Pupils commented that behaviour has improved and they link this to the changes in support systems. Some staff would like more training on how the behaviour policy works to ensure complete consistency.

Teaching assistants offer high-quality support for pupils and the support given to dyslexic pupils is good, often enabling them to reach at least average standards in their English work. Pupils receive good guidance about how to develop their English skills and the marking of pupils' work is often of very high quality. Sometimes pupils are not given enough time to act on teachers' comments about how they might improve their work. Targets in English are more suitably challenging than those in mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The work of the headteacher is central to school developments. She is well supported by her deputy headteacher, governors and the strategic leadership team. Together, they accurately evaluate the work of the school and have made a clear and appropriate plan for future developments. The school sets challenging targets to further raise standards. The headteacher is in the process of ensuring that all leaders have a sharper understanding of how to evaluate data about national standards and pupils' progress in the drive to further strengthen whole school ownership of self-evaluation.

Governors contribute much to the school. They know precisely what the school needs to do to improve. Leaders are fully committed to promoting community cohesion and they do this especially well by widening religious and cultural respect. They are actively working to further widen social cohesion by strengthening links still further in the immediate community and by making closer contact with more schools and organisations in Britain. Leaders know that they need to evaluate more rigorously how well their plans promote cohesion.

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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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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**

13 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Freezywater St George's Primary School, Enfield, EN3 6NR

You may remember that two school inspectors came to visit the school recently. We would like to thank you for being so friendly and telling us about your school. You go to a good school. This means that there are many things that are just right for you.

Here are some of the things that are especially good.

- You are looked after really well, you enjoy school and are enthusiastic.
- You work hard and almost all of you are able to do the things that are expected nationally in English, mathematics and science. Standards of work are high.
- Teachers help you to learn effectively.
- We are especially impressed by the way that you learn to respect the beliefs, and understand the cultures and lives, of others.
- The links with schools in Africa and Europe are excellent.
- Like you, we agree that you have many exciting extra activities and visits.
- We especially like the way that teachers link different subjects together to make activities interesting and meaningful to you.
- Your headteacher does a great job and all of the other adults help her well.
- We think that you are improving your writing successfully.
- Most of you behave very well. You are polite, kind and respectful. A very few of you do not behave as well as you should; this is not good enough. If you are one of these few pupils, we would like you to try as hard as possible to be as nice to other pupils and teachers as possible.
- You have a strong faith and this helps you in all that you do.

There are two main things that would help the school to become even better in the future. We have asked the teachers to do two things.

- To help all of you, especially those of you who find mathematics easy, to have more challenges and fun in lessons.
- To ensure that teachers check how well you are all doing as carefully as possible.

Thank you to all of you for being friendly. A special thank you for the delicious pizza, gingerbread men and flapjack that you cooked; they were delicious and very healthy. I loved your singing.

Yours faithfully

Wendy Simmons

Lead Inspector