

Freegrounds Junior School

Hobb Lane, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 0GG

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils learn well and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, achievement has improved considerably. An above average proportion of pupils attain at the expected level, and in reading, an above average proportion attained at a higher level.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points.
- The curriculum is excellent, with lively and exciting activities that motivate the pupils.
- High quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes pupils' high self-esteem and confidence.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are polite and courteous and have a good understanding of how to stay safe.
- The school provides a positive and caring climate for learning where each pupil is treated as an individual.
- The school is improving rapidly due to a strong senior leadership team and supportive governing body.
- The school successfully identifies priorities for improvements and this has been evident in the progress that pupils make.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A minority of pupils make uneven progress, particularly in mathematics in Years 4 and 5.
- Sometimes work set for the most able pupils is not always demanding enough, or does not provide enough opportunities for them to learn independently.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, of which three were joint observations with senior and middle leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to observe pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, and their views were also gathered more informally from discussions in the playground.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher and other teachers and support staff. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. A representative from the local authority was also interviewed, as well as the headteacher of the adjacent infant school.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress. Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised
- Account was taken of 55 responses to the Parent View survey online questionnaire. Other evidence included parents' interviews and letters to the inspection team.
- The views of staff from 29 responses were also examined and analysed.

Inspection team

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Liz Bowes, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Peter Thrussell | Additional Inspector |
| Gillian Bosschaert | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- Freegrounds Junior is a larger than average-sized school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. A very low percentage of pupils are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Their needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- The majority of pupils are White British and a small minority speak English as an additional language.
- The number of pupils leaving or joining the school part-way through the year is very low.
- A very low proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and a lower proportion than average are supported by the pupil premium.
- The school meets floor standards which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is an established pre-school and after-school club; these are both run privately and are not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics, particularly in Year 4 and 5 by:
 - increasing targeted intervention to meet the needs of all pupils.
 - embedding securely the new tracking system in these year groups so that it is used systematically and rigorously by all members of staff
 - ensuring that all teachers provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their practical skills.
- Ensure that the more able pupils are fully challenged by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to explore their learning independently.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the school with levels in line with those expected nationally for their age. As a result of accelerated rates of progress, pupils are now attaining above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the last inspection, achievement has improved considerably. An above-average proportion of pupils attain the expected Level 4. In reading, an above-average proportion attained the higher Level 5.
- In mathematics, a small proportion of pupils attained exceptionally highly, gaining Level 6. There is scope for larger numbers of more able pupils to achieve these levels, as demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson in mathematics, where pupils were considering how to divide by a billion. Progress for a minority of pupils in Years 4 and 5 in mathematics slows as their individual needs are not always fully met.
- All groups of pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, benefit from highly focused support and make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' skills in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) are good and this effectively supports the development of reading and literacy skills. Pupils across the school enjoy their reading and are keen to share and talk about their books.
- An intensive intervention programme has been established for any pupils identified as falling behind the school's own challenging targets of good progress; this has ensured that gaps identified in the achievement of groups are closing at a rapid rate. There are no significant differences in achievements between any groups of pupils.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and consider it to be 'great fun'; this is supported by an excellent curriculum based around topic work. The recent work on the Tudors resulted in a re-enactment day at Southsea Tower. Such experiences deepen pupils' awareness and understanding.
- Inspectors agreed with the views of the large majority of parents and carers who answered the Parent View survey and believe that their children achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Typically, teaching is lively and enthusiastic which appeals to the interests of pupils. A good range of practical learning opportunities are provided; this is especially so in some mathematics lessons where teachers make good use of the extensive grounds to enable pupils to improve their measuring and recording skills.
- All teachers have high expectations. Year teams plan together and use the high quality data on pupil progress to ensure activities maximise achievement. Teachers regularly check the progress pupils make and they effectively use the information to set work at the right level of difficulty for pupils' abilities in classes.
- All work is carefully marked and good guidance is given to pupils about what they need to do next. Targets enable pupils to be fully involved in their own learning; this was demonstrated in a Year 3 lesson on data handling where pupils continually referred to a success criteria sheet to check how well they were doing.
- Whilst progress in mathematics is good overall, there is a dip in progress in both Year 4 and Year 5, due to limited opportunities in previous years for pupils to practically apply their mathematical skills; however the new mathematics curriculum promotes practical application. The school recognises the need to provide targeted intervention for those pupils not achieving expected progress, to enable them to catch up and to track their progress systematically and rigorously.
- Literacy is taught well and teachers make effective reference to subject-specific vocabulary. This was demonstrated in a Year 4 literacy lesson where the teacher reinforced the concepts of

similes and metaphors. There is a good emphasis on developing children's reading skills through the use of a structured programme of teaching phonics and this enables them to make good progress, contributing to above average standards in reading.

- Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Carefully targeted support often results in accelerated progress and reinforcement of skills.
- On occasion, lessons can become over-reliant on teacher input rather than allowing pupils to explore their learning independently; this can affect the progress of pupils, especially those who are more able. Usually lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils are keen to respond to the range of activities provided; however, in the minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, pace is slower and this hinders progress.
- Good teaching across the school ensures that all pupils achieve well in both their academic and personal development. This is a view expressed by many parents and carers, and reflected in the comments of one who considers teachers to be 'always helpful - they give so much support to the children'.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Typically, behaviour is good and this provides the foundation for good learning. The school is a calm, cohesive and orderly community. Pupils are friendly and get on well together. They are polite and courteous to others around the school, often holding doors open for visitors.
- Pupils participate in activities enthusiastically; for example, in a Year 4 science lesson, pupils were very keen to conduct experiments with different liquids and powders to solve a mystery. Their learning was enhanced by their careful observations of their own and others' experiments. Safety was ensured as all pupils were sensible about wearing eye goggles.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and they can identify with many of the actions that the school takes to ensure their safety. Pupils have a well-developed awareness of e-safety and how they should use the internet.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to help the school community through, for example, the school council. Older pupils act as extremely positive role models. They also help those in the wider world through the sponsorship of a child in Rwanda.
- Pupils say there is no bullying and that adults are on hand to sort out minor disagreements that arise occasionally. They have a secure understanding of different types of bullying, especially cyber-bullying and that relating to prejudice.
- The school's supportive learning environment reinforces the value of good attendance and school leaders work hard to make attendance and punctuality a priority. There are very few exclusions.
- The inspection endorsed the views of the large majority of parents and carers who believe that behaviour is good and that their children are safe in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership team has brought about considerable improvements to pupils' outcomes. All areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been successfully tackled. Senior leaders have embedded a culture of rapid and sustainable improvement which has been achieved by accurate self-evaluation, robust monitoring and swift action planning.
- Performance management is effective because it links the impact of teaching on the progress of pupils and good achievement. Effective delegation of responsibility has empowered year leaders in the process of self-evaluation and school improvement. This has strengthened the school's clear capacity for further improvement.
- A clearly planned programme of training, support and formalised observations supports new members of staff. Support staff have benefited from a range of external courses aimed at raising

achievement for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength, with good evidence of multicultural and international activity such as links with a school in The Gambia, where pupils from the different countries enjoy writing to each other.
- The curriculum is excellent. It is very well organised and skills-based, aimed at pupils' abilities rather than their age. Structured on interesting themed topics it is further enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning.
- The school works well in partnership with the adjacent infant school. There are effective transition arrangements, with a particular focus on the transfer of pupils who are disabled and have special educational needs. Good opportunities exist for moderation between the schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - provides a good level of support and challenge for the school
 - ensures that performance management arrangements for staff support improving teaching
 - ensures that pupil premium funding contributes to good achievement for those pupils in receipt of it
 - ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
 - ensures that equality of opportunity is well promoted.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
|---------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Unique reference number | 116000 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 405614 |

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

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 350 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Roberta Smith |
| Headteacher | Malcolm Barrett |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14 July 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01489 782295 |
| Fax number | 01489 790282 |
| Email address | admin@freegrounds-jun.hants.sch.uk |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012