

Friezland Primary School

Church Road, Greenfield, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL3 7LN

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils in key stage 2, especially those with high prior attainment, do not make rapid enough progress in writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across Years 3 to 6. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations, and do not provide work that challenges the most able.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to develop scientific skills in key stage 2, including investigation and enquiry.
- Opportunities are missed to reinforce pupils' key writing skills in some subjects other than English, and to enable pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders are not rigorous enough in checking the quality of teaching and learning, and the progress that different groups of pupils make in lessons and over time.

The school has the following strengths

- All staff promote pupils' personal development and welfare well.
- Pupils behave well, develop strong friendships, and have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe. They feel safe and are safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good. They demonstrate a good understanding of different faiths and cultures.
- Good teaching in the early years ensures that children get off to a good start, so that by the time they leave Reception, they achieve outcomes above those expected for their age.
- The good teaching of current pupils in Years 1 and 2 supports pupils' good progress and outcomes in reading and mathematics.
- The teaching of reading across the school is good. Pupils read widely, enjoy reading and are fluent readers by the time they leave school.
- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils. Senior leaders know what to do to improve the school further, and recognise the urgency that is required.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good across key stage 2, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations and providing work that is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, especially the most able
 - ensuring that all adults check pupils' learning and progress carefully in lessons, revising work and the timing of activities to meet pupils' different needs, particularly the most able.
- Secure rapid progress for all groups of pupils, especially the most able, in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing more frequent opportunities for all pupils to write in detail and apply their writing skills in areas other than English
 - ensuring that the most able develop flair and fluency that brings a greater depth to their writing
 - developing pupils' confidence in explaining the calculations that they carry out and in justifying the approaches that they take
 - providing more frequent opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical abilities to investigate and solve problems.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to consolidate and deepen knowledge, skills and understanding across the broader curriculum, by planning for the development of investigative and enquiry skills, especially in science.
- Ensure a more rigorous approach to checking the impact that teaching has on the learning and progress of groups of pupils, including the most and least able.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have an overgenerous view of the school's effectiveness. This is because their evaluation of the work of the school is focused on the overall standards that pupils attain rather than the progress pupils that make from their different starting points. In particular, leaders do not check whether the most able pupils are making enough progress. As a result, too few reach the higher standards of which they are capable. Leaders have effective plans in place to address this but it is too early to see the impact of improvements.
- Senior leaders, although keen, do not check the quality of teaching and learning sufficiently. They do not take into consideration the impact that teaching has on the progress made by different groups of pupils, especially the most able.
- The acting headteacher and acting assistant headteacher are employed on temporary one-year contracts while the members of the governing body evaluate the future leadership structure of the school. The acting headteacher has the support of parents, governors and staff. However, the lack of substantive leadership is slowing school improvement.
- Leaders of some subjects other than English and mathematics, for example, of history and geography, have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. They also have a good understanding of the attainment of pupils in their subject. However, several leaders are new to their role and do not have this level of understanding. As a result, the quality of subject leadership varies.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is particularly effective in promoting fundamental British values and in contributing to pupils' good behaviour, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is less effective in helping pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding in all aspects of their education, for example in their scientific learning.
- Opportunities within school promote participation in the 'Oldham Pledge' (what pupils should have experienced by the time they leave education), including participation in the Children's University scheme. This also encourages participation in experiences outside school. Some of the most able pupils are given opportunities to attend workshops in specific subjects, for example mathematics workshops in Manchester.
- The school improvement partner employed by the school has supported the temporary leaders to develop the school team. She has also supported leaders to improve the quality of teaching in key stage 1. However, she has an overgenerous view of the quality of the provision provided by the school. The local authority currently provides 'light touch' support for the school and the work with the school improvement partner. They have brokered support for the acting headteacher from another local headteacher.
- The physical education and sport funding for primary schools is spent judiciously to increase the numbers of pupils participating in sporting activities on a regular basis, and to improve the expertise of both staff and pupils. As a consequence, more pupils than previously are actively involved in competitive sport and pupils are proud of their sporting achievements.

- Leaders use the small amount of pupil premium funding effectively to impact on the learning of pupils. As a result, the few disadvantaged pupils currently in school make good progress from their starting points.
- Parents welcome the regular information they receive from school. They speak highly of the open door policy and the fact that staff are approachable.

Governance of the school

- Governors want the best for the pupils. They are beginning to hold leaders more robustly to account but recognise that they should have done so earlier. As result of their recent training, they are bringing more challenge to meetings. They are more aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- However, governors have recently been overly focused on their own development and changes to the leadership structure of the school. This, coupled with the priority to manage a difficult budget, has resulted in a limited focus on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement. As a result, some of the areas for improvement from the previous inspection report have not been fully addressed.
- Governors know how the pupil premium funding was spent and the impact that it has had on pupils' outcomes.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of the link between performance and pay progression. They have ensured that key staff have been appointed to support the development of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff are vigilant and well trained and leaders ensure that staff keep their knowledge up to date, including how to prevent pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Staff know how to keep children safe and are aware of the signs which might suggest that a child is at risk of harm. There are clear procedures in place to ensure that all adults know to whom to report concerns.
- Safeguarding records are detailed and show a close working relationship with other agencies.
- The headteacher knows the pupils and their families well and ensures that support is provided when needed. Effective relationships with other agencies and with parents ensure that pupils are kept safe and that their welfare needs are met.
- The school educates pupils well about how to stay safe online. Parents value this and the support the school has given them to help their children with this at home.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving in key stage 1 but is too variable across Years 3 to 6. In some key stage 2 classes, pupils do not understand what they are learning or what is expected of them. In these classes, teaching lacks challenge and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their work. As a result, pupils become restless and some low-level disruption occurs. Pupils in these classes do not make good progress over time.

- In key stage 1, teaching is planned to match the needs of the pupils, including the most able and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and ensure that not a moment of learning time is wasted. Current pupils make good progress in these classes.
- Teachers are not clear about what good progress or working at higher levels looks like. While they say that this is becoming clearer this year, this slow response to the changes to assessment has had a negative impact on the outcomes for the most able pupils. Pupils say that teachers do not always challenge them in lessons.
- The teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling across the school is good. Nonetheless, teachers in key stage 2 spend too much time on practising individual sentences and completing exercises. They do not provide frequent enough opportunities for pupils of all abilities to use these skills to write for different purposes and audiences. In these classes, pupils, including the most able, make slow progress in writing from their starting points.
- In some key stage 2 classes, the most able pupils are not encouraged to write with sufficient flair and imagination, drawing on the techniques that authors use in the high-quality literary texts that they regularly read in class. There were some examples of good-quality writing from the oldest pupils. For example, one Year 6 pupil wrote, 'All of my emotions circled me like a storm.' However, this level of sophistication was not developed well for the majority of the most able pupils.
- The work of pupils currently in key stage 1 is of good quality. Pupils take pride in their work and work shows good progress from their starting points. There is no obvious difference between the work of girls and boys. Most-able pupils demonstrate a greater understanding of the characteristics of writing. However, pupils are given few opportunities to write in subjects other than English and so key writing skills are not reinforced.
- The teaching of mathematics is good in key stage 1 but variable across key stage 2. In key stage 2, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and reasoning. Consequently, the most able pupils in key stage 2 do not reach the highest available standards. However, when opportunities are given, pupils are able to explain their mathematical thinking. Mathematical vocabulary is developed well across school because of the focus that has been placed on this.
- Teachers use ongoing assessment in lessons to intervene and support lower-attaining pupils to good effect. This, along with the good-quality additional support provided by teaching assistants, is increasing the rate of progress for this group of pupils. As a consequence, lower-attaining pupils currently in school are making good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The good subject knowledge of all adults means that phonics is taught well. As a result, the majority of pupils reach the expected standard at the end of Year 1. Where this is not the case, the additional support provided ensures that pupils rapidly catch up. This knowledge is used to develop spelling strategies in key stage 2. However, because the school's marking policy is not followed consistently, pupils make the same spelling mistakes over again.
- Pupils read widely for pleasure. Pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils read fluently and with expression. When needed, they use their phonics skills to tackle

unfamiliar words. Pupils say that they like listening to stories which their teachers read and that this encourages them to read other books by the same author. The pupils who read to the inspector demonstrated a progression in reading comprehension skills appropriate to their age.

- Historical skills such as enquiry are developed well across school. In RE, pupils are encouraged to use their writing skills to discuss different religions. The teaching of other subjects, such as science, does not develop subject-specific skills as well. Insufficient opportunity is given for scientific investigation and few opportunities are given for pupils of all ages to write in subject areas other than English.
- All adults use questioning well to develop pupils' understanding. This is as a result of the training they have received since the previous inspection. Consequently, pupils are able to discuss what they are learning and how to improve their work. However, there are too few opportunities in some classes to develop reasoning skills in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. This is evident in the way in which they share their work and talk eagerly about the activities that are on offer to them. They value the range of additional opportunities on offer, including sport. They are particularly enthusiastic about the link that they have with another school in another local authority and the pen pals they have made. Pupils talk about the added excitement of visits and visitors, including a visit from a Viking!
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the charities they support each year and the responsibility of being a Reception buddy. One parent of a child in Reception particularly praised the 'buddy system' where Year 6 pupils are paired with Reception pupils. She told the inspector that, 'The buddy system works brilliantly. I can't believe he ate his broccoli. His buddy can come and live with us!'
- Pupils speak confidently and respect the views of others. For example, in a lower key stage 2 lesson, pupils shared their writing with one another. Other pupils gave sensitive feedback on how the writing could be improved.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They refer to Friezland as 'like one big family'. Pupils know what to do if they are worried, including using the 'worry box', and are confident that adults will help them. Pupils know how to stay safe, including when online, due to the good-quality education they receive in this area.
- Work on British values is embedded in the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to experience democracy through school council elections and demonstrate a good understanding and tolerance for those of other faiths and none.
- Cultural development is supported well through music, arts and wider cultural experiences, including international food week. Parents value the support given to pupils in their personal development and preparation for the 'wider world'.
- 'Frosties' provides a range of experiences for pupils before and after school. These activities include craft and creative activities, team activities and physical challenges.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In this small school, pupils show high levels of care for one another, with older pupils playing with younger pupils at playtimes. Older pupils take great care to ensure that younger pupils stay safe.
- Parents and pupils say that pupils enjoy school. This is reflected in the good levels of attendance. The schools' systems to monitor and track attendance are robust and, as a consequence, pupils are safe. Leaders reward good attendance. However, some of the older pupils feel that this reward system penalises pupils with genuine illness.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is but struggle to recall any incidents of bullying, racism or homophobic name-calling. They are confident that any conflict that does occur is dealt with swiftly.
- Pupils want to learn and, as a consequence, low-level disruption in lessons is rare. On occasion, where teaching is not challenging enough and time is not used effectively, pupils become restless, lose concentration and distract others. The presentation of some pupils' work in these classes lacks care and organisation and some pieces of work are left unfinished.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because not enough pupils, from their different starting points, are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Over the last academic year, leaders did not have a convincing and accurate understanding of the achievement of pupils, including groups of pupils. However, this is being addressed and a new system is in place which will allow the school to accurately and effectively track current pupils' progress.
- In 2015, the attainment of pupils in key stage 2 was in line with national averages. No pupils with higher prior attainment made more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016, the attainment of pupils in key stage 2 was below the national average. The proportion of pupils with higher prior attainment who achieved high standards in reading and mathematics in 2016 was significantly below that of other pupils and in the bottom 10% nationally.
- Inspection evidence shows that an increasing proportion of pupils are making at least expected progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this is not consistent across year groups and between subjects. Older pupils in the school make better progress than those currently in Years 3 and 4. Writing opportunities are limited and the level of challenge for the most able pupils is often not high enough. As a result, the most able pupils are not given enough opportunities to extend their thinking and do not make the progress they are capable of to reach the higher standards.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been consistently around the national average for the last three years. Improvements in teachers' subject knowledge, work in pupils' books and the school's own information indicate that this is being sustained.

- Low-attaining pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make expected progress from their starting points in writing but not enough progress in reading or mathematics. The acting headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, ensures that pupils receive timely additional support from external agencies and from well-trained school staff. As a result, progress is improving for these groups of pupils.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils is too small to make meaningful comparisons with national averages for attainment and progress. However, it is clear that the few pupils currently in school make good progress from their starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the Reception class achieve well due to the quality of teaching and the opportunities given to explore their thinking. For example, having heard the story about the Stick Man, the children were shown how to lash sticks together. They were then challenged to create their own Stick Man using materials found outdoors. The children recognised the challenge, with one saying to his friend, 'It's not going to be easy.' Adults encouraged the children to develop their own thinking with good-quality questions, for example, 'What could you do to make this stick the right size?' As a result, the children persevered with the task and were proud of their finished pieces.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. The early years leader is a specialist leader of education within the local authority. She has been instrumental in the increase in the proportion of children attaining a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year. The early years leader understands the key priorities for development of the current children. As a result, progress is good for current children. In 2016, all pupils reached expected standards of attainment for reading, writing and number at the end of Reception.
- Behaviour is very good in the Reception Year. Routines are firmly established and expectations are high. As a consequence, children feel safe and enjoy their time in and outside the classroom.
- Parents are very positive about the care and support their children receive in Reception.

School details

Unique reference number	105666
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10002919

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Jones
Headteacher	Rachael Swaby
Telephone number	01457 872601
Website	www.friezlandschool.co.uk
Email address	r.swaby@friezland.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 January 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Friezland is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is broadly average.

- The early years provides for children of Reception age. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- There is a before- and after-school club run by a separate management committee.
- The acting headteacher has been in post since September 2016.
- The school exceeds the current floor standard, whereby the government sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspector looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils reading and talked with pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspector spoke with parents and staff and took account of the 37 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector took account of the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 49 responses to the pupil online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Tanya Hughes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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