

Guildhall Feoffment Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124550
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359700
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Graham Preston

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Ames
Headteacher	Susan Herriott
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2007
School address	Bridewell Lane Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RE
Telephone number	01284 754840
Fax number	01284 765296
Email address	ad.guild.feof.p@talk21.com

Age group	4–9
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2011
Inspection number	359700

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 documentation 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'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed ten teachers in 16 lessons. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, groups of pupils and staff. Different aspects of the school's work were observed and documentation scrutinised, including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning. Inspectors also considered the questionnaire responses from 78 parents and carers and 69 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

Does the school assessment system and observations indicate that pupils make consistently good progress across Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and particularly in the first half of Key Stage 2?

- Is there any significant difference in the quality of teaching and marking for improvement between key stages 1 and 2?
- What evidence is there to support the school judgement that its care and support systems and partnership links are outstanding?
- How well has the school established its relatively new middle and senior leadership team and how effective has the team been in sustaining and improving the quality of provision?
- Given the changes in leadership and recent appointments of some governors, how well informed and involved is the governing body.

Information about the school

Guildhall Feoffment Primary School is slightly smaller than average and draws its pupils from both the centre of Bury St Edmunds and the surrounding district. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage but there is a small but increasing proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups including a number who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school works closely with both the separate pre-school nursery and breakfast/after school club which share the school site. The school has Sportsmark, Eco-schools Award and national Healthy Schools status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Guildhall Feoffment is a good school that successfully meets the varied needs of its pupils and provides a positive and inclusive learning environment. Its close working with the local church and community is developing successful partnerships that support and enrich pupils' learning and contributes to the good progress they make.

Pupils make a good start in Reception particularly in terms of their personal and social development. Although on occasion the school has not met the high targets it sets itself, pupils make good progress during their time in school so that most reach above-average and, in many cases, well above-average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 4. Boys and girls achieve equally well and those pupils at an early stage of English acquisition make rapid progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do as well as their peers and a number of their parents are very appreciative of the care and support work of the school.

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say that their children like school and feel safe and secure when there. Pupils similarly agree and this is reflected in their regular attendance. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and pupils know that any concerns they may have are quickly addressed. Pupils are committed to a healthy lifestyle; evident in their healthy eating, enjoyment of pre-lesson physical exercises and involvement in sports where they benefit from the sports partnership with the local upper school. The school's location in this historical centre enables pupils to be actively involved in their local area. Links with schools elsewhere help them develop a good and growing awareness of other faiths and cultures.

The school now has an effective blend of both new and experienced teachers and learning support staff. They work well as a team in developing good practice and for the most part, successfully meet the challenge of shared classes and mixed age groups. There are a few instances where lessons are not so well planned or sufficiently challenging but the great majority of teaching is good and often outstanding. Much effort has been directed at developing accurate and rigorous tracking of pupils' progress. Marking is much improved with the very best practice being actively promoted through the school. However, the school has been slower to use the tracking data to inform parents of their child's progress. As well as an extensive range of after-school sports and other activities, the developing curriculum includes successful strategies to better engage pupils, help them improve their reading and writing and make good use of information and communication technology (ICT). The quality of care, guidance and support is a major strength of this school that has a diverse intake not explicitly reflected in the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school is well led by an experienced and dedicated headteacher who is liked and respected for her approachability and detailed knowledge of the needs of all pupils. The

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

developing leadership team has the confidence and support of all staff necessary for sustained school improvement. The governing body consists of a number of well informed governors actively involved in the life of the school. However, the sad loss of a strong Chair and the recent appointments of some governors have resulted in a governing body not as involved as it could be in strategic school development. Despite this the school leadership demonstrates success in monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of learning which is improving standards. The school has also maintained much that is good and even outstanding such as its Early Years provision, the highly regarded care and support and the varied partnership links that enhance much of the good provision. For these reasons the school demonstrates good capacity to sustain its strengths and improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all parents and carers are fully informed of their children's learning and progress by:
 - conveying information of pupils' progress more regularly with opportunities for parental response
 - helping parents better understanding the purpose of homework and other learning activities and how they can become involved.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Children start in the Reception class with widely varied skills and experiences although overall these are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress over the next two years to reach standards above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4 reaching standards clearly above average by the time they leave. In most years pupils meet their challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics. For, example, in 2009 nearly two thirds of pupils attained level 4 in reading and writing and nearly half in mathematics. Not all targets were met in 2010 but current progress seen in lessons and in the school's tracking records show that almost all pupils are on course to make expected or better progress. While pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities start at a lower attainment level, their rate of improvement largely mirrors that of their classmates. Lesson observations confirmed pupils' good learning in all year groups. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were actively engaged in a stimulating writing task on 'superheroes' that provided considerable opportunities for teachers to assess and improve their work. Mathematics work in a mixed Year 3 and 4 lesson had varied challenge in which all understood sequencing and the more able worked confidently with negative numbers.

Pupils have no concerns about bullying and appreciate the wide range of opportunities to take responsibility as classroom monitors, 'buddies', playground helpers and tuck shop assistants. The school council members feel valued for their views on different policies such as assessment and choose charities and events they wish to support. Attendance has been above average in most years and the recent fall, mostly through holiday absence, is being actively and effectively addressed by the school.

Pupils are much involved in the local church and community including the Guildhall Feoffment Trust where pupils have close links with the residents of the Trust almshouses. Although not a church school there are strong links with the local church and cathedral

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

reflecting the school's strong moral and spiritual ethos. The emphasis on the 'Golden Rules' of consideration and concern for others contributes well to pupils' development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and learning support staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs increasingly based on rigorous tracking of pupils' and readiness to provide additional learning support. Although some classes are shared, the different teachers know pupils well and have good relationships with them. The best lessons have excellent planning with clear learning purposes shared with the pupils. Lesson activities are interesting, challenging and varied to accommodate the wide range of pupils' abilities and knowledge, particularly in the mixed-age classes. The less strong teachers plan conscientiously with interesting activities, but it is not always clear what pupils' are meant to be learning. Consequently, on occasion, lesson pace is slower and less challenging. Marking and assessment are good and the best practice is enabling pupils to make better progress by showing them how they can improve their work.

The curriculum is rightly focused on improving literacy and numeracy with considerable use of ICT. The wide range of sports and other extracurricular activities, benefit from excellent links with other schools providing access to sports fields and other facilities. Current curriculum development is helping promote greater social and cultural awareness through different school activities and outside links.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Care and support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is outstanding and reflects the caring ethos of the school supported by all staff. A considerable number of parents write at length about the support their children receive including those with moving from special school, coming from overseas and others with specific needs such as autism or lack of speech and language development. The now rigorous systems for identifying vulnerable children and close working with the different support agencies to provide and manage additional support enable these pupils to make good progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior staff manage the school well. The combined strengths and experience of existing staff with the new ideas and enthusiasm of more recently appointed senior and middle leaders, sustain the very positive features of a caring and inclusive school with a drive to further improve standards and pupil progress. The governing body is developing and is currently satisfactory. Governors are active and effective in key areas such as finance, safeguarding and curriculum, but have not been sufficiently involved in a careful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the school necessary for strategic development. All other aspects of leadership and management are strong. This is particularly so in the effectiveness of partnerships where the school's links with various agencies greatly strengthen its care and guidance. Other links similarly enhance pupils' educational experience and help develop the school. These include: the headteacher's leadership of the local Primary Heads' Partnership that shares best policies and practice and organises provision for gifted and talented pupils, the Primary Training Network that moderates standards and organises shared staff training and the Sports Partnership with the specialist college that greatly enhances pupils' sports experience. While more regular formal reporting to parents and carers is lacking this is more than balanced by the school's close working with parent and family support workers and its well attended family learning programmes in literacy, ICT and mathematics that help parents and carers support their children's learning. Safeguarding too is a strength because not only are all policies, procedures and training in place but the governor responsible regularly monitors staff understanding and checks on practice. Community cohesion has been well planned and implemented with the very strong local community links well complemented by established ties with Tanzania and a multi-cultural London school. A significant development in the last two years has been the development of rigorous academic tracking that is used effectively to monitor the progress of particular groups and respond to any concerns.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Evidence indicates that the school is particularly successful in ensuring, as far as possible, all such pupils make good progress.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The very great majority settle well into the life of the school and make good progress towards their Early Learning Goals so that by the end of the year they reach above-average levels for their personal, social, creative and physical development. Literacy and numeracy levels are more in line with those expected for their age and reflect good progress given many children's modest starting points. This good progress results from a carefully planned and effective balance of child-initiated and adult led activities that are regularly reviewed and developed. They include for example, daily work on learning sounds and letters and a focus on correct letter formation and handwriting practice to address these areas of relative weakness. Teachers plan varied learning activities that engage children's interest and encourage them to develop greater confidence and independence using the interior and outside learning areas and facilities. Children's good development of personal and social skills, are evident in their readiness to share resources and take turns. Staff are sensitive to their needs and demonstrate how best to engage them in learning. The different learning areas are well planned and the school makes effective use of visits to develop children's personal skills and understanding of the world. Regular observations of children's progress are made by teachers and support staff, who use these to plan future learning activities. Assessment of children's progress is carefully recorded as part of each child's 'Learning Journey'. The overall effectiveness of leadership and management is clearly good with much exemplary practice recognised by the local authority. Resources are very well managed, teaching and learning are effective, the learning areas are safe and good progress is being made to provide a seamless progression from Reception into Year 1.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are generally very positive about the school and a considerable number wrote additional comments and accompanying letters mostly praising the school leadership, their children's enjoyment of school and the good progress they are making. This reflects a popular school that draws a considerable proportion of its pupils from outside its catchment area. However, a small but significant number were concerned about their children's progress and the extent to which they were kept informed. Inspectors noted that the headteacher and staff make themselves readily available to discuss pupils' progress and organise meetings and training to help parents and carers support their children's progress. However, while the school monitors each pupil's progress continuously this information is not reported back to all parents and carers as regularly as it could be. Related to this, some respondents said they were not sure how they can help their children with their homework and would appreciate more guidance. Inspectors judged that the school is very effective in its engagement with parents and carers though staff recognise that still more can be done to ensure all are fully informed and know how to help support their children's learning

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Guildhall Feoffment Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 78 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 217 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	69	24	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	69	23	29	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	29	47	60	6	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	41	36	46	8	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	47	37	47	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	40	40	51	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	47	41	53	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	42	37	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	47	35	45	5	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	35	45	58	6	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	36	42	54	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	54	33	42	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	58	31	40	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Guildhall Feoffment Community Primary School, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1RE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We found it gives you a good education, and ensures that most of you achieve well by the time you leave. Your school has numerous strengths and we particularly like the way your school helps you to settle in and provides lots of opportunities to take an active part and help others in the community. You told us the school is a safe place to be and we were pleased to see how well you behaved and how well you worked together in lessons. You are all clearly committed to healthy lifestyles which we could see in your support for healthy eating, your obvious enjoyment in the 'Activate' physical activity and your considerable involvement in different sports even though you do not have your own sports field!

Many of your parents told us how much you like school and you certainly enjoy your lessons so we were surprised that your overall school attendance was only average. You get on with your teachers and support staff and they plan different activities that make your learning interesting and help you to make good progress. We were impressed with the careful work of staff in recording your progress. From talks with your teachers many of you know how well you are doing in your reading, writing and mathematics and what you need to do to improve. However, not all your parents felt they knew about your progress so we have asked the school to provide regular reports showing how well you are doing. The governors play an important part in supporting the work of the school. One governor runs the netball team while others make sure that your surroundings are safe and the school is well run. They play an important part in the life of the school and we have asked them to be more involved in planning its future development.

The headteacher, the governing body and all the staff are working hard to further improve your school. You can all help by working hard, improving your attendance and continuing to take an active part in the life of the school.

Yours sincerely

Graham Preston

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', 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.