

# Guildhall Feoffment Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124550
<b>Local Authority</b>	SUFFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	314959
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Krishan Sharma

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Heidi McEvoy-swift
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Herriott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Bridewell Lane Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 1RE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01284 754840
<b>Fax number</b>	01284 765296

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is now a smaller than average school due to a recent drop in pupil numbers. A vast majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds with a few that are from minority ethnic groups. Very few pupils are at the early stages of acquiring English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is low. When children enter the Reception class, their basic skills and knowledge are broadly average for this age group.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where all pupils achieve well and very often reach well above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4, particularly in reading and writing. In mathematics, standards are generally above average but not consistently, because pupils are less secure in applying their mathematical skills in handling practical problems. Continued improvement in reading was an outstanding success for the school in 2007 with Year 2 pupils. The national assessment shows they achieved exceptionally high results. From a broadly average attainment on entry to the Reception class, pupils make good progress in almost all areas of their learning. Their phonic skills progress rapidly due to the emphasis being placed on them.

Teaching is effective and promotes good progress for pupils of all abilities and different starting points. This represents a clear improvement since the last inspection, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Teachers make their intentions clear to pupils and hold high expectations of them. Pupils in turn are responsive to the challenge teachers provide for them. The provision for personal development is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and in and around the school. The personal, social and health education (PSHE), including the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme, ensure that pupils have an acute awareness about their feelings and how to keep healthy and safe. Good mastery of basic skills and effective social skills, which they develop at school, ensure pupils are well equipped for the next stage of their education. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community and beyond.

The curriculum is good. Pupils are offered, and they enjoy participating in, a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are well cared for and the additional academic and pastoral support given to those who need it is good.

Leadership and management are good and demonstrate a strong capacity for further improvement. The headteacher provides effective leadership that aims to achieve high academic standards. She is also equally committed to promoting pupils' personal and social development. To achieve this balanced vision, the school sets itself challenging targets. Regular checks are made on how pupils are doing through the robust collection and analysis of data. This gives the senior leaders an accurate view of standards in the school. Checking of aspects such as teaching quality and the impact of developments in individual subjects is not always as strong. Governors are supportive of the school and have a good view of the school's key strengths. Parents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the school's provision and the leadership of the school. A parent aptly commented, 'The school is very well run and it's a credit to Mrs Herriott'. The school has secured strong improvement since its last inspection. It gives good value for money because its pupils consistently achieve well and the standards they achieve are often well above average.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children settle well in Reception because the induction programme is effective. Clear routines and expectations, and the strong focus on children's personal, social and emotional development contribute to good progress in these areas. Children enjoy their learning, behave well and learn to work and play with others. Teaching is good because all staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. Adults provide a variety of interesting activities, which successfully

promote their learning, both in the classroom and outside. Sometimes activities tend to be overly directed by staff rather than building on initiative shown by children. Staff regularly check children's progress and develop an overall profile of their achievements. From broadly average starting points, children achieve well in all areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1 they reach the standards expected for their age and many of them achieve beyond these, particularly in early literacy. Leadership and management are good and there are clear plans for future improvement.

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

- Improve pupils' application of their numerical skills in handling mathematical problems.
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation skills of all senior and middle leaders so that they are secure in measuring more precisely the impact of teaching and developments in the areas for which they are responsible.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good across the school because pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress. From their broadly average starting points, children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and by the time they enter Year 1, they are well equipped in early literacy and numeracy skills to make a speedy start. Good progress continues and, by the end of Year 2, almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics, with a significant number reaching beyond this. The school has a good track record of sustaining above average achievement over a period of many years. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading are often considerably above average. Indeed, the unvalidated data indicates they were exceptionally high in 2007. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to build on their good progress and achieve well from their starting points at the end of Year 2, particularly in English. In mathematics, pupils' achievement is not as strong; mainly because skills in solving problems involving numbers are insufficiently developed across the school. Most pupils in Year 4 work at levels above those expected for their age.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils regularly learn about their own feelings and the impact they might have on others. Behaviour is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection due to high expectations of staff and clear guidance. Occasionally, a few pupils get restless in lessons. Older pupils take on responsibility as play leaders and help other pupils, for instance during lunchtime. All pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to stay healthy, both through what they eat and through exercise. As one young pupil said, 'Your heart has to go bump and you need to sweat'. They also understand how to stay safe and feel confident enough to ask for help when they need it. They make an excellent contribution to their own school, the local community and beyond. Pupils take pride in serving on the school council and feel they have a voice. As one pupil emphatically commented, 'I feel I am able to change the school and can make it better'. Pupils are prepared well in the skills they will need for later life. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school. Consequently, attendance is above average.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching is now good across the school. Its strong features include good planning, with lessons which build systematically on previous learning and tasks that match pupils' capabilities and maintain their interests. Teachers regularly check and mark pupils' work but sometimes the comments made are not specific enough to help pupils to understand what they have done well or what they could improve. The teachers make clear their intentions at the beginning of lessons. Consequently, pupils understand what they should do and learn. Now and again, a few pupils become a little restless and the pace of learning slows because they have spent too much time listening to the teacher. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to stimulate pupils' interest and to explain key ideas of the lesson. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those who find learning difficult or need reminders to behave well.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school carefully plans its curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all its pupils. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities and the higher attaining pupils are well catered for and they make good progress as a result. The focus on improving pupils' literacy skills is particularly effective in raising standards and prepares pupils well to read and write across the curriculum. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use ICT in their work. A wide range of educational visits, visitors with expertise and numerous out-of-school hours activities add excitement to pupils' learning and give them ample opportunities to develop their skills. Links with a school in Africa have introduced global dimensions into the school's curriculum. The PSHE programme, together with the recent SEAL initiative, is developing pupils' self-awareness in looking after their health and safety.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Parents rightly think that the school cares for their children and supports them well. Effective routines and structures are in place to identify and deal with problems as they arise. This, together with the very good relationships in school, ensures that pupils feel safe. The needs of the more vulnerable pupils are quickly identified and taken care of with the assistance of appropriate outside agencies. Arrangements for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety in the school, along with other procedures for safeguarding pupils are all secure. The individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are well written and help to ensure that they make good progress towards their targets. Systems for the monitoring of pupils' academic progress and setting whole-school challenging targets are good. Pupils are sometimes not clear about how targets relate to their own work and find it difficult to explain how they help them to improve it. Pupils receive clear oral feedback during lessons and this helps them to understand how they could improve further.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher provides effective leadership. As a result, all staff remain focused on achieving high standards in pupils' academic work and in their personal development. The current priorities in its development plan give the school a clear direction, although the benchmarks being used to assess their success could be more clearly expressed. The staff with responsibility for leading various aspects of the school's work are keen and work diligently. The school's arrangements for checking how well it is doing are sound enough to give senior leaders an overview of its key strengths and weaknesses, particularly in tracking pupils' progress and standards. The senior and middle leaders' checking skills are not yet as secure as they could be to enable them to evaluate the full impact of all the promising developments they currently lead. Parents overwhelmingly support what the school is doing for their children and appreciate that they are listened to. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's work and is confident enough to hold it to account.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

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

17 October 2007

Dear Pupils

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

Thank you for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed being in your classrooms, looking at some of your work and talking to you about it. There are many good things about your school. Here are some of them.

- You work very hard and achieve very good standards, particularly in reading and writing.
- Your behaviour is good and you are interested in the work your teachers plan for you.
- You come to school regularly and enjoy being there.
- You have an excellent awareness of how to keep yourself healthy.
- Teaching in your school is good and helps you to learn and progress at a good pace.
- You get on well with each other.
- You like doing things for others in the community and raise funds to help.
- All adults in the school care for you and are ready to help you if you need it.
- Your headteacher, Mrs Herriott, works hard and runs the school very well.
- Your parents appreciate what the school is doing for you.

We have asked your school to look at how things can be made even better. These are the most important things.

- Help you to use your skills in number work to solve problems in mathematics.
- Help teachers to check better how things they are in charge of are working out.

We wish you all and your school well.

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma

Lead inspector