

# Somerleyton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124608
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	314981
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Godfrey Bancroft

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

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

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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 (total)	28
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	3
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jan Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Patricia Utting
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	The Green Somerleyton Lowestoft Suffolk NR32 5PT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01502 730503
<b>Fax number</b>	01502 730503

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average and pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Whilst the majority of pupils are of White British heritage, the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds has risen to slightly above average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught in a mixed age class alongside those in Years 1 and 2. Attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year. It is currently close to that expected for four-year-olds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The percentage of pupils who start or leave at other than the expected times is much higher than in most schools. The school has gained the Activemark Award for its pupils' participation in sport.

Under local authority proposals for reorganisation the school is scheduled to take pupils up to Year 6 in 2011.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The inspection agrees with the school's most recent self-evaluation, that it provides a satisfactory quality of education. Parents and carers, however, in their responses to the inspection questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the school. One parent was by no means alone when she praised all staff for their 'dedication and passion for their work' and the headteacher for the way she 'continually encourages parents to be involved in the life of the school'. Participation in special village events helps to place the school at the heart of the community.

The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily; those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because the difficulties they face are recognised at an early stage and actions are taken to ensure they achieve well. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 4 standards are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Currently, standards in Year 2 are above expectations, with pupils making satisfactory progress from their above average starting points when they moved up from the EYFS.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Even so, there are times, notably in Years 1 and 2, when the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently and they mark time. When this happens, they are too easily distracted and do not concentrate enough. Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those who find learning difficult. Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. They are helpful towards each other and eager to take responsibility. Some are developing well as increasingly independent and committed learners. Others have not yet developed the skills that allow them to concentrate and stay on task for long enough. Overall, care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The strength lies in the pastoral aspects of provision and pupils are safe and cared for well. Teachers assess pupils' progress frequently and accurately. However, arrangements to involve pupils fully in understanding their progress, and what they need to do to make their work even better, are at an early stage. Consequently, some pupils are unclear about what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 4 and the provision for children in the EYFS are satisfactory. However, the expectations and routines needed to support children in reaching their potential during the early years of their education are not fully established or applied with sufficient consistency. A good range of additional activities and educational visits enhances pupils' learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Based on the challenges it faces, including responding to the reorganisation of education provision in the area, and on pupils' current achievement, the school's capacity for future improvement is satisfactory.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Good induction arrangements and links with parents ensure that children are well prepared for their first days in school. Relationships are positive and the highly experienced teaching assistant makes a valuable contribution to the children's learning.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of how young children learn and use this knowledge to plan a curriculum that covers all the required areas of learning. There is an appropriate balance of activities directed by adults and those that children select, where suitable use is

made of the indoor and outside resources. Personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Staff do not always establish routines systematically, so that children are sometimes unsure about what they are expected to do and the pace of learning slackens. Attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory and children generally enjoy their time in school, becoming increasingly confident and independent learners.

The quality of leadership and management and of the welfare, health and safety of children is satisfactory. Due attention is given to observing and assessing children in order to plan the next steps in learning. Children make satisfactory progress so that, by the end of the Reception year, most of them attain the standards expected for children of this age and in some years they exceed them.

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

- Ensure that expectations and challenge for the most able pupils are consistently high, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Establish expectations and routines that enable children in the EYFS to learn to the best of their ability.
- Embed the systems that provide pupils with a greater insight into their progress and how to improve their work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards vary significantly from year to year. This is mainly because pupils' starting points differ greatly. Even so, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress. Those who sometimes, for a variety of reasons, find learning difficult, achieve well. Teacher assessments, progress in lessons and the work in pupils' books show that in Year 4 standards in English, mathematics and science are close to expectations for their ages. The most recent national assessments in 2008 for pupils in Year 2 show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. By contrast, in 2007, the assessments at this stage were securely above average. In the current Year 2, standards are once again above average. In recent years, there has been a tendency for standards in mathematics to lag behind those in reading and writing. The current focus on how pupils use and apply their mathematical knowledge is helping to remedy this.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Behaviour and pupils' enjoyment of their learning are satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also satisfactory. The school has introduced a project to improve the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) and this is helping to support pupils' personal development. However, some pupils are easily distracted and soon lose concentration, especially when activities fail to capture their interest. Even so, they are tolerant and show understanding of the challenges their classmates face. They also take pleasure in celebrating each other's achievements and are very willing to take responsibility, for example by leading activities at playtimes. Pupils' cultural development is good; their understanding and appreciation of their own community and the wider world is well developed.

Attendance is currently above average, although in some years it falls below average and a consistent pattern is yet to emerge. Pupils make a significant contribution to village life. For example, they make the 'guy' for the village bonfire and the school fete is very much the highlight of the year. Pupils are knowledgeable about the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise and the school is working towards gaining the Healthy Schools Award. Current standards, coupled with pupils' social skills, mean that they are prepared satisfactorily for the next stages of their education and for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

There are good relationships in classrooms, enabling lessons to move on smoothly. Whilst work is often matched well to pupils' needs and abilities, this is not always the case. At times, relatively mundane activities fail to capture pupils' interest. At Key Stage 1 the expectations of pupils' capabilities are sometimes not high enough and therefore the challenges set for the most able do not always meet their needs. Some lessons also lack pace. When this happens some pupils lose concentration. Occasional instances of challenging behaviour are managed well by teachers, teaching assistants and the behaviour support assistant. This helps to minimise any potentially disruptive impact. Pupils' progress is assessed accurately and teachers' marking provides pupils with sound encouragement and advice about their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets pupils' needs satisfactorily. The current initiative to develop a thematic approach to the curriculum is making links between subjects more meaningful for pupils. The teaching of French is helping to enhance pupils' understanding of languages. However, opportunities to promote key skills, such as speaking and listening, discussion and writing in all subjects are not always fully exploited.

The school provides a good range of additional activities, such as French club, gym club, sports and yoga, in which pupils participate with enthusiasm. In this respect, the school makes effective use of the services of external providers, such as the local sports partnership. Pupils in Year 4 look forward to their annual residential visit in which they take part in outdoor and adventurous activities, and enhance their information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Overall, care, guidance and support are satisfactory, and the pastoral aspects are strong. Requirements to ensure that pupils are safe and secure are met in full and pupils are cared for well. There are effective systems to ensure that teachers have a clear picture of pupils' progress over time and provide them with the information they need to respond if any pupils are at risk of falling behind. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, and these pupils invariably receive prompt and effective support. Whilst the assessment of pupils' progress is accurate, arrangements to involve them in understanding their own progress and what they need to do to make their work even better are at an early stage. Consequently, some pupils are not sufficiently aware of the targets set for their progress or of what they need to do to improve their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The school benefits greatly from the hard work and dedication of the headteacher and staff. Its small size means that the burdens of governance and management fall on the shoulders of a few. Even so, the school has worked successfully to address the issues identified by the last inspection, namely to establish management systems for subject leadership and monitor the development of subjects.

The school development plan provides a clear picture of the school's priorities for improvement and lays the foundation for the accurate evaluation of its own performance. The headteacher and governing body also set suitably challenging targets for pupils' attainment. The chair of governors is very supportive and knowledgeable about the work of the school. Some governors are involved in evaluating its success and holding it to account for the quality of its work. However, not all governors are involved fully in these activities.

The school works effectively to gain and respond to the views of pupils, and of parents and carers, about the quality of education it provides. Parents are very supportive and the Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association (PTFA) raises significant amounts for the school. The school's contribution to the community is good. The school is very much at the heart of its community, especially in terms of participation in 'traditional' village events. Links with partner schools and support organisations are also good, with the school participating fully in cluster and 'pyramid' events.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

7 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Somerleyton Primary School, Lowestoft, NR32 5PT

You may recall that Mrs Yates and I visited your school recently for its inspection. We would like to thank you for making our day enjoyable and interesting. We were also very pleased to hear that many of your parents and carers are happy with the education you receive.

Your school is currently providing a satisfactory quality of education. All the staff are good at taking caring of you and making sure you are safe. We were also pleased to see how much you enjoy the additional activities your school provides, such as gym club. Most of you make satisfactory progress and attain the right levels for your age. It is pleasing to see that those of you who sometimes find learning hard do well. We hope that you and your teachers will be able to work together in the future to attain higher standards and help you all to make good progress.

Mrs Utting, the staff and governors, work hard and are always looking for ways in which your school can improve. With that in mind, we are asking them to:

- make sure that the work they set, especially for those of you who sometimes find learning relatively easy, always provides you with sufficient challenge
- set up routines to make sure that the youngest children are able to learn to the best of their ability
- help you all to become fully aware of how well you are doing and what you need to do to make your work even better.

You can play your part in helping your school to improve by always concentrating hard and doing your best.

We would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead inspector