

# Guilden Sutton CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111273
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	337656
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 September –1 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Bamber

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Andrew Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Kathy Crowe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Arrowcroft Road Guilden Sutton Chester CH3 7ES
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and carers, and other partners of the school. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, curricular plans, records of senior leaders' observations of the quality of teaching and learning, various policies and the work in pupils' books. Inspectors looked at the 97 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers. Staff and all pupils in Key Stage 2 were asked to complete a questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- to confirm the many strengths indicated by data and the school's self-evaluation
- to determine how much improvement the school has made since its last inspection
- to clarify how effective was the provision and children's achievements in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- to see how well the curriculum meets the needs of pupils, including those with a specific learning difficulty.

## Information about the school

This average-sized village school serves an area of relative social and economic advantage. Lower proportions of pupils than are found nationally are entitled to free school meals, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Reception class. There are privately run breakfast and after-school clubs. These are inspected separately and the report can be found on the Ofsted website. The school is in receipt of the Healthy Schools Award, the Activemark and it is a Silver Eco School.

**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

Guilden Sutton continues to be a good school. Aspects of the school's work are outstanding. Leaders and managers have worked successfully since the last inspection to maintain standards which are significantly above average, to address the issues identified at that time and to continue to enhance the exciting and rich curriculum. Pupils feel very safe as a result of the excellent care and support they receive and parents and carers overwhelmingly support their children's view about this.

Despite pupils' overall attainment being significantly above average, their standards in writing are relatively weaker. In Key Stage 1, pupils' lack of pencil control and inconsistent spelling and punctuation prevent them from reaching the highest standards. In Key Stage 2, pupils insufficiently follow the guidance provided in teachers' marking to improve their work, especially as regards organising their writing and in writing for a particular audience or for specific effect. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, pupils attain at least above expectation, with their attainment in dance being significantly above average. Pupils make good progress both in lessons and over time.

There are considerable strengths in pupils' personal development and in their learning. These include their excellent behaviour, extremely positive attitudes to lessons and to all the other opportunities provided for them, and their willingness to cooperate and to contribute sensibly and responsibly to the school and the wider community. Children in Reception love the 'buddy system' which pairs them with Year 6 pupils and they comment, 'It makes us feel safe.'

The rich curriculum contributes very significantly to pupils' high standards, to their excellent personal development and to their evident enjoyment of school life. The very wide range of out-of-school clubs on offer to pupils of all ages are extremely well attended and provide opportunities for them to develop interests and skills which could stay with them for life. The rigorous way in which the school monitors pupils' attendance at these activities is an indication of its excellent commitment to inclusion. Among the rich diet of visits and visitors, the appearance of the Chester Town Crier in a school assembly caused much excitement and greatly enhanced pupils' knowledge and understanding of local events and of history.

Teaching is of good quality and promotes pupils' effective learning well. Lessons are carried out in a positive atmosphere, with mutual respect between adults and pupils. Teachers effectively help pupils to apply their basic skills across a range of subjects. There are great strengths in teachers' questioning skills and in their use of a range of teaching methods. Some relative shortcomings in the balance between whole-class

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teaching and pupils working independently or cooperatively, in providing consistently rigorous challenge for the most-able pupils and in keeping pupils more regularly informed about the progress they are making towards their targets explain why the quality of teaching is good rather than outstanding.

The rigour with which senior leaders, including governors, monitor the school's performance and provision, the clarity of leaders' visions for the school, the good record of improvement since the last inspection and the accuracy of self-evaluation all illustrate a good capacity for the school to sustain continued improvement. Excellent governance fully supports and rigorously challenges the school's work. The excellence of partnerships the school has established contributes very well to pupils' good achievement, to improvements in teaching and to excellence in the curriculum.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing throughout the school by:
  - in Key Stage 1, improving pupils' pencil control and enabling them to more consistently spell and punctuate correctly
  - in Key Stage 2, ensuring that pupils more consistently respond in their subsequent work to teachers' guidance about how their writing can improve.
- Raise the quality of teaching and hence the quality of learning from good to outstanding by:
  - providing consistently challenging work for the most-able pupils
  - more regularly and clearly informing pupils about how well they are progressing towards meeting the targets set for them.
  - ensuring that in all lessons pupils, especially the more-able, have sufficient time to complete tasks

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

Pupils throughout the school achieve well, make good progress and attain significantly above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in writing lag behind those in reading and more-able pupils do not always attain as well as they might. Boys in the school consistently attain higher standards than boys nationally, both in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The school is rightly proud of the initiatives it has introduced to enable boys to perform as well as girls. Those few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language achieve well as a result of the school's recent much improved provision to support them.

Pupils' attendance is above average and they are punctual. These attributes, combined with their acquisition of very sound basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and their excellent ability to work cooperatively and independently, mean that pupils are extremely well equipped with early educational and workplace skills. Their conduct is exemplary and they contribute fully to the school

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and local community, for example as play leaders and by entertaining older people in the village. Typically in lessons, pupils make good progress, are committed to doing well and demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They are eager to answer questions and keen to take a lead in group work, cooperating and sharing tasks well. They are equally comfortable working independently and take pride in their work. The attention pupils pay to their diet and the eagerness with which they participate in exercise activities illustrate why the school has gained both the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark. Excellent partnerships with caterers and with the local school's Sports Coordinator programme contribute very significantly to these strengths. Pupils have a strong moral code and excellent social skills. They are knowledgeable about other cultures and concerned about environmental issues and the plight of children less fortunate than themselves. Their compassion is shown by the charitable fundraising they initiate themselves. Pupils manage money, are involved in enterprise schemes and learn about the different jobs that people do. This all means that they have a very good developing knowledge of the world of work and of financial management.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Because the quality of teaching is good and pupils have such a diverse and exciting curriculum they thoroughly enjoy school and achieve well. Where teaching is outstanding, pupils of all abilities work at a cracking pace, fully engaged in tasks which challenge and stimulate them. This was evident in an English lesson in which pupils worked in pairs to write a newspaper report using a wide range of both journalistic vocabulary and of connectives, resulting in excellent learning.

Typical strengths in good or better teaching are:

- the effective use of good subject knowledge, for example specialist teaching in French, music, dance and ICT, to enhance pupils' achievement in these subjects
- high expectations of pupils' commitment and quality of work
- the effective way in which teachers explain the purpose of lessons and the creative use of resources to stimulate learning
- high-quality marking which is very clear about how pupils can improve their work.

When teaching is no better than satisfactory:

- all pupils spend too long listening to lesson introductions when some might be better served working on individual or group tasks
- the work set for the most-able pupils is sometimes too easy
- pupils are insufficiently informed about how well they are progressing towards their targets.

A particular strength of the excellent curriculum is how well the skills pupils need to acquire are integrated into the themes they study. This enables pupils to understand that learning is holistic rather than limited to individual subjects. Other strengths include the programme to promote pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education, the provision for gifted and talented pupils and for pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths. The school's family atmosphere provides a safe and welcoming environment for pupils, staff, parents and carers, and visitors alike. Staff know pupils extremely well and ensure that any concerns or upsets are resolved quickly and amicably. Parents are fulsome in their praise of the quality of pastoral care. Strong links with the church and outside agencies enhance this aspect of the school's work and of the support it provides for those pupils who are more vulnerable than most.

The school makes sure that pupils are safe and the procedures for ensuring pupils' excellent behaviour and regular attendance work extremely well. Parents and carers understandably report that the school's arrangements for introducing pupils new to the school and for the smooth transition to secondary education are excellent.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and her leadership team continually seek ways of improving the school's performance and provision. They rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and learning in order to identify ways in which these can improve, but also to celebrate and disseminate good practice. Leaders' evaluations of the school's work are accurate and this allows them to identify apt priorities for improvement. Managers' commitment to improvement is transmitted throughout the school, so that all staff are clear about the high expectation of their personal contribution. Governors share equally these ambitions and contribute a wealth of relevant expertise in many areas of the school's work. Their excellent management of scarce resources has ensured a balanced budget, after a period of overspend, with the minimum of impact on provision for pupils and staff. Such prudence and excellent financial planning makes sure that the school continues to offer good value for money. Governors also ensure that all statutory requirements regarding safeguarding children fully meet government guidelines, and that the procedures for ensuring health and safety and for assessing risks are very effective. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. Governors have a suitable policy and their evaluations of the success of the school's efforts have rightly identified that at a local level promotion is excellent, that it is good at an international level but that more needs to be done to make pupils aware of the different communities represented in the United Kingdom.

The school is committed, to and successful in, ensuring that there is equality of opportunity and that everything possible is done to eliminate discrimination. The high quality of the partnerships that leaders and managers have forged with other schools and institutions very significantly contribute to pupils' high standards and good achievement, to the good-quality teaching and to pupils' rich curriculum. Of particular note is the close work between a local cluster of schools which has, for example, enhanced opportunities for pupils to compete in sports events and has led to improvements in provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception with skills that are above levels typical for their age. Because they are helped to develop well in all areas of their learning they make good progress and all enter Year 1 having met or exceeded the early learning goals set for them. Effective assessments by the Early Years Foundation Stage team make sure that the activities organised for children generally meet their needs well. Staff note children's progress daily and appropriately prompt and intervene in their learning to help them acquire necessary skills. In equal measure staff actively encourage pupils to develop their own interests and to choose their own activities. It was a delight to observe children, in response to one of them celebrating a birthday, organising a birthday party, dressing up in party clothes and 'baking' a cake. All welfare requirements are fully met and parents and carers attest to how happy and safe their children feel. Parents and carers are increasingly welcome partners in their children's learning. The effective leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage constantly seeks ways in which to enhance provision and the skills of staff. For example, she has adjusted the way in which children are taught letter sounds in response to recent concerns about children's skills in communication, language and literacy. In addition, more regular information about children's progress is to be communicated to parents and carers in response to their requests.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
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

The vast majority of parents and carers are happy with all aspects of the school's work. One or two parents and carers have concerns about how well the school meets the needs of pupils who have a specific learning difficulty and a small minority felt they were insufficiently informed about how well their children are doing. Inspectors paid special attention to this provision and, while acknowledging some past shortcomings, were

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reassured that recent improvements ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress. Inspectors agree with those parents and carers who feel that the school could provide them with more frequent and clearer information about how their children are progressing in relation to national benchmarks.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Guilden Sutton C of E 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 inspector received 97 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 203 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	134	72	46	25	2	1	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	136	74	42	23	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	70	39	92	51	14	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	80	43	84	46	18	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	100	55	76	42	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	82	45	90	49	6	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	96	52	80	44	4	2	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)	82	45	94	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	86	47	80	44	14	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	90	50	84	46	2	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	86	48	82	46	4	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	94	51	82	45	4	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	116	72	37	23	7	4	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



The other inspectors and I would like to thank you very much for the extremely warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Our job is to find out how good your school is. You were all keen to tell us how much you enjoy school and how proud you were to be at this school. We agree that you go to a good school and some of its work is outstanding.

The things that we were most impressed with were:

- the high standards you reach in reading, mathematics and science and the good teaching you receive
- the many exciting things you do in and outside the classroom and how well you are looked after and the efforts the school makes to keep you safe
- the lovely atmosphere in the school, much of which is owing to how well you behave and get on so well together regardless of your age
- how well the school is run, especially in making sure that you all have the opportunities to take part in so many activities and that you make good progress.

Part of my job is to point out things to your headteacher and governors that will help to make your school even better. To do this I have asked them to do the following things.

- I have asked them to make sure that you all do better in writing. Those of you in Years 1 and 2 can help with this by holding your pencil properly when you write and being a bit more careful with your spelling and when you use capital letters, punctuation marks and full stops. Those of you in Key Stage 2 should be encouraged more to show in your work how you have followed your teacher's advice about how to improve your work.
- I have also asked them to make sure that all your lessons are excellent and that you are all told how well you are getting on and whether you are meeting your targets, and for them to make sure that the work is hard enough for you.

Thank you again for such an enjoyable two days. Keep on enjoying school and working hard.

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