

# College Town Infant and Nursery School

Branksome Hill Road, College Town, Sandhurst, Berkshire GU47 0QF

**Inspection dates** 21–22 June 2016

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Strong relationships, high levels of care and the unfaltering commitment of the headteacher have ensured that many aspects of the school's work are already outstanding.
- The school motto, 'be the best that you can be' extends to everyone and characterises the work of senior leaders. The culture of continuous improvement has strengthened teaching and ensured that pupils across the school make at least good progress.
- Governors are highly effective. They provide robust challenge to senior leaders that has driven ongoing improvements to the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as their classmates and others nationally because they receive highly effective additional support.
- The early years leader has ensured that teachers use progress information effectively to tailor teaching to children's needs. As a result, children in the early years make rapid and sustained progress across all the areas of learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They provide demanding activities that develop pupils' learning effectively.
- Strong personal development starts in the Nursery and continues throughout the school. Pupils are confident, resilient and have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Clear and consistent guidelines and effective support enable them to meet high expectations.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in key stage 1 is not yet as strong as in the early years, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Occasionally, teachers do not identify misconceptions quickly and adjust their lessons to increase progress.
- Teachers do not always use time to the best effect. Sometimes, pupils are not challenged enough when they join Year 1.

## Full report

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

- Further strengthen the quality of teaching so that pupils' outcomes, particularly in writing and mathematics, in key stage 1, are outstanding by:
  - ensuring that teachers make the best use of time and information from more effective checks on pupils' learning to maximise progress
  - extending teachers' understanding of the progression of skills and knowledge from the Reception Year to Year 1.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher and governors are determined to secure excellence at College Town Infant and Nursery School. Everyone recognises and is inspired by the unfaltering commitment of the headteacher. Relationships at the school are equally strong. Ensuring the care and well-being of the pupils, including those who join and leave the school at different times during the school year, sits at the heart of the drive to be outstanding. As a result, many aspects of the provision are already of a very high standard.
- The school motto 'be the best that you can be' starts from the headteacher and extends to all staff. The headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly reflect on their own leadership and make the best use of carefully identified training to further develop their own practice and that of others. There is a deliberate culture of continuous self-improvement. This ensures that there is shared commitment among all staff to develop and improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders have high expectations of staff and carefully hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. Through this and regular visits to lessons, leaders identify ways for teachers to further improve. Teachers value the feedback and the high-quality support that they receive. This support enables them to refine their practice and develop leadership skills. As a result, current pupils' achievement is at least good.
- Leaders are proactive and seek advice to ensure that their evaluations of the school are precise and that they have identified the right improvements. For example, leaders rightly set out to raise standards in boys' writing across the school. There has been a deliberate focus on ensuring that topics are appealing to boys and that writing tasks are frequent, exciting and meaningful. Consequently, progress in writing is accelerating and is at a similar rate for both boys and girls.
- Middle leaders are well supported by senior leaders to fulfil their roles. These leaders are actively involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning. They use the information obtained from these activities to support further developments. As a result, pupils are achieving well in all subjects.
- The leader of provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that teachers fully support the headteacher in her drive to ensure that no pupil is left behind. Teachers make sure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate tasks and extra support so that they make good progress.
- There are equal opportunities for pupils to succeed. Leaders work closely with teachers to ensure that, across each year group, pupils receive the same opportunities regardless of ability. This includes developing the right provision for the most able pupils so that their work is suitably challenging.
- The pupil premium funding is spent very well, including in the early years. Disadvantaged pupils receive highly effective additional support and pastoral care that enables them to make progress that is similar to or better than their classmates. As a result, the gap between disadvantaged pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and that of others nationally has closed.
- The curriculum is very carefully planned to ensure that pupils are set appropriate tasks and enjoy a wide range of subjects. Topics such as 'London life', 'Dinosaurs' and 'Who was the better queen?' foster pupils' interests well. Events, trips and extra-curricular activities further enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils enjoyed a trip to a science centre to make their own rockets and were keen to share that they saw a space toilet!
- Provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a real strength of the school. Leaders ensure that teachers plan good opportunities to address each aspect of this learning across the curriculum. Pupils also learn the British values. For example, teachers use a children's newspaper to talk about current affairs, discuss morals and introduce the importance of democracy. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The physical education (PE) and sports premium for primary schools is spent well. Pupils have benefited from opportunities to experience new sports such as judo and gymnastics with specialist instructors. Some go on to compete at higher levels. As a result of this spending, rates of participation in extra-curricular activities have increased.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school. All who responded to the questionnaire would recommend it. Many praised the 'excellent leadership and communication' as well as the caring ethos that brings them confidence in the work of the school.
- The local authority provides valuable support to the school in addressing the improvement priorities. For example, advisers have worked with the headteacher to monitor the impact of recent changes to

strengthen phonics teaching. The headteacher has appreciated opportunities to validate her judgements of the school's effectiveness.

#### ■ **The governance of the school**

- Governors are highly effective. They have the necessary skills and knowledge that enable them to provide robust challenge to senior leaders and secure improvements to the quality of provision. Governors have a clear vision for the future and ensure that leaders take the right steps in the short term to achieve it.
  - The governing body maintains a strong oversight of the school. The detailed headteacher's reports provide them with valuable information that enables them to check the impact of the school's work. For example, governors use pupils' progress information to ensure that the extra support that some pupils receive is effective and that pupils achieve well
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a protective culture that ensures that safeguarding is prioritised in all aspects of the school's work. The school works closely with other professionals to promote pupils' welfare. There are clear procedures for staff to follow if they have concerns about a pupil. Rigorous health and safety procedures are in place and governors carry out regular checks to assure themselves that pupils are safe.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** is good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and as a result pupils across the school make at least good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve. Teachers plan demanding activities for pupils that enable them to develop their skills and knowledge. For example, in a Year 1 guided reading lesson, some pupils were busy writing about what they had found out when reading, while others worked with the teacher. One pupil explained how challenging it was by saying, 'It's hard being a kid, because we are worked hard!'
- Tasks are interesting and engaging for pupils. As a result, both boys and girls say that they enjoy learning, including writing. Teachers use a range of 'hooks' to motivate pupils to sustain a high rate of work. For example, in a Year 2 writing lesson, pupils were shown a picture in which many lily pads had landed mysteriously in a street. They were then able to interview an 'eye witness' to the event before producing their own account. Pupils wrote enthusiastically and at length.
- Teachers have a sound understanding of the subjects that they teach. This is particularly the case for phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) because leaders have focused on raising attainment in the Year 1 phonics check. Strong subject knowledge very effectively promoted learning in a Reception phonics lesson. Children were able to successfully segment words such as 'smell', 'smash' and 'smoke' because the teacher carefully demonstrated to them how to position their mouths to say each sound.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well. Over time, different groups of pupils work with both the teacher and the teaching assistant to receive appropriate challenge and support. High levels of communication between staff ensure that pupils working with teaching assistants, individually or in groups, achieve well.
- Mathematics lessons are rightly focused on ensuring that pupils are able to use and apply their learning to solve puzzles and problems. Pupils' exercise books show that they have regular opportunities to practise their mathematics in this way. As a result, pupils' achievement in mathematics is rising.
- In the best lessons, staff regularly check pupils' understanding, pick up misconceptions and adjust their teaching to address them. For example, in a Reception phonics lesson adults checked children's responses and used time well to correct children's use of different sounds to make words. However, this is not consistent across key stage 1.
- Occasionally, pupils' progress is reduced because teachers do not use time as effectively as possible. Sometimes pupils are ready to begin tasks before teachers send them off to work. In Year 1, in particular, leaders have recognised that pupils' progress is reduced because teachers do not build well enough on pupils' previous learning right from the start of the school year. Teachers' knowledge of what pupils can do when they leave the Reception Year is not fully developed.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Personal development starts in the Nursery and continues throughout the school. Staff build strong and highly effective relationships with pupils that foster confident and resilient attitudes to learning. In the early years, adults prompt children to try things for themselves by asking them what they think before they provide support. Pupils say that although teachers will help, they often complete tasks on their own. One pupil said, 'We just try.'
- Strong relationships also exist between pupils who willingly support each other and work together very well. One child in Nursery helped another to do up her coat saying, 'I'll help.' Pupils learn about aspects of diversity such as disability and different backgrounds in regular 'circle time' discussions so that they show empathy for others. Consequently, pupils are welcoming and caring to each other.
- Transitions into and out of the school are very well managed. Leaders recognise that some pupils join and leave the school more often than usual and work closely with other schools to make the transition as smooth as possible. Pupils are well prepared for change as teachers ensure that they have as much information as possible.
- Pupils feel safe and almost all parents agree that their child is safe at school. Bullying is very rare and pupils are confident that adults will help them if they have a problem.
- There are numerous opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep safe and healthy in regular personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons. Visiting speakers have also helped pupils so that they can explain what bullying is, know how to keep safe on the internet and how to look after themselves on the roads.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Around the school, pupils behave extremely well. They show respect for others by using excellent manners when they need to, such as 'Excuse me for interrupting'. In the dinner hall, pupils wait patiently and enjoy pleasant conversations over lunch. This is because pupils covet the special golden certificates and medals that they can receive for showing exemplary behaviour.
- In lessons, pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. They listen carefully to teachers and follow instructions quickly and without question. As a result, learning in lessons is enhanced by pupils' high levels of commitment.
- There are clear and consistent guidelines for pupils to follow that ensure that behaviour is outstanding. Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare. Staff provide very well structured support for those pupils who have challenging behaviour. Consequently, the school is a very calm and harmonious environment.
- Pupils' attendance has risen this year and is now similar to the national average. Rates of absence have reduced because leaders provide effective challenge and support to families.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils join the school at many different times and with varying abilities. Effective support with transitions ensures that this does not impact on pupils' outcomes. Across the school, all pupils make at least good progress in the range of subjects from their starting points.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make rapid progress across the areas of learning. Progress is particularly strong in reading, writing and aspects of personal, social and emotional development. This is because there is a strong focus on developing language, and building relationships and positive attitudes towards learning.
- Since 2014, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been above the national average. The very large majority achieve a good level of development because teaching meets children's needs very well.
- Over the past three years, attainment in the Year 1 phonics check has been similar to the national average. Current pupils are making good progress in phonics in Reception and Year 1 so that most are reaching the standard expected for their age. This is because the quality of phonics teaching has improved.
- The gap between disadvantaged pupils, their classmates and others nationally has closed. In 2015, the

attainment of these pupils was similar to that of others in reading, writing and mathematics. In the Year 1 phonics check, disadvantaged pupils' attainment was above that of their classmates. This is because expectations of what these pupils can achieve are high and additional support is very effective.

- The most able pupils are making strong progress across key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics and are exceeding the standards expected for their age. These pupils benefit from challenging tasks and accessing additional lessons that extend their learning.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar to or better progress than their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils benefit from extra help to acquire important language.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their individual starting points. They receive effective additional support that helps them to achieve well.
- Across key stage 1, current pupils make good progress and most are reaching the standards expected for their age across the curriculum.
- Attainment in reading at the end of key stage 1 in 2015 was significantly above the national average. Attainment in other subjects was just above the national average. Although rates of progress in writing and mathematics across key stage 1 are accelerating, pupils' attainment in these subjects does not yet match that in reading.

## Early years provision

**is outstanding**

- Children join Nursery and Reception with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. Some join later than others with a wider range of abilities. Nevertheless, across the early years, all different groups of children make substantial progress from their starting points so that they are very well prepared for Year 1. Most children, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve a good level of development. A significant minority exceed the expectations for their age across the different areas of learning.
- The leader of the early years is ambitious and highly focused on the provision of an excellent start for all children. She makes very effective use of children's progress information and effective checks on teaching and learning to make incisive changes to the curriculum and teaching. For example, staff received training to strengthen their knowledge of phonics. Parents have been well informed about these changes to enable them to support learning at home. As a result, attainment in reading has increased this year.
- Teaching meets the needs of children very well. The leader of the early years ensures that teachers and other adults carry out regular checks on children's learning to ensure that children achieve well across all the areas of learning. Staff check their assessments of children and use this information to plan their next steps of learning very effectively. For example, last year fewer children exceeded the expectations for their age in technology. Staff have gathered information about children's learning and technology and used this to provide better opportunities for learning. Gaps in attainment across the areas of learning are narrowing because the flexible curriculum enables teachers to make adjustments so that they provide the right experiences for children at the right time.
- Adults focus strongly on extending children's vocabulary. Across the early years, adults speak to children constantly to encourage them to talk at increasing length, demonstrate the use of new words and challenge their thinking. In the Nursery, a teacher played with a group of children who had made a house out of 3D shapes. One child had three shapes that he rightly identified as the same size. The teacher challenged him by asking, 'Can you remember the name?' Another quickly and correctly said, 'cylinder'. The first child said, 'I know it's a cylinder, it has circles at each end.'
- Across the early years, children behave extremely well and play safely. Adults are close by to support them and check that they are safe. A group of children were enjoying using vehicles on the 'road' in the playground. A 'policeman' and others were directing the 'traffic' in their high-visibility jackets. One child scraped his hand and continued on his way. A nearby adult stopped him briefly to make sure that he wasn't hurt. Children's welfare is rightly a priority.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109828
<b>Local authority</b>	Bracknell Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	10000819

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	265
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rita Carvosso
<b>Headteacher</b>	Trudi Sammons
<b>Telephone number</b>	01276 31933
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.collegetowninfantschool.com">www.collegetowninfantschool.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:secretary@office.colltown-inf.bracknell-forest.sch.uk">secretary@office.colltown-inf.bracknell-forest.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10–11 January 2012

## Information about this school

- College Town Infant and Nursery School is similar in size to the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is similar to the national average. The large majority of pupils are white British.
- Few pupils are known to be disadvantaged and eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils in receipt of free school meals or in local authority care).
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below the national average. Almost no pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school is located close to the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst. A small minority of pupils are from service families and some leave the school before the end of key stage 1. Therefore, new pupils join the school at different times of the year.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, a group of pupils and governors. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- There were 57 responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, this included a number of written comments. Inspectors also met with 22 parents on the playground.
- A range of documents were looked at including records relating to safeguarding, curriculum plans, pupils' progress information and records of behaviour and attendance.
- The inspectors considered responses to the school's own staff and pupil questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Caroline Dulon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Doug Brawley	Ofsted Inspector
Nigel Cook	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Aspland	Ofsted Inspector

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