



College Town Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109828
LEA Bracknell Forest LEA
Inspection number 278284
Inspection dates 11 May 2006 to 12 May 2006
Reporting inspector John Earish AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Branksome Hill Road
School category	Community		College Town
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Owlsmoor, Sandhurst GU47
			OQF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01276 31933
Number on roll	262	Fax number	01276 600665
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Brian Page
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2004	Headteacher	Mrs Katherine Money

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

College Town Infant School is larger than average and has a 52 place nursery. It serves an area of mixed housing. It is close to the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst which accounts for about a quarter of the intake of pupils. Many children leave and join the school throughout the year. A significant proportion of pupils who enter Year 1 have not experienced the Foundation Stage curriculum in this or any other school. Similarly, many fail to stay until the end of Year 2 because families are posted elsewhere. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is currently just below average. There is a higher than average proportion of pupils whose first language is not English. This is increasing year by year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is very close to the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school has modestly assessed its own effectiveness as satisfactory, but the inspectors judge it to be good. The school's previous designation as underachieving no longer applies. At the last inspection, standards and achievement were judged as unsatisfactory. The school has responded well by implementing a programme of support and improvements. The rigorous monitoring by the senior management and governors has led to effective action to address underachievement. The impact is good and the school is determined that these gains will be sustained in the future.

All groups of pupils achieve well because they are well taught. Teachers know the needs of the pupils well. They are good at using what pupils already know to ensure that they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. The school's capacity to improve is also good as demonstrated by its good improvement since the last inspection. It provides good value for money.

The very good leadership of the headteacher and her deputy promotes a purposeful climate of openness and mutual respect which permeates the school. All adults are totally committed to raising standards and improving the achievement of all pupils. The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding, particularly for the significant numbers of pupils who do not join the school at the usual time. The school has improved the systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress; these are now good and underpin much of the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers are good at developing links between subjects but there are still missed opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in new and imaginative ways. Pupils' work is regularly marked and clearly explains what they must do to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop links between subjects so that pupils have more opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in different and imaginative contexts.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All groups of pupils achieve well during their time at school. This is due to the good teaching and the meticulous tracking of pupils' progress towards challenging targets so that no groups underachieve.

Children start in the nursery with levels of attainment that are generally below those expected for their age. The children settle quickly to school routines and make good progress. This is good preparation for their future learning.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of the good teaching they receive. Standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by

the age of seven. The school's tracking information shows that pupils in Year 2 have made good progress this year with an increasing number reaching the highest level in reading and writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and English as an additional language also make good progress towards their targets. This is because the school is particularly good at supporting the significant proportion of pupils who start school between the ages of five to seven who have not experienced the Foundation Stage curriculum in this or any other school and also may be non English speakers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school: when asked what they liked about their school, more than one child replied, 'Everything!' Pupils are keen to succeed, behave well and get on well with one another. This is the result of the high expectations of all the adults and the very good relationships within the school. Attendance is rigorously monitored and is satisfactory overall. There have been no exclusions.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and is strongly supported by the school's positive ethos. Pupils have a well developed sense of right and wrong, and show respect for their own and others' traditions, values and beliefs. For example, pupils acknowledge and celebrate the culture of the Nepalese families whose children attend the school.

From their earliest days in school, pupils learn that it is important to stay safe and have a healthy lifestyle. For example, even the youngest pupils are aware of how to eat healthily, keep fit and stay safe. Pupils acquire the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, as well as skills in ICT, that will equip them for later life and learning. The school council is effective and pupils feel their opinions are acted upon and taken seriously. They cheerfully take on responsibilities and enthusiastically participate in the good number of extra-curricular activities. This is further evidence that they are happy in school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well because of good teaching. An overriding feature of lessons is the very good relationships between pupils and adults. As a result pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Teachers use praise well to ensure that pupils develop confidence and are keen to learn. As a parent commented, 'My child is always eager to go to school and thinks his teacher is a superstar'. Planning is thorough. Teachers and teaching assistants show a good understanding of how children learn by matching work well to pupils' abilities and providing interesting activities to move their learning on. They assess pupils' work well and the information is used effectively to follow pupils' progress and to set challenging targets for them to achieve. Teachers make good use of resources and

teaching aids such as the interactive whiteboard to capture pupils' interest and support pupils' thinking in lessons. This makes learning fun so that pupils are absorbed in their learning and take an active part in their lessons. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is also good and prepares children well for their start in Year 1.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and successfully meets the needs of the school's diverse community. Teachers place an effective emphasis on the development of the basic skills that children will need to practise from Reception to Year 2. Additionally, they carefully select a good range of activities to support the significant number of pupils who do not join the school at the normal time and those in danger of falling behind. For example, the school has introduced new programmes of study for pupils with little or no English who arrive at short notice; these are leading to even better progress for these groups of pupils. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are well catered for through additional levels of challenge and targeted activities such as the able mathematics group and weekly problem solving lessons. The school is developing links between different subjects which allow pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in different and meaningful contexts. However, the school is aware that some opportunities are missed here and has identified the need to establish further links to allow pupils to see the relevance of their learning. The school provides a good range of after-school activities and visits, which adds to pupils' enjoyment and learning during their time in school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school gives its pupils outstanding care, guidance and support, a view endorsed by the overwhelming majority of parents. The pupils like their teachers and rightly appreciate their efforts to help them feel safe in and out of school. A close check is kept on their well-being and the pupils are taught how to take care of themselves and how to make healthy and safe choices. Health and safety procedures are effective and are reviewed regularly. Child protection procedures are rigorous and there are good systems to support any pupils who are particularly vulnerable. The headteacher works very effectively with parents to allay their anxieties and concerns during her 'drop-in surgeries'.

The tracking of pupils' academic and personal development is a strength of the school. As a result, pupils feel happy, secure and able to achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties and English as an additional language are cared for extremely well and additional provision is well matched to their needs. For example, the teachers have recently produced their own video about the school with a commentary in Nepalese. This will help parents and children feel welcomed and enable them to quickly develop a clear understanding of the school's routines and expectations.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The strong team of headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very good leadership which is clearly focused on raising pupil achievement and promoting high standards of care. In this, they are ably supported by other managers. The school's pursuit of improvement is relentless and well managed. As a result the legacy of underachievement identified in the last inspection has been eliminated and pupils achieve well. This clearly demonstrates the school's capacity to improve. The school values all its pupils equally and ensures that new pupils settle quickly. Parents' views are actively sought and valued, and the overwhelming majority say 'the school finds the best in every child'.

The senior management team monitors school performance closely and evaluates it accurately. As a result the school knows itself well. Systems for improving teaching performance are rigorous. Teachers' targets for improvement are linked to pupil progress, priorities in the school development plan and teachers' own professional development. The school makes good use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and to identify where improvement is needed and then takes effective action. A good example of this is the recent emphasis on pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.

Governors are very effective; the school wisely makes good use of their wide range of skills. They are very supportive but their strength is in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and holding it to account. They have a clear understanding of the strategic development of the school and work very closely with the senior management team to set priorities and to check progress against the school development plan.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

Following our visit to inspect your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. We enjoyed seeing you at work and at playtimes especially when you tried to teach us to skip without falling over. We agree that we need lots of practice if we are ever to be a good as you! We would also like to thank those members of the School Council who told us about the school.

There are lots of things that we like about your school. Some of them are: * you are able to learn in a very friendly and caring school; you behave well and get on very well with each other* Mrs Money and the teachers are good at helping you to do your best* you listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and try very hard in your lessons* your teachers spend a lot of time looking at what you have done in class and working out how to help you to make your work even better * the school council represents your views very well and you all help the school run smoothly* you like all the clubs and visits the school has organised for you.

Your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, are working very hard at making sure that you get the very best education. They are always trying to make improvements. We have asked your headteacher and governors to explore ways to help you make more links between the different subjects so you have even more opportunities to work in interesting ways. We enjoyed being in your school. We hope that in the future it is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely,

John Earish

Lead Inspector