

# College Town Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	109828
<b>Local authority</b>	Bracknell Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	377992
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Rob Crompton

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>	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>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bernice Huelin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Trudi Sammons
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Branksome Hill Road Owlsmoor Sandhurst GU47 0QF
<b>Telephone number</b>	0127631933 01276600665
<b>Email address</b>	secretary@office.colltown-inf.bracknell-forest.sch.uk

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## Introduction

Inspection team

Rob Crompton

Additional Inspector

Veronique Gerber

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and observed 10 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and staff, and talked with pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, and assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 72 parents and carers, and 35 members of staff.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than the average infant school. About three quarters of pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, with Nepalese being the largest group. About 16% of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. Most of them have speech, language and communication difficulties. The school is very near the Royal Military Academy and about a quarter of pupils are children of service personnel. That has an impact on the proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school outside the normal times, which is above average. The school has Healthy School status, the Eco-Schools award and the Investor in People standard. The school site is shared by a children's centre and a privately run pre-school, both of which are subject to a separate inspection.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is a safe and harmonious community where pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Parents and carers, staff and pupils are full of praise for the school. The opinion expressed by one pupil summed up succinctly the views expressed by many: 'This is a fantastic school because we learn and it is fun.'
- All groups of pupils achieve well through the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy learning thoroughly and their social development comes on in leaps and bounds. Levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 have risen gradually over the last few years and are now a little above average overall. Pupils make particularly good progress in reading with many on course to reach the higher levels. Although their progress has recently accelerated, the more-able pupils do not do as well in writing and mathematics as they do in reading.
- Consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching motivates pupils to do their best. Teachers, ably supported by well qualified and experienced teaching assistants, establish a purposeful and productive atmosphere in lessons. They keep a close eye on how pupils are getting on. That enables teachers to modify their approach accordingly, for example allowing more time for some pupils to complete a task or providing additional support to help them do so. Occasionally, pupils are set work which is rather too demanding or they are unclear what to do. Pupils are eager to participate and answer questions, but occasionally teachers' questions require no more than brief answers and opportunities are missed to extend their understanding.
- The headteacher plays a pivotal role in driving improvements and is supported very well by the leadership team. Members of the governing body provide strong support also. They are well aware of the school's strengths and where improvement is needed.

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

- Raise pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics so that the proportion

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reaching the higher levels is at least five percentage points above the national average by July 2013, by;

- encouraging pupils to use the language and vocabulary they come across in their reading when tackling written work
  - applying the same rigorous expectations as are evident in English lessons to pupils' writing in other subjects
  - increasing pupils' confidence in applying their secure numeracy skills when solving mathematical problems.
- Improve the quality of teaching further to ensure a higher proportion of the teaching is consistently outstanding by December 2012, by;
- ensuring work is always pitched at the right level
  - ensuring pupils are clear about what they are asked to do and the criteria for success when setting them individual or group tasks
  - extending the variety of questioning strategies teachers use in order to keep pupils alert and deepen their thinking

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good progress across the school and parents and carers are happy in the knowledge that their children achieve well. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children's social skills, attitudes to learning, and speaking skills develop rapidly within the warm and purposeful atmosphere. Levels of attainment by the end of the Reception Year vary considerably from year to year due to the different characteristics of each cohort. Children currently in the Reception Year are on course to reach above-average levels across all areas of learning.

Pupils' overall attainment by the end of Year 2 has risen gradually over recent years from a little below average to a little above. Particularly good headway has been made in raising attainment in reading, which is now above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing and mathematics fell last year. Due to a concerted effort, pupils' progress in those areas has recently accelerated. The more-able pupils are rising to the increasing challenge, with an average proportion of Year 2 pupils set to achieve the higher levels by the end of the year. The school's main priority, rightly, is to accelerate further the progress of the more-able pupils.

Pupils are increasingly confident in using their secure knowledge of letters and sounds to write independently. Some Year 2 pupils include features such as ellipses and exclamation marks in their writing that they have gleaned from reading. When asked to re-write a scene from a familiar story, for example, one such pupil wrote 'Suddenly in the middle of the night a man came in the room, and who was it...Santa!' Other pupils who read well are not as adept at incorporating such devices in their writing.

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Good progress was also evident in numeracy lessons. During a lesson on subtraction in Year 2, for example, pupils learnt quickly how to solve calculations, such as 157 minus 69, by using a number line to structure the process. The more able built successfully on the learning and could solve more difficult calculations. When it comes to applying their basic number skills to solve problems expressed in words, however, pupils are not so proficient.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. Those with speech, language and communication difficulties are among the higher-attaining pupils. Pupils who fall behind in their learning benefit from very effective support, which enables them, for the most part, to get back on track and progress well. Pupils at an early stage of learning English progress well also, due to focused teaching and mixing with their classmates. Last year, pupils of White British heritage were outperformed by most other groups. That proved to be an unusual dip and the school's tracking shows that it is no longer the case. After pupils new to the school have settled in, their levels of attainment are assessed quickly. That enables staff to adapt lessons accordingly and provide additional support where needed. As a result, pupils benefit from their time in the school, albeit sometimes briefly.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers are highly skilled in managing behaviour, engaging pupils and sustaining their attention. That means disruptions to lessons are extremely rare. Expectations for learning are generally high. Parents and carers are very happy about the quality of teaching.

In the Nursery and Reception classes, teaching is underpinned by close working relationships across the adult teams and a very good understanding of how young children learn. All areas of learning are promoted very effectively, drawing on the wide range of stimulating resources indoors and out. Staff in the Reception class build well on children's early language skills and teach early phonic (letters and sounds) skills very effectively. Teaching assistants are deployed extremely well in those classes, frequently playing a leading role in children's learning.

Across the school generally, teachers use effective strategies to support the learning of pupils with different abilities and needs. Pupils respond well, keen to rise to the challenges set. Occasionally, the tasks are a little too ambitious or not entirely clear. This means that pupils sometimes struggle to get started. Generally, teachers use questioning effectively to gauge pupils' level of understanding and extend their thinking, targeting their questions to individual pupils. Some are highly skilled in encouraging pupils to generate their own questions and this adds a new dimension to the pupils' learning. During a highly successful science lesson on eyesight in Year 1, for example, pupils were not 'spoon fed'. They were encouraged to find out all they could as they took apart a large model of an eye, wore blindfolds and tried to follow instructions, and made pictogram graphs of their classmates' eye colours. In other lessons, opportunities are missed to augment pupils' knowledge and understanding in this way. Teachers plan activities which successfully promote pupils'

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spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. That is evident in personal, social and health education lessons and also in subjects such as art, music and geography.

Teachers keep a close eye on the progress of different groups during lessons and are quick to provide further explanations if necessary. Pupils review their own work increasingly during lesson summaries and their own written comments are often to be found alongside those of teachers in their work books.

Support for pupils with a range of aptitudes and needs is well organised. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language, benefit from extra help in the classroom and from skilled intervention by well trained and experienced support staff in small withdrawal groups. Teachers do not always insist that pupils take the same care in presenting their topic work as they do in their literacy and mathematics books, for example when writing historical accounts, recording scientific investigations and completing tables.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and show high levels of engagement in their learning. They collaborate particularly well and show great enthusiasm at all times. They assist one another when they see someone struggle and show great kindness to everyone. Pupils show great politeness and maturity when interacting with one another and adults.

Bullying is very rare. When it happens, it is dealt with quickly and effectively, as is evident from the behaviour logs and parents' and carers' comments. Pupils are aware of what constitutes bullying and are vigilant in looking after each other. The parental survey and discussions with pupils revealed that good behaviour is the norm and that pupils feel extremely safe. Staff use judicious praise to encourage excellent behaviour and pupils who are reminded to get back on track do so immediately and with good grace.

Pupils know how to be safe and how to remain safe, as evident in practical activities and at social times. During the wide variety of activities in which pupils engage, they manage risk well and support each other in doing so, for example on the 'pirates ship' in the playground or when racing each other or playing with hula hoops. Minor accidents and incidents are dealt with swiftly, thanks to very good supervision and monitoring. Attendance is above average. The newly introduced 'Sam the dog' competition programme is helping to raise the profile of attendance and improve it further.

### **Leadership and management**

The senior leadership team, middle leaders, members of the governing body and key administrative staff are united in their drive to improve standards in all areas of the school's work. Lessons are monitored regularly and feedback is provided against agreed criteria. Expectations are high and increasingly staff live up to them. The staff

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are very appreciative of the guidance they are receiving and the opportunities available for further professional development.

Self-evaluation systems are well established and rigorous, as shown by the recent reviews of literacy and mathematics which led to improvements in the support for different groups of pupils. Levels of attainment have risen steadily in recent years and the school is moving forward strongly on several fronts, indicating a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The curriculum is good. Activities in the Nursery and Reception classes are extremely well planned and provide wide ranging opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, for children to learn and develop. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 enthuses pupils, thanks to a variety of interesting topics, which include scope for pupils to pursue their own interests within each theme. A wealth of additional activities promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The school's positive ethos, purposeful climate for learning and unceasing commitment provide all pupils with equal opportunities to succeed, help all groups to feel valued, and promote their confidence and self-esteem. Learning alongside children from a wide range of backgrounds means pupils gain insights into the many similarities among people, at the same time appreciating and celebrating different cultural traditions.

Safeguarding, including pupils' health and welfare, is given a high priority. Detailed risk assessments, emergency planning and fire procedures are tested regularly and updated by the site controller. A trained teaching assistant on duty in the medical room during social times deals with all minor accidents quickly, reassuring and reminding pupils of the ways in which they can keep safe.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



12 January 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of College Town Infant and Nursery School, Sandhurst GU47 0QF**

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited you last week. We enjoyed hearing all about what you were doing.

You go to a good school. All the adults look after you extremely well and you are exceedingly happy and hardworking. They make sure that you have interesting activities to choose from and they keep a careful check to see that you have a go at everything that is on offer. You told us that learning is fun and we saw for ourselves how much you enjoy lessons. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and how well you get on with one another and all the adults. The adults take great care to be sure that each one of you makes good progress.

It was great to see how much your reading is improving. We would like you to do as well in writing and mathematics, so we have suggested ways which might help you to improve. Try to use the words and phrases that you come across in your reading when you are writing. Also, we are sure that many of you could use your good skills in numeracy to solve word problems, so be confident and always have a go. We saw how much you enjoy tackling hard work and answering questions, and we have asked the teachers to think carefully about the questions they ask in order to keep you on your toes! Please carry on being cheerful, friendly and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton  
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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