

# Orchard Fields Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	122994
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380562
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Rodney Braithwaite

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	422
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Parsons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dawn Shilston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 September 2008
<b>School address</b>	Edmunds Road Banbury OX16 0QT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01295 263324
<b>Fax number</b>	01295 220261
<b>Email address</b>	Office.2055@orchard-fields.oxon.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	22–23 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380652



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Rodney Braithwaite

Additional inspector

Veronica Young

Additional inspector

Cliff Mainey

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 29 lessons or part lessons taught by 15 teachers. A number of lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher and other school leaders, as well as teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors also talked with several parents and carers and took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding arrangements as well as information concerning school development planning, procedures, policies, school improvement, external evaluations and a range of pupils' work. A total of 130 questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised, together with questionnaires received from staff and a representative sample of pupils.

## Information about the school

Orchard Fields is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British, the remainder coming from a range of other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above that seen nationally. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at other than the usual times is above that seen nationally. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The headteacher took up post in January 2012, having been the acting headteacher the previous term. The school has recently introduced a free daily breakfast club. The school has the Eco-Schools award and Healthy Schools status.

**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>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the achievement of pupils throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school’s overall effectiveness is inadequate. Although the school has made some significant improvements since the arrival of the new headteacher, it is still not a satisfactory school because the achievement and progress of pupils are not yet consistent across the school. There is clear evidence that a majority of pupils are making accelerated progress towards reaching the targets for their learning, but this is not the case for all pupils in every class. The achievement of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics remains inadequate.
- Most of the teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better. This confirms the rigorous evaluation of teaching performance in the last few months, which concluded that teaching is now satisfactory. This is a marked improvement on the last few years but there is still not enough good teaching in the school, because the expectations of some teachers are not high enough, and some lessons do not interest and enthuse pupils sufficiently.
- Records and external evaluations show that pupils’ behaviour has been disruptive in the past, both in lessons and outside. The introduction of new management strategies, more effective teaching, and a better understanding by pupils of acceptable behaviour have led to satisfactory behaviour throughout the school. Pupils are kept safe and well cared for. The attendance of the great majority of pupils is at least broadly average. However, a small minority of pupils have persistently low attendance.
- The headteacher is leading the school with determination and success to improve the education offered to pupils, concentrating especially on the leadership of teaching and improving the school’s performance. Senior leaders have been given much more responsibility, which still needs strengthening further, and are well aware that they are accountable for the effectiveness of

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their actions. The governing body is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance, and is showing equal determination to remedy a long period of underachievement.

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

- Raise attainment and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school, so that they meet or exceed the government's current floor standards, by:
  - ensuring consistency in all year groups in implementing recent improvements in the teaching of reading and writing
  - strengthening teachers' understanding of the interpretation and use of data on pupils' progress.
- Ensure that almost all teaching becomes good or better in the next 12 months, and that any inadequate teaching is eliminated by:
  - extending the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by school leaders, and the provision of suitable professional development
  - raising expectations of what all pupils can achieve further, especially for the more able, and ensuring that they are guided to understand clearly how they can improve, both verbally and through marking.
- Build upon recent improvements in leadership so that:
  - senior and middle managers become more experienced and confident in leading staff through the management of change and the drive for consistency in the improvement of the school's performance
  - leaders become increasingly proactive in developing opportunities for strong teamwork with a shared understanding of the school's priorities.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are lower than those expected for their age and make satisfactory progress. This progress continues in the Reception classes, but children still have skills below those expected, particularly in their language development, by the time they enter Year 1. Achievement in the Reception classes is satisfactory for all groups of children. For several years pupils have made inadequate progress in Years 1 and 2. Their attainment has been below, or significantly below, the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. However, teachers' assessments show that there were signs of improvement in writing and mathematics in 2011 and the inspection evidence indicates that this trend is continuing. Few pupils reach higher than average levels in any subject, reflecting the slow progress that more-able pupils have made over time. For a number of years, pupils have been leaving the school at the end of Year 6 with attainment in English and mathematics that is significantly below the national

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average. National test results in 2011 showed a slight improvement, although very few pupils reached the higher levels. Consequently, pupils did not meet the minimum levels of progress and attainment expected nationally. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and more-able pupils, have until very recently made insufficient progress and underachieved. Newly introduced initiatives by school leaders, including more effective assessment procedures, are enabling teachers to have a greater understanding of what their pupils are really capable of achieving. Additionally, robust monitoring of teaching, led strongly by the headteacher, has resulted in more effective teaching and better learning by pupils. Rising attainment and better progress is visible across the school, but is not yet consistent in all classes as the legacy of past underachievement remains to be overcome.

Reading skills are variable throughout the school. Pupils generally enjoy reading, and talk with understanding about the content of their books. The school has increased its stock of good quality and appropriate books recently which pupils have appreciated. Their basic skills, especially those of older pupils in Key Stage 2, are still limited because in the past, and in all year groups, they were not shown how to build words through their knowledge of letter sounds (phonics). Recently, teachers have begun to teach phonics on a regular basis throughout the school, and where their teaching and understanding of these skills are developed well, such as in classes observed in Reception and Year 4, pupils make good progress. However, school leaders have recognised that attainment in reading at the end of Year 6 is well below that expected for pupils of this age. A large majority of parents and carers feel that their children are developing basic skills, and that the school is helping them to support their children's learning. Inspectors agree that there has been improvement in the teaching and support provided for pupils' development of literacy and mathematics skills, but many pupils still have a lot of ground to catch up.

### **Quality of teaching**

While teaching in the past has been inadequate, there has been much improvement in the last year. Records of pupils' progress and their work show that the pace of learning is improving in most classes because teachers are planning more effectively and most are using new assessment strategies and data to provide for the individual needs of pupils. However, not all teachers are fully confident in the interpretation of assessment data, which has led to some anomalies in the apparent progress of pupils. A large majority of parents and carers consider that teaching is good in the school. Inspection evidence indicates that, while teaching has improved, at present it is only satisfactory because some pupils are not yet reaching the standards of which they are capable.

The proportion of good teaching is steadily increasing, but leaders appreciate that this is still not high enough or consistent in all year groups, and there is still some inadequate teaching. A planned programme to monitor lessons is being linked to the professional development needs of individual teachers and school improvement. As a result, nearly all teachers are increasingly confident in raising their expectations of

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what their pupils can achieve, and are offering more challenging and enjoyable learning experiences. This was observed in a fast-moving lesson in Year 4 where pupils were encouraged to use 'powerful words' in their writing, and the whole class learned the importance of a variety of punctuation. A major factor in the steadily improving writing skills of pupils has been the successful introduction of 'Big Write' throughout the school. This has inspired pupils and teachers alike, and there are many displays of pupils' extended writing across a wide variety of topics and aspects of the curriculum such as the Second World War and astronomy. Nevertheless, this is still a developing area of teaching, and there remain examples of teachers being insufficiently focused on pupils' learning needs and offering limited challenge, especially to more-able pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, and although pupils have instant access to their learning targets, they are not always clear about what they mean.

Teaching assistants are particularly effective in helping those pupils who require specialised nurturing support, including those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, disabled pupils and pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers' provision of a planned curriculum has improved because there is a wider emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, a new focus on science, including parental involvement, and more-effective links with other schools. Extra-curricular clubs are well attended, but some parents and carers would like more. The improvement in pupils' behaviour, together with the quality of teaching, is contributing positively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

A number of parents and carers commented on their questionnaires that behaviour in recent times has improved. Pupils also report this and, in discussions, showed full understanding of what the school expects from them, both in and out of classrooms. Although some pupils, parents and carers expressed concerns about incidents of bad behaviour, most related to events in the past, or were related to a very small number of pupils. Strategies and behavioural procedures and expectations have been tightened, with a consequent improvement in outcomes.

Almost all parents and carers agree that the school keeps their children safe, and that they are well cared for by staff. Pupils are clear on the different types of bullying to which they could be subjected, and younger ones show few concerns about any bullying in the school. If there is any, they know who to report to, and say that their troubles are dealt with quickly and fairly. Behaviour during the inspection was never less than satisfactory, and often good. This was evident in lessons and in the playground, where good resources are provided for pupils to enjoy. A considerable number of pupils also behave well in the new daily breakfast club which is being run successfully by school staff. A pupil commented, 'This gives me a good start to the day, and I have a healthy breakfast.'

Attendance has been below the national average for a number of years, but is showing signs of improvement, being only slightly below average this term. Much of

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the absenteeism is that of a small number of pupils. School leaders have now adopted very strict guidelines and procedures with regard to persistent and unauthorised absence.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is establishing a senior management team which shares her high ambitions and relentless pursuit of school improvement. A lengthy history of pupils' underachievement has been addressed as a matter of urgency, and a considerable range of actions and new initiatives introduced. Not all of these changes have led to eradicating all underachievement yet, but there have already been some noticeable improvements, many of them driven strongly by the headteacher. These include steadily rising attainment for most pupils, improved behaviour and more-positive attitudes to learning. Improved assessment strategies have contributed to more satisfactory and good teaching, and the school's wider use of effective intervention strategies to teach pupils phonics is starting to raise standards in literacy. These improvements indicate that the school has clear capacity for sustained improvement.

Under the guidance of the headteacher, senior leaders are taking greater responsibility and working hard with staff to understand the school's most important priorities, but some staff still need further development and confidence. The efforts of the literacy coordinators, for example, are already bearing fruit with the marked improvement in writing across the curriculum. Although a minority of staff do not find adapting to change easy, there is a general determination to follow the headteacher's often-repeated statement that 'This school is for the children.'

Rigorous evaluation of learning and teaching has helped the curriculum become more interesting for pupils, which is having a positive impact upon some aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Displays of pupils' work show designs of rocket cars in science, a visit to a Roman museum and the cultural diversity of Africa. There is little evidence, however, of the development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology. The school is inclusive and there is no evidence of any discrimination. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is inadequate because so few pupils have achieved as well as they could for some time, especially more-able pupils.

The governing body, under the experienced chair, is more involved than in the past in the drive for school improvement. Governors are challenging leaders and have a clearer picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors ensure that arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils meet statutory requirements. School leaders are trying to engage in partnership more with parents and carers. Carefully devised workshops for parents and carers help them to work with their children to contribute to their learning both in school and at home. These are called 'Inspire Workshops' and are proving to be successful. In addition, parents and carers have also enjoyed recent innovations such as the 'Mother's Day tea party'. Although a few parents and carers have expressed concerns, both through questionnaire returns and during conversations with inspectors, the large majority feel well informed by the



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school and are being helped increasingly to support their children's learning.

## 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.**



6 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Orchard Fields Community School, Banbury OX16 0QT**

Thank you so much for giving us such a friendly welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed observing your work, watching how you learn and hearing about Roman forts and the Mother's Day tea party. You told us that you think everyone's behaviour is better than it used to be, and that staff look after you when you have any problems. It was good also to know that you are kept safe and that you like your teachers.

We found that for several years you have not made as much progress in your learning as you should, and you have not been reaching the standards in reading, writing and mathematics that most children do by the end of Year 6. We found that the school's leaders, especially your headteacher, have taken notice of this, so there are signs of improvement in your work. Your teachers are being more successful in making sure that your work is more interesting and challenging, and that you are learning more skills in your literacy and numeracy lessons. We need to be sure that this improvement will continue, so we have given the school a 'notice to improve', which means that other inspectors will come to look at your work again to make sure that the school is improving enough.

We have asked the school's leaders to use the information they have about your progress in every class so that you all make even quicker progress in your learning. We would like your teachers to give you more challenging work to do in all classes, especially those of you who have found some of your work too easy. We have also asked that they help you in lessons and through marking to understand clearly what you need to do to improve. Finally, we have suggested that all your school leaders and teachers are given opportunities to make strong teams and have good training so that your learning can be managed even better. All of you can be a part of the school's improvement by continuing to try your hardest, behaving well, and coming to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

Rodney Braithwaite  
Lead inspector

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