



College Town Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109859
LEA Bracknell Forest LEA
Inspection number 278293
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector Vanessa Ward AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Branksome Hill Road
School category	Community		College Town
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Sandhurst GU47 0QE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0127635292
Number on roll	317	Fax number	0127637455
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	LtCol R E Edger
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs J E Ward

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

College Town Junior School is above average in size. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is slightly above average. The largest minority ethnic group is of Asian heritage. There is an increasing number of pupils from Nepalese families. For these pupils, English is not their first language and a few are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. A small percentage of pupils come from black Caribbean or mixed heritages. The social and economic backgrounds of the pupils are mixed. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is slightly below average, although not all entitlements are claimed. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is average. The number of pupils who join the school other than at the start of Year 3 is above average. This presents a particular challenge to the school, especially when large numbers of pupils are admitted in Years 5 and 6, as often happens. During the last few years, the school has been through a period of significant change but is now much more stable. The school has achieved the gold Activemark and Healthy Schools awards and the Investors in People qualification.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory and is improving. The school has recently been through a period of turbulence, caused by staffing changes and protracted debate about possible amalgamation with another school. Since the appointment of the current headteacher in February 2004, several initiatives to bring about school improvement have been successfully implemented. The pupils are achieving satisfactorily but standards in mathematics have been below those in English and science for several years. Strategies introduced by the headteacher to improve standards in mathematics are proving effective in raising achievement. The school is aware of the need to continue with its plans. The teamwork of the headteacher and deputy is good. They have a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the actions required to bring about improvement. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good features. The school recognizes that it can improve the quality of its teaching and, thereby, raise the achievement of the pupils. The school has introduced good procedures for assessment. The information this provides now needs to be used more consistently and effectively when teachers plan what pupils should learn next. The curriculum is good. It is enriched by an outstanding range of clubs, educational visits and visitors to school. The school provides good care and support for its pupils. This enhances their personal development and helps them to feel safe and happy. Links with external agencies are used well to benefit the pupils' development. The issues identified for improvement at the previous inspection have been dealt with effectively. Recent improvements, and the commitment of the staff and governors to support necessary change, indicate that the school is well placed to continue improving. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

Continue with initiatives to: * Raise standards and achievement in mathematics * Monitor teaching rigorously to raise the quality of teaching to that of the best * Ensure that assessment information is used effectively by all staff to improve teaching and learning

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and is improving. Whilst pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics on entry vary from year to year, they are average overall. In 2003, test results showed that the value which the school had added to pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science by Year 6 was significantly lower than average. The school took action to bring about improvement and standards have since risen and are currently average. Pupils' achievement in investigative science is now good, an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in mathematics have been below those in English and science since 2001. The school has recently implemented several initiatives which are working successfully, standards having risen in mathematics in 2004 and again in 2005. The school is aware that it needs to continue this work to

raise standards further. The tracking of progress towards individual targets, followed by the provision of additional support where needed, is contributing to this improvement. This helps to raise the achievement of pupils with different abilities and from different backgrounds. It also helps the school to track the progress of the high numbers of pupils who join the school after the start of Year 3. The school successfully integrates these pupils and enables them to build on their previous attainment. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified early and regular, well-planned support enables them to make good progress. Similar provision is successfully helping pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. They are enthusiastic about the wide range of extra-curricular activities which the school provides. Their personal development is good, with some outstanding features. For example, the school council is very effective in achieving change in the school community and the pupils who are trained mediators play a very positive role in resolving disputes. A few pupils express some concerns about bullying. The school has good procedures to deal quickly with any incidence of bullying and pupils know that they need to tell someone if they are unhappy. However, behaviour is almost always good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. One pupil commented that, 'Our teachers always listen to us and make us feel important'. They have good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The school makes good use of its rich cultural diversity and takes opportunities to increase understanding of different lifestyles through, for example, the involvement of its Nepalese pupils and their families. Pupils have a good understanding of the benefits of eating healthily and taking exercise. The school council has concerns about school lunches commenting that there is, 'Sometimes too much sugar which makes us hyper'. Pupils learn to play safely and to use resources with care. Activities such as instigating and running a 'Juice Bar' at lunchtime is helping the pupils develop the skills they will need for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and there are several examples of good practice. For example, in an English lesson, good questioning about the use of the apostrophe, challenged the pupils and resulted in good progress. The staff are aware that increasing the proportion of good teaching should raise achievement. Teachers generally plan work that meets pupils' individual needs, but sometimes all pupils undertake the same work which means that it is then too easy for some and too hard for others. Teaching assistants play an important part in ensuring good support for all pupils and especially those with specific learning needs. These pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them. In the good lessons, pupils respond very positively and learn

effectively because the good teaching motivates and enthuses them. Good assessment procedures are now in place. Teachers test and check the pupils' learning regularly but the information is not used consistently well to plan further work and to ensure improved rates of progress. Work is marked carefully and pupils understand how to improve. Relationships are very good, and pupils work hard and want to do well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is good. It meets the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who are learning English as an additional language. Teachers are beginning to make links between subjects such as English, history and geography in order to make learning more interesting and creative. Pupils have regular lessons in information and communication technology (ICT) and use computers well, both for research and to prepare Powerpoint presentations in order to share their knowledge of other subjects. The school effectively promotes pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and healthy through the curriculum. The school extends its curriculum through an outstanding range of enrichment activities and after school clubs that are well supported and greatly enjoyed. Visits, visitors and a residential visit all add to the pupils' enjoyment of learning. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were excitedly preparing for a Victorian school day.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of personal care and support is good. The procedures governing the safety and protection of pupils are good. Parents trust the school to take good care of their children. One parent reflected the very positive views of many when she wrote that, 'the staff are very caring for the children and their parents'. Good risk assessments are carried out, including regular checks of the building and surroundings. Many pupils say that their teachers will help them if they do not understand something in their lessons. They say that targets help them to improve their work. The school provides good and effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and for those learning English as an additional language. As a result they progress successfully towards the clear targets set for them. The school is also successful in enabling pupils who join the school other than at the start of Year 3 to settle quickly and learn effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with some significant strengths. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, has a clear vision for bringing about school improvement. She has implemented several initiatives in the 18 months since her appointment and these are beginning to improve pupils' learning. For example, the curriculum has been improved and is now good with some outstanding features. Staff and governors are thoroughly involved in school improvement planning and in

monitoring progress towards the identified objectives. The school places strong emphasis on teachers' professional development, and the monitoring of teaching is being increased in order to improve its quality. This is contributing to the improving achievement of the pupils. The roles of the subject leaders have developed well since the previous inspection when they were a key issue for development. They now have much greater influence over teaching and learning in their subjects. They are an integral part of the school's drive to raise standards further. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Several governors are new and three vacancies are about to be filled. Governors are supportive of the school's development and have significant involvement in monitoring the school's initiatives to raise achievement in mathematics. The school is successful in providing a safe and secure environment for the pupils in which equality of opportunity is given particular focus. The school manages its resources well, and ensures that decision-making remains focused on improving learning. The accommodation is kept in good repair and the teachers provide displays which both celebrate the achievement of pupils and stimulate their interest.

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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?	3	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	1	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?	3	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?	2	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	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

As you know, we visited your school recently for two days. I am writing to you, on behalf of the inspectors, to tell you what we found out about your school. We talked to some of you, and we would like to thank you all for being so friendly and willing to talk to us. We found that your school does lots of things very well and has good plans to make things even better. It was really useful to listen to what you had to say about what you enjoy doing.

The things we think are good about your school are: * Your headteacher and deputy are good at working together to find ways to make your school better so that you can learn more. * You have lots of interesting things to do in addition to your lessons. You told us that these make your learning especially enjoyable. * All of the grown ups in school look after you very well and this helps you to feel safe. They give you very good support as you grow up. * We noticed how well you behave and care for one another. These are good things, which help to make your school a happy place.

We think that your school could be even better if your teachers: * continue helping you to improve your work in mathematics. * continue to make their teaching even better. * make more use of the information about how well you are doing when they plan work for you. We hope that you carry on enjoying school and help your teachers as much as you can.

Best wishes

Vanessa Ward, Lead Inspector