



## Inspection Report

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**Better  
education  
and care**

**Unique Reference Number** 123124  
**LEA** Oxfordshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 281407  
**Inspection dates** 5 July 2006 to 6 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Charalambos Loizou AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	School Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Aston Rowant
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Watlington OX49 5SU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01844 351671
<b>Number on roll</b>	74	<b>Fax number</b>	01844 354030
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Jenny Jackson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Joy Farrell

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a very small rural primary school. The school serves a number of villages in a generally advantaged area. Most pupils are of White British heritage and are taught in three mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at different times is high. The percentage of pupils having learning difficulties and disabilities is about the same as most schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The school is part of a learning network and partnership of schools which provides extended enrichment for pupils and training opportunities for the staff.

## 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 provides a good education and good value for money. Pupils achieve well and mature into courteous and confident young people. Their personal development and well-being are excellent. They show caring attitudes to each other, their community and the world around. Good provision and standards in the Foundation Stage enable the children to make good progress. Throughout the school teaching and learning are good, enabling pupils to attain well above average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 but pupils' writing is not as accurate as it should be. Across the school, teachers ensure that tasks are well matched to the needs and abilities of pupils in mixed-age classes. However, teachers' marking and assessment are not always sharp enough to ensure that all pupils reach their writing targets. The school provides a stimulating range of activities in lessons, after school clubs and visits so pupils enjoy school and learning.

Good leadership and management have improved standards, maintained good teaching and secured good improvements since the last inspection. This track record demonstrates that the school has good capacity to keep on improving. The school's evaluation of its own effectiveness was modest, reflecting the high expectations of the headteacher and staff and the belief that there is still more to do. The governors provide good support and are an asset to the school. The headteacher and governors have established a very good partnership with parents who think highly of the school, one typically commenting, 'A lovely school. The staff are all dedicated, friendly and enthusiastic'.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve and refine assessment and teachers' marking to help the pupils reach the high standards in writing of which they are capable.
- Improve pupils' punctuation and spelling in Years 1 and 2.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 and the pupils achieve well. Most pupils start school with above average attainment in language, communication and mathematics and make good progress in relation to their starting points. In the Foundation Stage, children develop well in all areas and exceed the standards expected for their age. Last year's national tests show that Year 6 achieved high standards in English, and well above average standards in mathematics and science. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and achievement is good in reading and mathematics but not as good in writing because spelling and punctuation are not accurate enough. Across the school, assessments and national tests show that some pupils perform less well in writing compared with reading and mathematics. Their individual targets are challenging but some pupils do not reach their writing targets. Very effective teaching for older pupils is accelerating pupils' progress in writing so

standards are high in English by the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well because their progress is monitored closely and they are well supported. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above those expected for their age and this is an improvement since the school's last inspection.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

This is a strength of the school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very polite, treat each other with respect, and maintain good friendships. 'I like school because you do lots and I like seeing my friends', is one typical comment. Their outstanding enjoyment of school is reflected in good attendance rates. Pupils are extremely well behaved and play and work together harmoniously. They reflect thoughtfully on themes in assemblies and class discussions that enhance their spiritual and moral understanding. They have an outstanding awareness of how to stay safe from harm or hazards which they learn in personal, social and health education lessons. Older pupils act as good role models and care for younger ones. The school council enables pupils to have an active voice and pupils appreciate that the staff will act on their ideas like the 'problem box', where they can identify things they are worried about to alert others to help or support.

Pupils improve their excellent understanding of healthy living when participating in the 'jump for heart' activities as part of the healthy lifestyle week, and when walking or cycling to school. Pupils develop a comprehensive understanding of cultures and faiths when studying different religions and cultures and through direct links with a school in Africa. They make an excellent contribution to the local and wider community through their involvement with the local church and partner schools. Pupils demonstrate good enterprise skills when planning and organising special charity events.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall and very good for older pupils. Lessons are motivating and fun, one said, 'Teachers give us lots of interesting things to do'. The teaching is having a positive effect on the pupils' personal development and standards because lessons are well planned for mixed-age classes. Reception and Year 1 pupils improved their mapping skills when orienteering outdoors to find special staging posts. Tasks and worksheets were adapted at the right level for reception children to help them participate fully and improve their reading, writing and spatial skills. Working at different levels, pupils in Years 2 and 3 improved their use of adjectives when describing their favourite and least favourite foods. Some investigated powerful language used in food advertising and others designed their own adverts. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 made very good progress investigating complex number patterns because the work

was carefully tailored to meet the needs of all three age groups and all abilities. Marking is helpful and guides the pupils towards the next steps of learning but does not always ensure that pupils' writing is accurately spelt or punctuated, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is satisfactory but not regular enough to ensure they all reach their writing targets. Teaching assistants provide very effective support, especially for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those identified with the potential to achieve higher levels.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a good curriculum, including that for children in the Foundation Stage. Pupils learn to apply their English and mathematics skills well in other subjects, although independent writing is not always as accurate as it should be. There is an excellent range of visits and additional activities that improve the pupils' self-confidence, health and enjoyment of learning. Older pupils talked enthusiastically about the time they stayed overnight at the science museum. The school successfully promotes music and the creative arts, participating for example, in the Oxfordshire festival of voices. Strong links with a sports college and arts centre improve their skills in sport, art, dance, music and drama. Younger pupils learn about nature and plant growth when visiting a local gardener. The use of ICT to enhance learning has improved well since the last inspection. Older pupils proudly demonstrating how well they organise and enter instructions into a computer to control a series of switches. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a range of musical instruments. Very good use is made of the local area and the school grounds and links with local schools and the community enhance learning opportunities for all pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well cared for and procedures to protect them are very good. Risk assessments, child protection procedures and health and safety checks are carried out systematically by governors and staff. The school goes to great lengths to ensure the pupils are able to care for themselves and others. For example, their involvement in the injury minimisation programme, organised by a local hospital, teaches pupils basic first aid and safety procedures. Teachers and teaching assistants are vigilant and supportive of the pupils' needs and concerns. Pupils are confident in the adults who work with them, one commenting, 'I like having helpers in lessons because they help you when you are stuck'. Assessment is carried out at different stages and pupils' progress is charted quite well but checks are not regular enough to ensure that all reach their writing targets. Teachers and support staff are very good at providing the right intervention programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Both pupils and staff are very good at helping pupils who join the school at different times to settle quickly and to make new friends.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The staff share responsibility for the management of the curriculum and work well as a team. Guided by the direction and quiet determination of the headteacher, staff and governors share common aims which have led to improved standards. Excellent use is made of the learning network and partnership schools to develop the teaching and provide enrichment for pupils' learning. Training is linked to the school's priorities in its development plan. Priorities are identified following accurate evaluations of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The right priorities for improvement have been identified, such as the need to raise writing standards further. Monitoring has led to adjustments to writing targets which are already showing improvements to standards. Focused priorities and the effective deployment of staff and resources have led to good improvements since the last inspection, particularly standards in ICT, resources and accommodation, demonstrating that the school has good capacity to improve further. The governing body provides good support. Staff and governors survey parents' and pupils' views regularly and these are taken into account when development planning. Relationships between staff, parents and governors are very good and the vast majority of parents hold the school in high regard. One parent expressed the views of most, 'We feel very lucky that our child has the opportunity to attend such a good school'.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

I was pleased to visit your school and write to thank you for your help. You made me feel really welcome and a special thank you to pupils in the school council who spoke to me. I believe that yours is a good school.

I think that these are the best things about your school: \* it helps you to grow up into extremely well behaved and polite young people \* you are keen to work hard and learn. You do well and reach good standards \* the school gives you lots of interesting things to do in lessons and at other times such as special events like the Oxfordshire Festival of Voices and visit to the Science Museum \* teaching is good and your teachers and other helpers take very good care of you to make sure you stay safe \* the way that the school is led is good and the staff and governors work closely with your parents to explore new ways of making the school even better.

These are the things I have asked your teachers to do to improve your school even more: \* I would like the teachers to guide you better on how to reach your writing targets \* I would also like your teachers to find ways to help some of you improve your spelling and punctuation. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector