



# Gawcott Community Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 110228  
**Local Authority** Buckinghamshire  
**Inspection number** 288605  
**Inspection dates** 11–12 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Peter Limm HMI

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 address</b>	Church Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Gawcott
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7		Buckingham MK18 4HY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01280 813066
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	52	<b>Fax number</b>	01280 813066
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Smith
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carole Chandler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 February 2003		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Gawcott Infant School is a small popular school and most pupils live in the village itself. It serves an area whose social circumstances are generally more favourable than those nationally. Pupils' attainment on entry fluctuates each year but is broadly average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. A small number of pupils from traveller families attend. The school is federated with a local infant school and, after impending amalgamation, will become a primary 4-11 school in September 2007. There is now one governing body. Staff from both schools work closely together.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Gawcott is a good school. It is in the process of amalgamating with a local infant school and this has energised everyone to improve the school and make the best of joint arrangements. An impressive team spirit exists within the school; as one parent wrote, 'Gawcott is a wonderful environment for new starters and young children, a very welcoming school full of happy children and motivated staff'.

Trusting relationships are at the heart of the school community, ensuring a positive climate for learning. The teachers and support staff are committed and keen to do their best for the pupils. Pupils receive good pastoral care and a range of enrichment opportunities which helps them to engage in learning. Their personal development and well being are excellent. Adults value and respect the individuality of the pupils. They in turn, feel safe, secure and behave extremely well. Pupils enjoy school very much and more than one parent commented that their youngsters don the school uniform on Saturday because they want to attend school. The school genuinely reaches out to the parents and they are very supportive.

Standards are above national averages and achievement is good. Pupils start school with broadly average attainment and they make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Progress continues to be good in the rest of the school and all groups of pupils achieve well in the core subjects. The school is aware that although able pupils do well, they could do even better, and is implementing plans to address this. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive the right kind of support. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Marking and assessment are good across the school and enable pupils to know what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum is good and the school is working hard to improve it further to meet the pupils' needs. It is being carefully planned to offer more creative and imaginative themes and topics.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and has worked hard and effectively to bring about change and joint working with the federated school. Governors provide her and the school with excellent support. Leaders evaluate the school's performance well and have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses. The capacity of subject leaders to embed new strategies is developing but they are not yet fully effective. The school works well with the local authority to bring about improvements. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Embed the current plans for providing further challenge for the more able pupils.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders to ensure new strategies are embedded consistently across the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement and standards are good. Pupils who begin school in the Foundation Stage make good progress and reach above average standards in all areas, building on their mixed but broadly average starting points on entry to the school. The few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to make good progress building on the positive start made in the Foundation Stage. The results in the 2006 tests indicate that pupils are reaching standards that are well above those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The results show a clear improvement in writing compared to past performance. More pupils are attaining higher levels but the school has good plans to increase the challenge for higher-attaining pupils and improve standards even further.

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

### **Grade: 1**

This is a real strength of the school. From the Foundation Stage onwards, pupils develop into confident young people who are well prepared for their next school and later life. Cultural, social, moral and spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are polite and considerate and taught to value differences between cultures. Without exception, they stand back, open doors for visitors and greet them in a friendly way. Imaginative assemblies encourage the pupils to reflect and act on pertinent issues; for instance how to help pupils in a developing country. Pupils cooperate extremely well in group activities. Pupils learn to be safe and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. There is a good range of activities that pupils take part in, including yoga and line dancing. Their attendance is excellent and reflects their very positive attitudes and enjoyment of school. They are well prepared for moving on to junior school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school accurately evaluates teaching and learning as good. Inspectors observed lessons that were at least good and some with outstanding elements. Pupils are motivated to learn because of the lively, practical and interesting ways that teachers present the work. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson pupils were encouraged to make predictions about which objects would float or sink and to explain why they thought it would happen. More able children were challenged to think of ways to make the experiment fair so that results would be accurate. Teachers know pupils well and support their individual needs effectively. The school is focusing on helping more able pupils to achieve as well as they can but sensible strategies to attain this are not yet embedded consistently well across the school. Teaching assistants play a key role in ensuring the quality of teaching and learning is good. They support pupils very well.

The school's assessment and target setting systems are good. Marking is generally good and helps children understand what they need to do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff are working energetically and enthusiastically to introduce more imaginative and creative themes into the school's already good curriculum provision. The curriculum has ample opportunities for pupils to experience practical, relevant topics which involve visits outside of school, such as the work undertaken for 'Dinosaur Week'. The recently completed computer room has enabled pupils to develop their basic information and communication technology skills very well. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Intervention strategies for these pupils enable them to make good progress, for example 'precision teaching' based on the teaching of sounds for reading. Activities that take place after school are appreciated and most pupils participate enthusiastically in the range of options, including computing, art and craft and sewing. A particular favourite is the 'Sportoon' club run by an outside provider which offers a range of sports. Parents value these activities highly and one commented: 'The participation of even the youngest children in events such as yesterday's Harvest Festival are truly priceless'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well cared for because the adults know them well and take time to address their needs. Written procedures for safeguarding pupils are good. Teachers are good at guiding and helping pupils to assess how well they are doing and marking indicates clearly what they need to do to improve. Older pupils are motivated by targets which are monitored well by teachers. Pupils are well supported by teachers and support staff. The 'buddy stop' arrangements in the playground mean that no pupil is left alone during playtimes. Pupils seek the support of friends and adults if in difficulty and are confident that problems are dealt with swiftly.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a caring, committed leader who is successfully managing the amalgamation process with a local school. She has introduced many developments which are having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning and standards and achievement. The governors provide excellent support and challenge and have a very clear strategic vision for the future of the school. Everyone involved has worked hard and enthusiastically to ensure transition arrangements work well. Subject leaders are energetic and enthusiastic and carry out their roles conscientiously. They are keen to make changes and improve the curriculum but have yet to embed new strategies consistently across the school. The

school's self-evaluation is good, has improved since the last inspection and consequently plans for improvement are understood by all.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to thank you for giving the inspectors a warm welcome. We were impressed with the way you talked to us confidently and greeted us in a friendly way. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything that you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we found out about you and the school. We think that it is a good school.

What we like about the school:

- you enjoy school and do well in your lessons
- you get on very well with each other and the adults in the school
- you behave very well and are kind to each other
- you do some exciting and interesting learning and your teachers have good ideas for even more
- you are given lots of opportunities to find out about the world around you and to help make the school a better place
- your school looks after you well and teachers want to do their best for you.

We have asked the school to make these improvements:

- help those of you who already learn well to do more 'tricky' work
- make sure that all of you get to enjoy the exciting ideas your teachers have for helping you to learn well.

I am sure that you will want to help your teachers to make your school even better than it is.

Thank you again for helping us find out about your school.

Best wishes,

Mr Limm

Her Majesty's Inspector