



# Aston and Cote CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 123106  
**Local Authority** Oxfordshire  
**Inspection number** 292583  
**Inspection date** 26 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Keith Sadler

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Cote Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Aston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Bampton OX18 2DU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01993 850435
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	150	<b>Fax number</b>	01993 851915
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Little
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Ottley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 October 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 26 February 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 292583
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a small village primary school that has increased in size by about a third since the previous inspection. Pupils come from the village and also from the surrounding area with about one third of the pupils living outside the catchment area. Almost all are from White British backgrounds. Pupils come from a range of economic backgrounds which are mostly advantaged. The percentage with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry is at levels expected, and above for children's personal, social and emotional development.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Aston and Cote is a good school with some outstanding features. There is an overwhelming atmosphere of support and care in which pupils thrive in both their learning and personal development. Parents are almost unanimously supportive of the school. All say that their children enjoy school. This is certainly the case! Pupils love school and learning and they work and play together in a harmonious environment. As one parent stated, 'I feel that the school has enriched my children's life. It's a happy school full of energy and life.' Another said, 'The school is a happy environment that encourages and rewards a variety of achievements.'

The new headteacher is pivotal to the school's success. She has built on the strengths of leadership reported in the previous inspection. One parent suggested, 'Mrs Ottley has taken over with skill and no obvious disruption to learning'. In fact in the past three terms she has made changes that have improved teaching and learning considerably which are now consistently good. Teachers generally plan lessons well to provide challenge for all groups of pupils. This is the result of the focus on involving pupils in their learning which helps them to become more independent. The curriculum is of good quality. However, some of the topics being studied have not been adapted to extend the pupils knowledge and skills by building on what they already know.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they have highly positive attitudes to learning and school. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage. They settle quickly and well and from expected starting points they become confident and secure. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This continues and quickens as the pupils move up the school. By the time that they are in the top class, pupils are mature and thoughtful, have caring attitudes to their classmates and younger pupils, and are confident and secure learners.

Pupils' academic progress is good overall and they achieve well. In the past, standards in the tests for Year 2 pupils have been below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Only a small proportion attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress has quickened and most pupils in Year 2 are working at appropriate levels for their age. Progress is good in Years 3 to 6 and these pupils achieve well. By the time that they leave school, standards are significantly above average in English, mathematics and science.

The school has good systems in place to keep a check on pupils' progress and to monitor the school's work. All teaching staff take their responsibilities seriously and because they lead and manage well, the school has a good and clear view of how well it is doing and where improvements need to be made. Governors play an important role in this. They are very effective and contribute well to the school's good quality improvement plan and its strategic development.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and, in particular, increase the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels.

- Strengthen the curriculum by ensuring that topics studied extend the pupils' knowledge and skills by building on what they already know.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the Reception class with standards that are at expected levels, and their personal, social and emotional development is above average. They settle well and by the time that they enter Year 1 most attain the expected learning goals in all areas of learning. Progress in Years 1 and 2 in the past has not been satisfactory. Attainment has been around the national average, though in 2006 standards were significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, due to improvements in teaching, pupils' attainment has been boosted in the past year and many of the current Year 2 pupils already attain standards expected at the end of the school year in writing and mathematics. However, the more able should do even better. Progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6 and pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science because of the good quality of teaching. Results in Year 6 national tests have been exceptionally high in three of the past four years with many more than the expected number attaining the higher level in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress due to the good provision for these pupils.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Their behaviour and relationships are excellent. These strengths are the result of the excellent quality of care, guidance and support provided and the over-riding ethos of inclusion that permeates all aspects of the school. Pupils listen carefully and well to each other in class and thoroughly enjoy the morning break, lunch and assembly times together. They delight in taking responsibility for the wide range of opportunities available. For example, Year 6 pupils are responsible for the rewards for house points in assembly. They also enjoy helping children in the outdoor learning area of the Foundation Stage class and on the infant playground at lunchtimes each day. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and lessons and this is reflected in their good levels of attendance. As one pupil said, 'Teachers make the less popular lessons real fun!' They have a strong level of awareness of the need to lead active and healthy lifestyles and a detailed understanding of how to stay safe. Due to their outstanding personal qualities and very good literacy and numeracy skills, pupils are well prepared to thrive in their secondary education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Both teaching and support staff make a strong contribution to learning and manage pupils exceptionally well. Together, staff create a positive climate in which pupils are encouraged to make discoveries and to support each other.

There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection in teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. This is now of good quality as a result of the improvements that have recently been put into place. The focus on strengthening learning is paying dividends. Pupils are clear about what is being learned and what the teacher expects. Teachers' [MDH1] planning is good and ensures that the good quality of activities matches the differing learning needs of pupils. However, although the challenge and expectations that teachers have of pupils in the infant years has increased, on occasion, it is not always high enough. The school has already implemented good and robust plans to address this and there is evidence of positive impact on these pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is of good quality. Teachers are adept at making sure that they include information and communication technology (ICT) opportunities in lessons. In addition, they plan well to make sure that current literacy targets are also addressed in other subjects such as history, geography and science. There is a commitment to ensuring that learning is made even more relevant and impacts positively on pupils' achievement beyond English, mathematics, science and ICT. At present, the topics studied and what is learned in them do not always stem from and build on the pupils' interests. Good focus is provided in science and physical education in particular to help to develop pupils' understanding of healthy life styles. In addition, collaborative work is set in many subjects. This helps to develop skills of working together and contributes well to the pupils' positive attitudes and excellent relationships.

The range of additional activities is good. Many visitors to the school and educational visits enrich pupils' learning. The school provides a satisfactory range of after-school activities.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. There is a pervasive atmosphere that helps to make sure that all are included in what the school provides. All statutory arrangements for safeguarding pupils are met in full, and there are robust health and safety and child protection procedures. The strong sense of team work linked to the

family ethos means that all adults, and pupils, take responsibility for ensuring that all others are safe and well cared for. There have been significant recent improvements in the guidance provided to pupils. Marking is of good quality and there are now good arrangements in place to track pupils' progress as they move up the school. Pupils are clear about what they have to do next to improve. There are good quality and clear learning plans for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. These involve the pupils well in understanding their targets. In addition, the child-friendly format enables these pupils to know what they have to do to meet their targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of leadership and management is good[MDH2]. The new headteacher has made an outstanding start. She has successfully built on the many strengths reported in the previous inspection, has tackled the necessary improvement points with rigour and sensitivity. She has strengthened the performance management arrangements of teachers and has provided excellent opportunities for teachers with responsibilities to influence teaching and learning. Teachers have relished these opportunities. The improvements in learning and its assessment have had such a positive impact on lessons because all teachers are committed to working collaboratively. There are already signs that standards in Years 1 and 2 are improving as a result. The strong sense of teamwork, commitment to improvement and a clear vision for the future, provide the school with good capacity for further improvement.

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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	2
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>	1

<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	2
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**

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I was really impressed with your friendliness and excellent behaviour, your very sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other and how well you do in your work.

Here are some of the really good things I found about your school:

- your behaviour is excellent, you thoroughly enjoy school and lessons and you play together exceptionally well
- all the adults work hard to make sure that you are safe and you are outstandingly well cared for
- lessons are good and your teachers work hard to give you interesting and exciting things to learn about
- your headteacher is doing a really good job and she is helped very well to make your school even better by the other teachers and governors.

I have asked the school to work on two things in particular to make your school even better:

- raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 especially increasing the number of you that gain the higher levels
- make lessons in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT even more interesting by adapting these lessons to extend your knowledge and skills by building on what you already know.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and to meet the targets set for you.

With best wishes

Keith SadlerInspector