

# Iver Village Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110374
<b>Local Authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	337482
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Carrington

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stafford Salt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samantha Woodcock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	West Square Iver Buckinghamshire SL0 9NW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 655104
<b>Fax number</b>	01753 655104
<b>Email address</b>	office@iver-inf.bucks.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045  
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at curriculum planning, information from the monitoring of pupils' progress and the quality of provision, samples of pupils' work, assessment and attendance data and school improvement planning. Seventy-four parental questionnaires were evaluated as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of leaders and governors in raising standards and accelerating pupils' progress
- improvements to achievement in writing
- improvement in the level of attendance
- the promotion of community cohesion and equal opportunities for pupils
- the use of assessment to raise pupils' achievement.

## Information about the school

Iver Village Infant School is smaller than most schools for pupils aged 3 to 11. About a quarter of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups, especially Indian. A small proportion of pupils are from Romany or Gypsy families. The proportion of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is similar to the national average. An above-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of these have speech or communication difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class.

The headteacher took up post in September 2009.

**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

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

Iver Village Infant School provides a satisfactory education for the pupils. It is improving rapidly under the incisive leadership of the headteacher. The school's unwavering emphasis on raising standards and increasing pupils' progress is having a significant impact. At present, pupils make satisfactory progress and attainment is average. Achievement in writing has tended to be below that in reading and mathematics in recent years, although results in the subject have not been far removed from those found nationally. Children in Reception settle quickly and make good progress so that most reach their learning goals by the time they join Year 1. The work in pupils' books and observations in class show that more is being achieved in lessons and that the quality of work is better than in the past. The system of marking pupils' work is having a significant influence on pupils' efforts and aspirations to do well. The quality of work in art is a key strength of the school. The school has secure potential to continue improving at a good rate.

The personal, social and emotional development of pupils is a particular strength. Behaviour is good and pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because assemblies and lessons are used to help pupils work together happily, reflect on special things and learn about different cultures, societies and faiths. Staff give effective care, guidance and support, which enables all pupils to learn successfully. The Gypsy and Roma pupils enjoy their school life and their learning and progress match that of the other pupils. Pupils from Indian backgrounds are given the same chances to succeed as other pupils. The school ensures all pupils have equal opportunities to do well and tackles all forms of discrimination thoroughly.

The quality of teaching is improving well. It is satisfactory at present. Lessons are usually brisk, teachers plan interesting activities that motivate the pupils well and the pupils are enthusiastic workers. Some activities are not well enough focused on pupils' ability levels and there is not always enough time for pupils to talk together about the things they are learning and the progress they are making. It is these things that prevent teaching being of good quality. While there are some good features in the curriculum, such as the provision for information and communication technology and art, and the programme of out-of-school activities, improvements can still be made. The focus on pupils' independence in learning and an emphasis on practical activity that will bring greater creativity to lessons are not yet strong enough to make the curriculum fully effective.

Improvement is a way of life for staff and governors. They form a very strong team, with good expectations and a strong determination to enrich pupils' learning. The

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organisation of school leadership has been changed recently. As yet, senior leaders and those in charge of subjects have little chance to check and evaluate the quality of provision and how it is affecting pupils' progress. Nonetheless, they are keen to take more responsibility for pupils' achievement and school self-evaluation is accurate. Governors are effective in their work to improve the school and are alert to the need to monitor pupils' safety and security rigorously. As a result, the safeguarding of pupils is good. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. Links between the pupils and the local community are very strong, and school leaders are working to strengthen the direct links between pupils and people from different cultures and societies elsewhere in Britain and overseas. Parents and carers are virtually unanimous in their view that their choice of school was the right one.

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

- Increase achievement in writing, especially through the development of greater opportunities for pupils to write in different ways in other subjects.
- Make learning more responsive to pupils' enthusiasms and preferred practical approach by:
  - matching the work more closely to their ability
  - giving them greater opportunities to talk to each other about their learning and progress
  - developing activities that require them to show greater independence and collaboration in learning.
- Give senior and subject leaders more opportunities to check and evaluate school performance, using pupils' progress and attainment as the key indicators of success.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

While attainment in mathematics has been above average during recent years, pupils' results in writing have not been as strong. Opportunities for them to develop their writing skills more systematically are now established and are showing positive signs of success. The improved focus on phonics in lessons and the creation of a new library, complete with structured reading scheme, are already helping pupils to strengthen their reading skills in readiness for the now more challenging tasks in writing. Pupils' writing books show that both the technique and presentation of writing are being developed appropriately and the marking of each piece of work by reference to pupils' individual targets is a particular strength. This personal attention is clearly encouraging pupils to reach higher standards, although it is too early to see the complete impact in the form of increased attainment in assessments.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because their work is carefully planned to provide appropriate small-step learning. Planning is particularly effective for children in Reception and gives them good

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opportunities to learn alongside an adult and to make their own choice of independent activity inside and out. This enables them to make good progress from their below-the-expected-level of skills when they start school. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are as successful in lessons as the other pupils and build quite quickly the necessary fluency and confidence in speaking and listening.

The school has successfully tackled the previous below-average level of attendance so that it is now similar to the national average. This increased attendance reflects the strengthening of pupils' enthusiasm for school, something every parent and carer recognised when completing the inspection questionnaire. School leaders are determined that pupils should be better prepared for the next stage in their education and are working successfully to increase achievement from satisfactory to good as the core part of this aim. Pupils have a very strong sense of being part of the school community. They are proud of their own and others' achievements and celebrate them enthusiastically in assemblies.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Lesson observations showed teaching to be secure across the school, with some good practice in all years. The curriculum also has some strengths in important areas. Thus, it is evident that there is a firm platform from which to build even better quality provision. Pupils' success in learning is now the key factor in the school's evaluation of teaching quality. In most lessons, pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic learners. This was seen, for example, in a Year 1 phonics lesson where the pupils were building expertise effectively in analysing words by a step-by-step emphasis of each sound unit. This was done rhythmically and with high-five-type hand signals to show the sound pattern.

In some lessons, such as in science, there is still too much emphasis on the use of worksheets, which can cap the achievement of some ability groups. Additionally, there can be too much teacher talk at the expense of opportunities for pupils themselves to think about, plan and discuss the approach to learning they will adopt and, later, to review their success. There has been recent improvement in this component of assessment, especially in the marking of pupils' work, and staff have adopted it as a priority for further improvement.

Vulnerable pupils are monitored carefully to ensure they can learn as well as all other pupils. The school collaborates appropriately with outside agencies and parents and carers to ensure equality of opportunity for these pupils. Parents and carers are unanimous that the school provides effective care, guidance and support and are keen for an increased involvement in their children's learning. The school has placed this priority high in its list of necessary improvements.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Some of the improvement and strengths identified in this report began to emerge before the new headteacher joined in September last. However, under her keenly focused steer, staff efforts have been redoubled and improvement accelerated sharply. Staff and parents and carers pay tribute to the headteacher's sensitive yet decisive approach to change, which is already bearing fruit. Questionnaire responses from staff and parents and carers include a long list of improvements and there are no murmurs of disquiet in them.

The school ensures that all forms of resources are used appropriately to ensure it gives sound value for money. The rationalisation of the leadership team is a case in point. The headteacher is determined to broaden the base of leadership so that staff talents are

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built upon to ensure totally effective leadership and management of the school. Changes have been made with this in view, although there has not yet been time for them to have impacted fully on provision and outcomes. Nonetheless, leaders and governors have a precise timetable of policy and system review, evaluation and updating to ensure improvement is maintained and existing strengths, such as the good quality safeguarding approach, sustained.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Improvements to provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage have been built successfully since the previous inspection. This is due to good leadership and management and a firm understanding of the needs of Reception children. Their welfare is promoted well, which results in good personal, social, and emotional development. The development of language and literacy skills is slower than that for other aspects of children's learning. This is due to the children's level of skills being well below that expected for their age when they start Reception. While they make steady progress in building such skills, there are still a number of gaps in their language and literacy knowledge and skills when they move to Year 1.

The children are enthusiastic learners and are keen to share their investigations, discoveries and new learning. The theme of dinosaurs which was initiated by the children is a current focus that has captivated their imagination. It has been successfully developed and harnessed to engage children in all six areas of learning with a degree of originality. The Reception children talk animatedly about the dinosaurs and some are learning some quite complex new vocabulary as they do this.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## **Views of parents and carers**

The strength of opinion of parents and carers is almost unanimously in favour of the school's work. One or two parents or carers are concerned with how effectively the school prepares their children for later education and how staff manage challenging behaviour. Inspectors judge that the school is preparing pupils satisfactorily for their next steps and that this, like the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, is improving well. They also judge that behaviour is good and that staff manage any inappropriate conduct well. Every parent and carer completing the questionnaire said their child enjoyed school and that, overall, they were pleased with their choice.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Iver Village Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 118 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	76	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	76	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	53	35	47	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	55	30	41	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	65	26	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	53	34	46	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	53	33	45	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	39	36	49	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	51	35	47	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	47	33	45	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	50	34	46	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	59	29	39	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	72	21	28	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Iver Village Infant School, Buckinghamshire SL0 9NW

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We thought you were friendly and well behaved. You shared your ideas about the school with us, which we found helpful in writing our report. We think your school is giving you a satisfactory education and that it has a number of good points.

- You make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards.
- Children in Reception enjoy their time in school and they do well.
- You are taught satisfactorily and are keen to learn.
- The adults in school look after you well.
- Your school is led and managed well and is improving quickly.
- Your headteacher is making sure you will do even better in the future.

There are three things we have identified for staff and governors to improve.

- Make sure your writing is of better quality than it is now.
- Give you plenty of chances to talk about your learning and to make sure your work is always hard enough.
- Allow your teachers to have a greater share in the leadership of the school.

We know you will help your teachers to make these improvements. To help them you could write a list of the ways in which you learn best and another one for the learning you find hard.

We hope you are successful in your education and wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

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