

## SUMMARY OF THE INSPECTION REPORT

**Weston Turville C of E  
Combined School**

Weston Turville  
Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire HP22 5RW

Telephone : 01296 613436

Headteacher: Mr G Norris

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Woods  
T12745

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> June 1998

This is a summary of the inspector's full report, which can be obtained from the school.

Under OFSTED contract number: 508270

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

## Introduction

- 1 Weston Turville C of E Combined School is a popular village school situated approximately three miles south east of Aylesbury. There are 252 boys and girls on roll including nine children who attend school part-time in the reception class. Most pupils come from the village with the majority from middle income homes. Most have attended the local pre-school or private nurseries. The school has nine full time teachers including the headteacher and two part time teachers.

## Main findings of the inspection

- 2 Weston Turville C of E Combined School provides a good education for its pupils in an attractive and welcoming environment. The school has a positive ethos and well defined aims, underpinned by a clear mission statement. These aims are achieved through the dedication and hard work of the headteacher, staff and governors. The work of the school is appreciated and fully supported by the parents.

## Pupils' standards of attainment

- 3 Children under five in the reception class receive a sound foundation for learning. Their attainment on entry is broadly average. By the time they are five children's standards of attainment are above those expected nationally in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. Standards are in line with national expectations in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. They make sound progress overall in all areas of learning as defined in the Schools' Curriculum and Assessment Authority's document 'Desirable Outcomes'<sup>1</sup>. However, there are insufficient opportunities for direct talk as children work during the day and for purposeful play or development of coordination skills, through a lack of appropriate equipment. Children under five are taught in a class together with pupils of statutory school age and are well prepared for work within the National Curriculum.
- 4 By the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 standards of attainment are above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Attainment by the end of both key stages is above national expectations in history and the expected requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. In physical education standards are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. In art, design and technology, geography, information technology and music attainment at age seven and eleven is in line with national expectations. Progress throughout Key Stage 1 is good in English, mathematics, history, physical education and religious education. Progress is good in English, history and religious education throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all other subjects.

<sup>1</sup>Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills.

- 5 By the time pupils leave the school aged twelve standards of attainment are above average in English and mathematics but are below average in science. This results from too little emphasis on advancing standards in experimental and investigative work. Attainment is above national expectations in history and the expected requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. Standards are in line with national expectations in art, design and technology, geography, modern foreign languages (French), music and physical education. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement on attainment in information technology. Progress in Year 7 is good in history and religious education. Progress is satisfactory in all other subjects except science, where it is unsatisfactory. In information technology there was insufficient evidence to form a reliable judgement.
- 6 Attainment in literacy throughout the school is good. Speaking and listening skills are well developed. Pupils listen carefully, speak confidently and make positive and relevant contributions to discussions. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils confidently express their points of view in discussions, argue and debate in a mature and sensible way. Reading is developed effectively throughout the school using a structured reading scheme and guided choice of books as pupils' skills develop. Reading skills are used extensively across the curriculum. Research skills are developed well and older pupils use the CD Rom in the library competently and independently. The oldest pupils are knowledgeable about books, authors and classic literature. Writing skills are used effectively for a wide variety of purposes, including stories and poems in English, as well as extended writing in many subjects.
- 7 The school places a strong emphasis on numeracy. Pupils practise mental arithmetic regularly and older pupils have a confident grasp of number patterns and relationships. Mathematical skills are used appropriately across the curriculum, for example, statistical analysis of census data in history and graphs in geography, although in science results tend to be recorded in simple tabular form. Scientific enquiry is used satisfactorily in other subjects, for example, examining artefacts and photographs to provide information about life in different times and places. The use of information technology across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Computers are used appropriately for reinforcement and some word processing, but the generally outdated equipment limits the value of the work, particularly for the older pupils.
- 8 Pupils with special educational needs are effectively identified and supported well throughout the school. Individual education plans set appropriate targets and are reviewed regularly. The majority of these pupils attain appropriate standards and make steady progress towards the targets set.
- 9 Pupils' behaviour and their relationships with each other and with the adults in the school are very good. These are strengths of the school. Their attitudes to learning and their personal development are good. Children under five in the reception class are well integrated into school life. They quickly develop confidence and are keen to do well. Pupils enjoy coming to school and respond well to teaching and learning. They are attentive in lessons, concentrate hard and take pride in what they are doing. Lively

discussions are a regular feature of many lessons and pupils cooperate sensibly and work well together. Pupils behave very well, both in classes and around the school. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are friendly, polite and well mannered. They show respect for property and each other, appreciating and sharing each other's successes. Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility. They show a strong commitment to the school, for example, through enthusiastic participation in sporting activities and school productions. Music, drama and sport make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Attendance is good, being above the national average. The majority of pupils arrive punctually and registration procedures make an efficient start to the day.

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### The quality of education

- 10 The quality of teaching for children under five in the reception class is satisfactory overall. Teaching throughout the school is almost always satisfactory. It is good or better in sixty-five per cent of lessons and very good in eight per cent of these. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in less than one per cent of lessons. Teaching throughout the school is characterised by good humour. A particular strength of the teaching lies in the very good relationships which exist between teachers and pupils. Teachers plan lessons carefully and generally match work well to the different levels of attainment of pupils within each class. Teaching is particularly good when teachers effectively communicate their enthusiasm for a subject to the pupils and a lively, stimulating atmosphere is produced. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage pupils well both in lessons and around the school. Only a small minority of lessons lack pace. In these lessons pupils spend too much time sitting passively listening to the teacher. Teaching is sometimes less effective when the same activity is provided for all pupils with insufficient challenge for the higher attainers.
- 11 The curriculum for children under five is based appropriately in the areas of learning and provides a satisfactory foundation for pupils to make progress at Key Stage 1. There is good provision for personal and social development, literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Provision for language, physical and creative development are broadly satisfactory, although there is limited opportunity for direct talk during the day or purposeful play both indoors and out. The curriculum for the remainder of the pupils in the school meets statutory requirements and is broad, balanced and relevant. It meets the needs of all pupils, promoting their physical, intellectual and personal development effectively. Pupils by the age of twelve are appropriately prepared for transfer to secondary school. A six year planning cycle covers the requirements of the National Curriculum appropriately, with topic work planned on a two year cycle. However, whilst there are policies in place for all subjects except history, these are not yet supplemented by suitable schemes of work indicating what pupils should learn in each year. Teachers plan effectively from one term to the next and ensure that pupils build on previous learning over the year but cannot ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are systematically built upon and developed throughout the school. Provision for extra-curricular activities is

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good and includes music and drama as well as sporting activities. There is a good range of educational visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum.

- 12 Overall provision for the arts is sound. It is good in music with visiting musicians, individual instrumental tuition and concerts in association with other schools. It is satisfactory in art, drama and literature, but there is limited use of artists in residence or art and poetry clubs to extend and enrich pupils' experience.
- 13 There are appropriate procedures for determining and recording pupils' attainment and achievement, although the school's policy on assessment is under review. On-going notes on the activities of children under five are regularly recorded and used appropriately to assess their attainment and progress. Teachers keep individual records of the attainment of pupils in their class. Information is recorded appropriately in pupils' folders and in portfolios of work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However there is no consistent format applied throughout the school with the result that information is not easily accessible from one teacher to the next. A new system for recording information about achievement and attainment is being developed to enable teachers to monitor progress more effectively. However, until schemes of work are in place assessment cannot ensure that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed systematically in each subject.
- 14 The school makes sound provision for the support and guidance of pupils. It provides a safe and secure environment. Parents support the view that their children like coming to school and are very supportive of the attitudes and values taught. All staff know the pupils well and pupils feel confident to approach adults for help and advice. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and there are good links with the support services. However, the current child protection policy is out of date as it names the previous headteacher as the designated child protection officer. Statutory requirements for testing electrical equipment on an annual basis is not being met; the last testing was carried out in March 1997.
- 15 The school has established strong links with parents and the community. The quality of the information made available to the parents is a strength of the school. Annual reports are comprehensive and thorough and give very good information on the progress, achievement and attainment of the pupils. Parents are fully involved in their children's learning; many help in school on a regular basis. They feel welcomed and that their contributions are valued. The school has an active parent teachers' association which works hard on its behalf. It provides valuable financial and material support, as well as social events, which have a positive impact on the quality of learning for the pupils.

## Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 16 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is based on a foundation of clear aims, values and attitudes which are well supported by parents. The school's mission statement 'to pursue wisdom within a Christian ethos' underpins the life of the school. Daily assemblies create a sense of occasion for pupils and provide good opportunities for reflection on values and religious beliefs. There is a clear teaching of Christian values as well as the celebration of other faiths and festivals. The school sets high standards for the moral development of pupils. They receive good guidance on the principles of right and wrong and clearly understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The school's spiritual and moral provision contribute to its effective promotion of pupils' social development in an atmosphere which is caring, safe, friendly and happy, and where the individual is respected and valued. Pupils' own cultural traditions are successfully explored through study in school and outside visits connected with their topic work. Pupils' opportunities for multi-cultural experience are limited, but a mullah from a local mosque and an Indian lady have visited the school to talk to and work with pupils. Pupils celebrate the diversity and richness of other cultures through many curriculum subjects, such as geography and history, and in assemblies.

## The efficiency of the school

- 17 The headteacher provides dynamic and committed leadership. He has a clear vision for the development of the school and has implemented many initiatives to improve standards in the time he has been in post. He is fully supported by a dedicated and committed senior management team and an enthusiastic and hardworking staff who all work effectively as a team. There are good relationships between the school and governors, who take a keen interest in its work. Governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities apart from ensuring electrical equipment is tested. The governing body has an appropriate committee structure and these committees meet regularly to discuss issues currently affecting the school. They are fully involved in the strategic decisions for school improvement but currently have no procedures in place to monitor their impact on standards attained within the school and consequently their cost effectiveness. Coordinator roles have been allocated appropriately and coordinators have clear plans for development of their subjects. However, many are relatively new to their roles and these plans are at an early stage of development. Monitoring of the curriculum, teaching and learning through examination of planning, pupils' work and classroom observation is undertaken by all teaching staff. These strategies are at an early stage of development but are already having a positive impact on expectations and standards in the school. The school development plan sets realistic targets for the improvement of the school but does not yet include full details of the specific costs involved.
- 18 There are good systems for financial control. The day-to-day management of the budget and administrative support in the school are good. The secretary efficiently manages the daily business of the school and provides good support to the teaching staff. The school is very clear about its

priorities and the budget is planned thoroughly taking full account of these. Strategic planning and financial management take careful account of potential changes to the school's budget in the near future. All specific grants are spent appropriately. The funding available for special educational needs is put to good use with additional money allocated from the general budget. Teaching staff are managed effectively and have appropriate responsibilities. The accommodation and resources available to the school are used well.

- 19 Overall the school manages its budget well and taking into account the relatively low unit costs, the good standards attained particularly in English and mathematics and the very good behaviour and relationships which exist throughout the school, the school provides good value for money.

### Key issues for action

- 20 The governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- further improve standards by:
  - completing and fully implementing schemes of work which clearly state the level of work to be expected in each year group
    - i. to secure the systematic development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding,
    - ii. to simplify the planning process for teachers;
  - continuing to develop existing assessment procedures to make them manageable and useful in
    - i. providing information on the attainment and progress of individual pupils,
    - ii. assisting in informing teachers' planning,
    - iii. raising expectations in all subjects;
- develop effective procedures to enable governors to monitor the impact of decisions for school improvement on standards attained within the school and consequently their cost effectiveness;
- ensure that provision for children under five is more appropriate to the desirable learning outcomes by providing better opportunities for direct talk and a suitable range of resources for both indoor and outdoor activities;
- ensure that the testing of electrical items in the school is brought up to date to conform with statutory requirements.

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

167

Number of questionnaires returned:

68

Percentage returned

41

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

|   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school           | 32             | 59    | 2       | 6        | 1                 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 24             | 56    | 9       | 7        | 4                 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well   | 6              | 41    | 46      | 4        | 3                 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught                                     | 7              | 54    | 17      | 16       | 6                 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress                                | 12             | 62    | 13      | 10       | 3                 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work                             | 18             | 59    | 16      | 4        | 3                 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons            | 29             | 37    | 24      | 9        | 1                 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home                   | 15             | 54    | 18      | 12       | 1                 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)                       | 16             | 60    | 20      | 3        | 1                 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour  | 15             | 63    | 16      | 3        | 3                 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school  | 41             | 41    | 14      | 1        | 3                 |

### Other issues raised by parents

19 questionnaires were returned with comments on the reverse. Parents at the meeting and in responses to the questionnaire strongly supported the attitudes, values and behaviour taught by the school and felt their children like coming to school. They felt they were kept well informed about the school and welcomed to become involved. In comments made on returned questionnaires several parents expressed appreciation of the work done by the new headteacher and staff. Several parents expressed concern over the size of one class. Inspection evidence did not find any significant effect on standards in this class as a result of the number of pupils. Other issues raised by parents were investigated by the inspection team.

*The governing body is responsible for drawing up an ACTION PLAN within forty working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the issues. This action plan will be sent to all parents of pupils at the school*



## THE INSPECTION

Weston Turville C of E Combined School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of the inspection is to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to help schools to improve the quality of education they provide and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. Inspection is also designed to give parents more information about their children's schools. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school.

The inspection was undertaken by an independent team of four inspectors, led by Mrs L Woods, under contract to the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

The team was required to report on the **standards** achieved by pupils, the **quality of education** provided by the school, the **efficiency** with which financial resources were used and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**.

The contractor for this inspection was:

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Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints, which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor, should be raised in writing with OFSTED by writing to:

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