

Uplands Manor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131184
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	360225
Inspection dates	24–25 January 2011
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	691
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Davies
Headteacher	Sue Gormley
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who observed 34 lessons taught by 26 teachers or other adults. They held meetings with groups of pupils, parents, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' progress and attendance, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 112 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are girls making sufficient progress in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2?
- Are the school's actions to improve attendance proving successful, especially in reducing persistent absenteeism?
- Are the school's leaders consistently setting sufficiently demanding targets for the school's performance?
- How effective are middle managers and governors in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school?

Information about the school

The school is much larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The majority of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with an above average proportion who speak English as an additional language, although the overwhelming majority of these pupils are fluent speakers of English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. A small number of pupils with special educational needs have speech and language difficulties. These pupils are supported by a resource base that is managed by the school.

The school has been undergoing building work since November 2010, which has resulted in the moving of the nursery to alternative rooms and disruption to the school's power and gas supplies. The school operates its own breakfast club. There is a Children's Centre on the same site as the school, which also has its own nursery. The Children's Centre is privately managed and subject to a separate inspection.

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

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Progress is satisfactory, but varies between classes and subjects. For example some classes make good progress in their reading but slower progress in their mathematics. These variations are a result of inconsistencies in teaching. Teaching assistants provide a consistently good level of support for pupils with statements of special educational needs, so they make good progress. The school's senior managers accurately identify the strengths and areas for improvement in lessons, but do not use the information to determine what is most effective in promoting pupils' learning so that they can ensure that all teachers are implementing the best possible practices. There are examples of outstanding teaching in the school, often provided by the excellent role models of the senior staff, but these are not disseminated widely enough to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently good level. Those pupils supported through the resourced provision make good progress because their teaching assistants are well trained and they receive a high quality of specialist support.

The school provides a welcoming and safe environment. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors how safe they felt at school, and how effectively any bullying was dealt with. They have confidence in the staff to act on any concerns they may have, and their parents and carers agree with their views. Pupils demonstrate a good ability to reflect on spiritual matters. They get on well with one another and cooperate very effectively when working in groups. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, and usually behave well in and out of lessons. However, behaviour is only satisfactory because a relatively high proportion of pupils are excluded. Many of these pupils have special educational needs, although none have disabilities or a statement of special educational needs. They do not receive the same level of support in lessons as those with a statement of special educational needs. The school has many different approaches to helping pupils modify their behaviour, but these are not always applied coherently, or early enough to prevent behaviour becoming a problem. Pupils' attendance is low, but improving. Persistent absenteeism is high because pupils and their parents and carers do not always receive timely support to prevent attendance falling to a worrying level.

The school has made steady progress since it was last inspected, and has satisfactory capacity to continue improving. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Targets for academic achievement are appropriately challenging, but the target for attendance is not demanding enough. Where leaders and managers have identified areas for improvement and taken action, there have been examples of notable success, such as in raising attainment in writing. However, reducing exclusions is not identified as a priority and the governing body play only a limited role in improving attendance.

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Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the variation in quality of teaching across the school and raise the proportion of lessons taught to a good or better standard to at least 75% by February 2012 by:
 - using lesson observations to identify what aspects of teaching are the most effective in promoting learning
 - ensuring all teachers use these aspects consistently in their teaching
 - making more widespread use of examples of outstanding teaching to model best practice for others.
- Raise attendance to 95% and reduce persistent absenteeism to less than 3% by July 2011 by:
 - providing more support to pupils and their parents and carers as soon as a downward trend of attendance becomes apparent
 - increasing the school's target for attendance to a more challenging level
 - ensuring governors play a greater role in monitoring and challenging the taking of holidays during term time.
- Reduce exclusions of pupils with special educational needs who do not have a statement of special educational needs by:
 - making this a whole school priority and drawing up plans to address the issue in the school development plan
 - increasing the use of targeted support from teaching assistants in lessons
 - developing a more proactive and strategic approach to managing behaviour.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their achievement is satisfactory. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average, as it is on leaving Year 6. There are very few differences in the progress made by the different groups of pupils in the school, including those from different minority ethnic backgrounds. Those with a statement of special educational needs or who are supported through the resourced based provision do well, while progress for all other groups is satisfactory. Girls' progress in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 is now similar to the boys'.

The learning observed by inspectors in lessons was satisfactory. Pupils are often enthused by the topics they study, and the great majority are keen to get down to work. In some lessons they are keen to move on to new tasks but are held back by the slower pace of the lesson. Behaviour is mostly good in lessons. When pupils are not challenged sufficiently by the work or do not understand what they are to do, they sit quietly rather than misbehave. Higher ability pupils relish difficult tasks that make them think hard. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs concentrate better than others because they are engaged by their teaching assistants. This is particularly true of those

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with speech and language difficulties, who are confident in communicating with their teaching assistants and play a full part in lessons.

Pupils are polite and respectful towards adults. They move around the school in an orderly and sensible manner. Pupils play a good part in the school community and readily take on responsibility. Their contribution to the school's anti-bullying policy has been most effective in ensuring that all pupils are aware of the impact on others of bullying. Outside of school their role is more limited, although there are some notable successes, such as the project to maintain the local brook. Punctuality to school and lessons is good. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, but are not always keen to adopt it in their daily lives, and this is especially true of the contents of their lunchboxes.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Some lessons are planned very well to take full account of pupils' needs. In one mathematics lesson in Year 1, for example, assessments were used exceptionally well to plan tasks for each of the six groups. The whole class was focussed totally on their work for the full duration of the lesson. In another lesson, pupils were given tasks they did not understand and the teacher did not check that pupils were working. Some teachers target questions at the most appropriate pupils and check their understanding, while in others only those with their hands up are asked, allowing other pupils to sit quietly and play little

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part in the lesson. Some lessons are exciting, such as the one that combined sport and mathematics or where the pupils were 'ghost hunters', but others lack such a stimulating context.

The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, with good provision for the talented in sports. Provision for personal and social education is effective, and backed up particularly well by the work of the learning mentors. The school maintains close ties with the Children's Centre that help children settle quickly to life in school. Pupils who join the school part way through their education are supported well, especially those who arrive with little English. They are linked to a teaching assistant and to pupils who speak their first language, so they are able to quickly join in the life of the school. Links with secondary schools are also effective, especially in continuing the support for those pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Excellent attention is paid to these pupils, whose circumstances are closely monitored and early interventions are made as soon as concerns arise. The breakfast club provides a good start to the day for pupils who choose to take up the opportunity. Although attendance is low, its impact on academic performance is limited because the school has good systems in place to ensure pupils catch up the work they have missed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

School's leaders ensure that all staff share a suitable drive for improvement. Data from assessments is used well to track pupils' progress and target support where it is most needed in order to ensure that no group falls behind. The school has successfully closed the gaps in performance of different groups, although provision for equality remains no better than satisfactory owing to the disproportionate number of pupils with special educational needs who are excluded. A strong and effective stance is taken against any forms of discrimination. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding. Members of the governing body have a good knowledge of its strengths and areas for improvement but do not always challenge senior managers to explain how improvements are to be made. Very effective partnerships are maintained with specialist services to support those with speech and language difficulties. However, specialist education welfare support only targets those pupils whose attendance falls below 80%, so that they are already persistent absentees before their parents and carers receive the specialist guidance they may need. The school has carried out a good audit of its needs for community cohesion and has clear plans for further improvement in this area. Some good actions are already being taken, such as the

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links with a French school and joint activities with other local schools, but evaluation of their impact is limited.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They join with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below the level expected for their age. Children make good progress in some aspects of their literacy and numeracy because a good amount of time and planning goes into teaching them. Children enjoy coming to school, where they cooperate and play well together. Boys make less progress than girls in their personal development. This has not been identified by the leadership, because data from assessments are not analysed in sufficient detail. Staff provide a caring and nurturing environment, where children feel safe and secure. The same variation in teaching is apparent as that in the rest of the school. Some lessons are imaginative and demanding, with tasks that are well matched to children's needs. Others do not allow children, especially boys, enough freedom which limits their independence. While the indoor area is used well, the outdoor area is underused. In particular, the planning for the use of the outdoor area focuses on the resources to be used, rather than what learning will be promoted. There is a good team spirit among staff. Links with parents and carers are strong. Checks on teaching have identified some areas for improvement, and these have been successfully addressed. However, monitoring and evaluation are not sufficiently comprehensive to improve provision and outcomes at a good pace.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A relatively low proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Those responding were particularly pleased with how much their children enjoyed school, the welcoming atmosphere, and how safe their children are at school. A few parents had concerns about the way that behaviour is managed. Inspectors followed up the concerns by checking behaviour in and out of lessons, talking to pupils and analysing the reasons for exclusions. This aspect is now a key area for improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Uplands Manor Primary 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 112 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 691 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	61	38	34	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	61	54	48	43	2	2	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	43	56	50	7	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	47	50	45	5	4	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	56	50	47	42	3	3	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	42	56	50	4	4	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	47	46	41	9	8	3	3
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)	42	38	58	52	4	4	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	41	58	52	5	4	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	38	48	43	13	12	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	38	53	47	12	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	49	44	48	43	6	5	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	52	47	42	2	2	2	2

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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



26 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Uplands Manor Primary School, Smethwick, B67 6HT

Many thanks for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We found that you are receiving a satisfactory education. You told us how safe and well looked after for you all felt. We agree. Your teachers take any concerns you have seriously and there is always someone who you can turn to with any problems. You behaved well in the lessons we saw but a few of you have to be sent home from school because your behaviour is not good enough. We have asked the headteacher and the other senior managers to give you more help in lessons to control your own behaviour, and also to identify as early as possible when you need support to stop your behaviour getting worse. You can help yourselves by always concentrating on your work, doing as your teachers tell you, and behaving as well as you can.

Many of you get on well together and know the difference between right and wrong. We were impressed by how thoughtful you were in assembly. Some of you do not come to school as often as you should. We have asked the headteacher and the other senior managers to contact your parents and carers as soon as your attendance starts to fall, and get specialist help for them more quickly if it is necessary. We have asked the governors to support them in this too. You can help a lot here, by always coming to school whenever you are fit enough.

You make satisfactory progress in your subjects, but you learn more in some lessons than in others. We have asked the headteacher and the other senior managers to find out what things make the best lessons so special, then use them in all lessons.

Your school is improving steadily. The headteacher and the other senior managers are good at improving the things they have identified as weaknesses but some things get missed. So we have asked them to include improving your behaviour as one of them and to aim for your attendance to be higher.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll
Lead inspector

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