

Upton Snodsbury CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116854
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	358044
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Farrell

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Hocking
Headteacher	Lorraine Barber
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. An assembly and six lessons were observed; three teachers were seen; and meetings were held with the chair of governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including records of pupils' progress, school development planning and safeguarding documents. They scrutinised 31 parental questionnaires.

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

- Inspectors examined how effectively the school has responded to the apparently slower progress made by pupils in Years 3 and 4, boys in mathematics, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- They looked at the effectiveness of curricular planning and delivery in the mixed-age classes, and how well activities are matched to pupils' individual needs.
- Inspectors examined the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision in encouraging children's progress in creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Information about the school

Upton Snodsbury CofE First School is smaller-than-average. Almost all pupils are from White British heritages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower-than-average. The school has Healthy Schools status and an Artsmark Gold award. Following the retirement of the previous headteacher, a new headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Upton Snodsbury CofE First School is a good school. It provides outstanding care, guidance and support, including through its excellent safeguarding procedures, and the way it engages parents and carers is also outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they feel exceptionally safe. One pupil spoke for the great majority in saying, 'I really enjoy school because I have a brilliant teacher to help me learn.'

The school is led and managed well and the new headteacher fully supported by the staff team has brought about considerable improvements in a comparatively short time. The ethos is exceptionally warm and welcoming and staff work as a closely-knit team. The well-planned curriculum is taught effectively in the mixed-aged classes, where great care is taken to ensure activities are engaging and pitched well to the different abilities and starting points of pupils. There are many opportunities within the school for pupils to develop economic skills, but the opportunities for real-life, practical experiences of business and enterprise in the local community are less developed and the school is keen to extend them. Excellent arrangements for pupils as they start school, pass through it and leave ensure that they are very well prepared for dealing with change and confident about the future. Good teaching and assessment are underpinned by very strong relationships between pupils and adults, and good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants. Careful planning is accompanied by good use of questioning. Occasionally the introductions to lessons are not as challenging as they should be, and this slows pupils' learning.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Where any pupils are considered to be making slower progress than expected, the reasons are identified and timely steps are taken to set this right. For example, boys have been given further support in the aspect of 'using and applying' mathematics; pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were given increased individual support; and pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefited from improved opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. In all these cases, progress has rapidly improved. In the good Early Years Foundation Stage, when careful monitoring of progress data indicated slower progress in creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world, this was vigorously tackled and rectified. For example, a space station was introduced to enhance creative development and a wide range of activities developed about the wider world, including other countries such as China.

Well-considered self-evaluation procedures are clearly related to information on pupils' progress and this leads to a clear cycle of monitoring and improvement. Although a few of the resulting judgements are modest, the school's leaders have a good awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. Since the previous inspection the school has improved well, particularly in terms of care, guidance and support. Coupled with the commitment of the

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staff and governing body to do even better, these strengths give the school a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' progress, and consequently raise attainment, by ensuring that the introductory tasks in every lesson are pitched at the right level of difficulty and challenge pupils to think hard about the aims of the lesson.
- Improve the curriculum by increasing pupils' practical experiences of business and enterprise in the local community, so they develop a fuller understanding of the world of work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with the skills expected for their age. Pupils were seen to be achieving well in all year groups during the inspection, and reaching above average standards. Different groups, such as minority ethnic pupils, and boys and girls, make equally good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn and achieve well because the school responds promptly to their needs, ensuring support is individually tailored to each pupil's specific requirements, including their personal interests. Pupils told inspectors of many activities they liked and clearly enjoyed school a great deal. Older pupils' questionnaires indicated the same. Attractive artwork enhances the physical environment of the school, adding to pupils' enjoyment. In a typically good literacy lesson for younger pupils, on writing a letter about a visit the previous day to Worcester, pupils were highly motivated and behaved excellently as the teacher questioned them well to remind them of the requirements of letter writing. Pupils drafted their letters with a clear understanding of what was required. In a good mathematics lesson for older pupils on using compass directions, pupils achieved well because the main activity was pitched to suit pupils working at different levels, the teaching assistant effectively supported individual pupils and small groups, and pupils' behaviour was exemplary and very well managed.

Pupils' very strong sense of security is echoed by their parents and carers. In lessons pupils act with great consideration for others, and around the school they help and support each other. They are kind and polite and generous in their response to the achievements of others. Pupils are particularly aware of the importance of physical health and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of after-school activities. They trust the adults in the school and know they can talk to them if they are worried. Pupils are very active in the school council and eco team and older pupils especially are proud of doing various jobs around the school. In the village, they contribute to summer and Christmas fairs and are developing a growing awareness of the contribution they can make more widely, for example raising funds for people in need abroad. Good attendance is supported effectively by the school and reflects the eagerness of children to come to school. Good economic well-being is supported by good progress in basic skills and good opportunities for teamwork. Particularly strong social and moral development contributes to pupils' excellent behaviour. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. In the mixed age-classes younger pupils are cared for by older pupils and learn in their turn the importance of social skills and kindness.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Teaching has a strong impact on pupils' good progress and achievement because the relationships between adults and pupils are very warm, and because lessons are interesting and capture pupils' interest so they do their best. Careful ongoing assessment informs the planning of subsequent lessons. Teaching assistants working very closely with teachers make a good contribution to lessons, especially with individual pupils and small groups. Lesson introductions are not always as well pitched as they should be to pupils' different abilities and sometimes opportunities are missed to recap the learning objectives before moving on to the main activities. Where this is the case, the challenge of lessons is reduced and pupils' progress slows.

The carefully structured curriculum leads to good outcomes for pupils, and its flexibility ensures that pupils in mixed-age classes experience work that is well matched to their different starting points. It offers a wide and balanced range of activities which pupils enjoy considerably, and the school is planning to extend the practical element through direct experiences of the world of work in local businesses. Personal and social education is especially emphasised, contributing effectively to pupils' excellent behaviour. Activities concerning safety are also given their full importance, contributing markedly to pupils' very strong feeling of being safe. As part of the good partnerships the school has developed, safety is emphasised as community representatives of the fire service and the police come

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into school to show how they help keep children safe and to explain risks to pupils. Pupils can readily name a range of activities they greatly enjoy, including the popular and well-attended after-school clubs.

Work with families and external support agencies is tightly woven into the school's provision. Great care is taken to effectively support pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable and their families. The vast majority of parents and carers feel the school helps them support their child's learning. Excellent guidance is provided for pupils' health and safety, for example pupils are very involved in developing risk assessments.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school leaders and managers embed ambition and drive improvement well. Teaching and learning are carefully monitored, and the school's records and a joint observation conducted during the inspection demonstrate that this provides an accurate picture. Effective school development planning is supported by close monitoring of standards. The governing body is closely involved in keeping a strategic overview of the school's work, and provides effective support and challenge. Parents and carers value the school enormously, as indicated by their questionnaire responses, and play their full part in ensuring its success. They are very well informed through various channels including the school's informative website. Partners contribute well to the pupils' academic progress and very well indeed to their personal development and well-being. Even after deep consideration, pupils could offer no evidence of any bullying or discrimination, but the school has clear procedures should any occur. Pupils are known very well as individuals and the school takes timely action should any child show signs of not progressing, so all make similar good progress.

Closely overseen by the conscientious governing body, safeguarding procedures are very robust. Documents are very carefully developed and procedures scrupulously followed. Community cohesion is supported effectively by well-considered plans that are carefully monitored and modified as necessary. This aspect of provision has a palpable impact on the strong feeling of community in the school and beyond. The school provides good value for money, as reflected in the good outcomes it achieves.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress, achieve well and behave excellently. This is because activities are very skilfully planned, staff work as a very cohesive team and the ethos is exceptionally warm and encouraging. The richly stimulating environment includes a construction area and a very popular 'space station'. In a good lesson on putting on a series of events and recounting them, children learnt well because the activity was introduced by a film clip of a space shuttle taking off. This fascinated them and gave the lesson momentum, and the teacher and teaching assistant worked very closely together to ensure children understood the task and could do their best.

Great care over safeguarding and excellent care and support of children are marked features of the provision. The mixed-age class of reception children and Year 1 pupils works very well. This is because the engaging activities are very well planned for different ages and abilities so all make good progress. Also the reception children learn personally and socially from the great care and kindness of their Year 1 class members. For example, a younger child accidentally tore a piece of paper trying to file it and a nearby Year 1 pupil immediately said, 'You've torn it - let me help.' When the teacher warmly praised a reception child for good writing, the whole class spontaneously applauded, delighting the child involved. Great care is taken to monitor the progress and well-being of children to ensure they get the best support. Relationships with parents and carers are exceptionally strong. The dedicated joint leaders have a very clear understanding of how to develop provision further, for example by physically extending and making fuller use of the outdoor area.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 proportion of parents and carers who returned questionnaires was higher than average and nearly all agreed with every statement, reflecting very positive views that matched the findings of the inspectors.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upton Snodsbury CofE First 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 51 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	69	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	86	4	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	62	10	34	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	83	5	17	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	83	5	17	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)	20	69	8	28	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	83	5	17	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	76	6	21	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	72	7	24	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	83	5	17	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 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.



21 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upton Snodsbury CofE First School, Worcester, WR7 4NH

It was lovely to meet you when my colleague and I inspected your school recently. Thank you for talking to me and letting me know your views. You told me about many things you enjoy, such as the kindness of the staff. Some older pupils said in questionnaires that they did not know how well they were doing at school, but when I spoke to you, you were able to give many examples of things at which you did well and enjoyed.

Upton Snodsbury is a good school. It cares for you and guides you outstandingly well. It keeps you very safe indeed. Your behaviour is excellent and you are very kind indeed to each other. The school is led and managed well. The teaching and the curriculum are both good. The provision for the youngest children is good, so they do well too.

There are two things the school could do better so I have asked the staff to do the following.

Make sure that the introductions to lessons always keep you on your toes and make you think hard.

Give you more opportunities to see how people work in your local community.

I am sure you will want to help in this by continuing to do your best in lessons, and when you do more business activities locally I hope you will make the best of these opportunities.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Farrell

Lead inspector

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