

Upton Cross Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111956
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	357012
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Richard Light

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	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Coleman
Headteacher	Mark Clutsom
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2010
School address	Upton Cross Liskeard Cornwall PL14 5AX
Telephone number	01579 362519
Fax number	01579 363785
Email address	head@upton-cross.cornwall.sch.uk

Age group	2–11
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2011
Inspection number	357012

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

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

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 15 lessons, observed the teaching of 8 teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and several groups of pupils. They observed the school's work including before- and after-school care, play time and lunch time. Inspectors also looked at a range of evidence, including data on pupils' progress, pupils' work, teachers' planning, minutes of meetings and information on the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning. Questionnaire responses from 42 parents and carers, 36 pupils and 8 staff were also analysed.

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

- The progress of all groups of pupils in mathematics.
- The impact of teaching and the use of assessment information and whether it has sufficient impact on raising attainment, particularly in writing.
- The effect of improvements to the curriculum and whether they have been successful in developing pupils' contribution to the school and wider community.
- The strength of the school's leaders and managers and the capacity to secure continued improvement in the school's performance.

Information about the school

The school serves a small rural village on the edge of Bodmin Moor in Cornwall. It is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Recently there have been some significant changes in teaching staff. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are catered for in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The school also has an early years unit onsite for children from the age of three. The governing body manages a breakfast club and after-school child care on the school premises. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average and most pupils have a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. An above-average number of pupils leave or enter the school other than at the normal times. The school has achieved a number of awards including Eco-Schools, International School Award, Healthy School Plus and Activemark.

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

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Upton Cross Primary School is a rapidly improving school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory and attainment has risen markedly due to the robust actions taken by leaders and managers to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' attainment is average and their learning and progress are satisfactory and improving quickly.

The school provides a caring environment which is effective in promoting pupils' good, and sometimes outstanding, personal development. Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and in the after-school care club. They are proud of their school. Parents hold highly positive views of the school and recognise the improvements that have been made.

Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and it is now good, although it is too early to see its full impact on pupils' achievement. Interesting lessons ensure that pupils enjoy learning. Previous weaknesses in pupils' literacy are being tackled effectively, although not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop extended writing skills across different subjects. The handwriting of pupils' written work is inconsistent across the school. Opportunities for pupils in Years 2 to 4 to apply their mathematical skills in real life contexts are undeveloped. Occasionally, learning outcomes are not clear enough in lessons so pupils are sometimes unsure what knowledge, skill or understanding they need to improve.

Children in the early years unit make satisfactory progress but have too few opportunities to develop and use early vocabulary. The new outdoor play area is a significant improvement to the learning environment. The school recognises that planning to use this resource to supplement classroom activities is in its early stages of development as are joint curriculum plans for all children in the early years unit and Reception class.

The school has introduced thorough systems for tracking and assessing the progress of pupils. Guidance for some pupils is often too broad so pupils do not always know what they need to do next to reach their target and there are too few opportunities for pupils to act upon marking and feedback. Strong and decisive action to improve the curriculum has developed pupils' contribution to their wider community exceptionally well. The curriculum has significant strengths in the very broad range of clubs and activities on offer that are successful in ensuring pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to live a very healthy and sustainable lifestyle. Strong links have been developed with partners in the local cluster and schools in London and Uganda.

The headteacher leads a committed staff team that shares the school's aims and vision. Good self-evaluation ensures that the school has an accurate understanding of its

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

strengths and areas for further development. The arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning, and school improvement plans, are well constructed and identify specific areas for development. Determined actions by leaders and managers at all levels, including members of the governing body, have helped ensure that rapid improvements since the last inspection have been made. The pace of improvement and strength of leadership demonstrate that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Up to 40% of 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?

- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - using pupils' targets more precisely to identify their next steps in learning
 - ensuring pupils are given opportunities to respond to, and act upon, marking and feedback
 - improving lesson planning so that teachers know clearly what knowledge, skill or understanding they want pupils to improve.
- Raise pupils' achievement in English and mathematics further by:
 - providing greater opportunities for extended writing
 - developing a consistent approach and guidance on improving pupils' handwriting
 - improving opportunities for pupils to apply mathematical skills in real life situations.
- Improve the quality of provision and outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - developing shared planning and practice between the early years unit and Reception classes
 - acquiring early language skills more rapidly by using daily observations and planning more precisely to build small steps in learning
 - making better use of the new outdoor provision to supplement class-based activities and build on children's personal interests.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen and is now average. Progress has accelerated particularly in the past year so that test results in 2010 for both English and mathematics were close to the national average. Pupils' attainment in writing has improved but less markedly. A good range of strategies have been introduced that are successful in developing pupils' reading skills. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and the school recognises that there is more to do to ensure consistently good progress. Pupils' learning in classes on inspection was good. Most lessons move at a brisk pace and contain a good variety of activities that match the needs of pupils well.

Pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities receive additional targeted support which is often of a high standard. These pupils make good progress in

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

their learning as clear systems to review individual education plans are effective in informing precise next steps in learning. Pupils' confidence is developed and progress accelerated when targeted activities challenge them to achieve the next step in their learning.

Pupils are good ambassadors for their school and they play an active part in the life of the school and wider community, for example through the school council, acting as playground buddies and raising funds for charity. In lessons, pupils demonstrate good social skills and work cooperatively with one another. Pupils' self-esteem is promoted well in assemblies which provide good opportunities for pupils' successes and achievements to be recognised. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as demonstrated by the above average attendance, because they feel valued and safe.

Information and communication technology is used well to stimulate pupils' enjoyment in learning. Pupils' writing of Cornish myths is edited and improved well through the use of netbooks. Similarly, pupils research minibeasts using the internet confidently to design imaginative prints in art. Year 4 pupils' understanding of profits and enterprise skills are enhanced well when the pupils grow and sell salad for the school summer fete. Occasionally, worksheets are overused in lessons and this restricts pupils' opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in context. Pupils' good interpersonal skills, together with their improving numeracy and literacy skills, ensure their preparation for the world of work is satisfactory.

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	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

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching has improved markedly since the last inspection and it is now more consistent due to the monitoring and guidance provided by senior leaders. A rich climate for learning exists in classes. Lesson starters are purposeful and generally identify clear learning objectives, although occasionally these are too vague. Teachers' good subject knowledge is used well to explain passive sentences in non-chronological reports that effectively follow up on pupils' recent residential experience in London. Pupils are encouraged to work independently by teachers. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning through well-targeted questioning, and deal sympathetically with behavioural issues.

Teachers have done much work recently to clarify pupils' learning targets and to involve pupils in discussing their progress. All pupils are aware of their targets for improvement and marking usually gives good advice to help them correct and revise their work. This is better in English than mathematics. Pupils are not always enabled to follow up suggestions for improvement and the targets for pupils are sometimes too general.

The curriculum has been revised and improved so that it enables pupils to make an outstanding contribution to their community. Effective links with schools in London and Uganda are successful in developing pupils' understanding of a multicultural world. Follow up work, for example in mathematics, uses ethnicity information from these schools well to develop pupils' data-handling skills. Pupils enjoy the very wide range of well-attended extra-curricular clubs offered, which are successful in enabling pupils to develop very healthy lifestyles. Pupils are very proud of their track record of sustainability and talk enthusiastically of their work in the valued eco-committee. Thematic and cross-curricular links are now well established and contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Trips and visitors are used well to develop pupils' understanding of how to live safe lives, including the use of the internet.

The strong teamwork focusing on pupils' personal needs and close partnership with parents, carers and other professionals underpin the school's caring environment. The individual education plans and detailed support, including good partnership arrangements with a wide range of external agencies, breakfast club and after-school care, ensure that the needs of pupils are met well. Careful analysis of the personal development of pupils, combined with good transition arrangements, ensures that pupils at risk of falling behind are identified early. Similarly, personalised transition programmes for those moving on from Year 6 prepare pupils well for their next stage of education. The high levels of care, guidance and support are effective in developing pupils' personal qualities and are increasingly helping pupils achieve better in their academic work.

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides clear and honest leadership which has helped parents and carers, staff and pupils to develop a strong sense of pride in the work of their school. The headteacher's open style of leadership is welcomed by all members of the school community. Pupils' successes are shared collectively and valued through displays, in assemblies and in newsletters. The school is an environment where everyone is treated with trust and dignity. The shared sense of purpose and commitment from staff and the governing body has played a major part in moving the school forward. As one parent commented, 'The school ethos is fantastic and their emphasis on being a member of society has encouraged a school full of considerate and kind children.'

All pupils take part in school life and senior leaders analyse progress data to check how well different groups are performing. Rigorous procedures are in place for monitoring teaching and learning and subject leaders have suitable plans to improve their areas.

Parents and carers receive good-quality, regular information about the personal care and progress of their children. One parent commented, 'My daughter is very happy here. We have watched her confidence grow which is also reflected in her school work.' This view summarises the feelings of the majority of parents who commended the positive aspects of the school's work. Partnership links to the local secondary college develop pupils' sporting skills well. As part of its inclusive and caring ethos, the school promotes equal opportunities and does not discriminate. School values are modelled well and taught by staff, and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and personal development.

The school has worked hard to improve the promotion of community cohesion. Very strong links exist with the local community and wider links with schools in London and Uganda have been well established in the past year. Safeguarding requirements are thorough and meet all the requirements.

The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support for the school. Governors care deeply about the quality of education pupils receive and are involved in monitoring the school's work through visits to lessons and reports from staff. Systems are in place to ensure statutory requirements are met and finances managed prudently. All staff are well trained in child protection procedures, and adults are fully vetted and checked before they are employed by the school. Staff, pupils and parents and carers say that they feel very safe and secure within the school.

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

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Year Foundation Stage staff form positive links with families at an early stage through the well-planned programme of induction and support combined with early partnership work with a range of agencies. Transition arrangements for children moving between the early years unit and Reception class ensure a smooth passage to the next stage of their education, although this process does not extend to the sharing of joint planning and activities. Parents and carers are provided with detailed information and guidance and this helps to ensure that children develop positive attitudes to learning. Detailed daily observations in Reception are beginning to be used more effectively to adapt planning more precisely to build small steps in learning and to better respond to children's needs and interests. Lessons build on previous experiences and are used to provide individual lessons in phonics (letters and sounds) and mathematical work. Creative development is nurtured well when children are encouraged to develop African musical 'bouncy' dances. Activities, such as making play-dough in the early years unit, foster a strong collective community with children working together and cooperating well with adults. In these situations early language exploration is sometimes lacking. Children are not always encouraged to share and develop their speaking and listening skills to further their vocabulary. The indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced, with the result that children are interested in, and enjoy, their learning. Arrangements to effectively plan for the use of the outdoor play area are very new and yet to be fully realised. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has sound subject knowledge and clear ideas on how to improve provision further, including targeted action to address weaknesses in the development of early literacy. With well-organised lessons and clearly established routines, children in Reception become happy and confident, making satisfactory progress to enter Year 1 with skills similar than those found nationally.

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

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 higher-than-average number of questionnaires was returned. One parent commented, 'Our children love coming to school. They have been given a wonderful start to their lives and we are delighted with their learning and progress.' Parents and carers hold positive views of most aspects of the school's work and recognise the safe and caring environment the school has created. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that communication could be improved. Inspectors noted that the school had good arrangements for communicating with parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upton Cross 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 70 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	55	17	40	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	69	12	29	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	43	18	43	5	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	57	14	33	3	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	26	62	15	36	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	52	16	38	4	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	69	13	31	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)	27	64	12	29	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	57	14	33	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	50	16	38	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	52	18	43	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	55	17	40	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	67	12	29	2	5	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



25 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upton Cross Primary School, Liskeard PL14 5AX

Thank you for the warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We were impressed by your good behaviour in lessons and around the school. We enjoyed seeing you in lessons, talking to you about your school and looking at your work.

We think that your school is improving quickly. All the adults in the school take good care of you and make sure you are very safe. Your attendance is good. You say you enjoy being part of the school community and the exciting activities and visits teachers plan for you. You look after each other thoughtfully and gain good personal skills to help you grow up, especially the importance of eating healthily, taking regular exercise and understanding environmental issues.

The governing body, headteacher and other staff are determined to ensure that the school continues to improve. Your teachers work hard to make sure you are making progress. The teaching you receive is improving and helps you develop the skills you need in English and mathematics. We have asked teachers to make sure they challenge you more by giving you clearer targets and plan times for you to act on comments in marking and feedback to help you make even better progress.

We have also asked the headteacher and his team to plan opportunities for you to develop your writing and to apply your mathematical skills in real-life situations. For the youngest children, we have asked the headteacher to make sure best use of the new outdoor area is made and children's early language skills are developed. In this way, they can all help to make your school an even better place in which to learn.

It was a pleasure to meet you all. Best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Richard Light
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.