

# Down Ampney Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115664
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379117
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Eadie

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	35
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brian Hedges
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathrine Hume
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Down Ampney Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5QR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 750294
<b>Fax number</b>	01793 750605
<b>Email address</b>	admin@downampney.gloucs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. He visited 10 lessons or part lessons and observed four teachers. The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils and the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body. He observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's development plan and policies and procedures, particularly those concerning safeguarding. The inspector analysed the data showing the progress that pupils are making and evidence from the school's own monitoring. Questionnaires returned by 18 parents and carers were analysed, as were others completed by 23 pupils in Years 3 to 6 and from seven staff.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress that pupils are making through the school, particularly those who join in later year groups.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics, to see how this compares with that in English.
- The levels of challenge for pupils, particularly those in Years 1 and 2 especially, to see how many attain the higher levels in the national tests.

## Information about the school

Down Ampney is a much-smaller-than-average, two-class village primary school. The headteacher took up her post in January 2011. The very large majority of pupils are White British and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is rising, but is still below average. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of those have speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual times is significantly above average. The village pre-school occupies a separate building on the same site, but this is managed privately and inspected separately.

**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

Down Ampney is a good school. There are a number of outstanding features, especially the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for pupils. Each child and his or her circumstances are known extremely well by all adults and strenuous efforts are made to ensure that all are cared for in the best possible way. The high level of support ensures that pupils feel outstandingly safe. They are extremely confident that they are in safe hands in school and that there is always someone to turn to and help them if they have a problem. Pupils play their part in the care as well. For instance, on the first morning of the inspection, three new pupils joined the school. By break time, one would not have known that they were new, as other pupils ensured that they were integrated fully into play and class.

Behaviour is outstanding, as pupils have an excellent awareness of how to behave and put this into practice and encourage others to do the same. The school is an extremely well-ordered and safe environment, where pupils are happy and show this by playing safely, with older pupils often playing with younger ones. The pupils make an excellent contribution to the smooth running of the school, taking on responsibilities willingly and by carrying out some of these tasks independently. For example, the librarians used their own initiative to come up with ideas to support the younger pupils in their reading. The pupils are also involved very well in the local community, for example, in helping the local gardening club to create a new community garden and running stalls at the village Christmas bazaar or fête. They raise significant sums for charities further afield, often on their own initiative.

Pupils are making good progress because of the good quality of teaching. Attainment is average overall. The major reason for that is that many of those who arrive in classes further up the school have levels of attainment that are below the expectations for their age. The school does well to enable those pupils to catch up to reach average levels. While still good, pupils' progress in mathematics is not as good as that in English. Pupil's attainment is lower in mathematics, although still broadly average. The school has recognised the issue and raising attainment in mathematics is a current focus. In particular, work is being done to increase pupils' speed at recalling basic number facts. There are occasions when there is insufficient challenge in mathematics lessons, particularly for the more-able, and when pupils sit for too long as a whole class listening to the teacher instead of getting on with their own tasks. Children of Reception age make good progress and the Early Years Foundation Stage has recently satisfied the exacting criteria for the Bristol Standard for provision for children of this age.

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The school has developed highly effective relationships with parents and carers, which is evident in their exceptionally positive responses to the questionnaires. Very good use is made of technology to communicate with parents and carers. For instance, one parent who works abroad often learns about what his children are doing on Twitter before he hears about it from his wife. Despite the excellent relationship and the school's best efforts, attendance is only average, although most pupils have excellent attendance records. The school knows it needs to work with parents and carers to improve rates of attendance.

There is a strong desire to continue 'on the upward path', shared by all staff and the governing body. The new headteacher leads the drive for improvement and has given it fresh impetus. All staff say they know what the school is trying to achieve and are involved in the push for improvement and the process of self-evaluation, along with the governing body. The school recognises the need for a fuller contribution from both staff and the governing body in that process as an area for development. All share a very clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, given the good progress being made, the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress in mathematics by:
  - developing a scheme to improve pupils' facility for a quick recall of number facts
  - ensuring pupils, especially the more-able, are consistently given work that matches their abilities and provides them with good levels of challenge
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to work actively at tasks, rather than listening to the teacher.
  
- Work together with parents and carers to improve rates of attendance.

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

**2**

Pupils' learning in lessons is typified by enthusiasm and earnest endeavour. Pupils are keen to learn because of the excellent relationships between them and all adults. In a French lesson in Years 3 to 6, there was considerable enthusiasm as the pupils were recalling colours in French while playing a team game. Similarly, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils were keenly writing their own descriptions of their morning routine, making them lively and interesting by using colourful adjectives correctly. In a lesson with the youngest children, they were enthusiastically matching number symbols to the number of objects they had counted. A variety of activities retained their interest well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress, as a result of the careful plans that are made for their learning and the support they receive in lessons.

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Pupils are developing very well into thoughtful and sensible youngsters who have a keen sense of their place in society and their consequent responsibilities. They have very good knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and many put this into practice in their daily lives, for instance, by taking part in the good variety of after-school sporting clubs. However, they do not always make good dietary choices. Pupils’ independent working, teamwork and leadership skills are developing well in preparation for their future lives. Their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are improving well. Pupils are interested in the world around them, but do not have a well-developed awareness of the range of cultures represented in the United Kingdom.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers plan well for the range of ages in their classes and staffing levels are high, enabling pupils to be taught in smaller groups for the key subjects of English and mathematics. That is very effective in progressing pupils’ learning. However, on a few occasions, when work is not matched sufficiently precisely to the range of abilities in classes, this slows the learning, particularly of the more-able pupils in mathematics. A particular strength in teaching is the way that teachers use assessment information to adapt their planning, based on the success or otherwise of previous learning. The teachers set pupils clear targets in writing and mathematics, so that the pupils know what they need to do to improve. However, marking is not always used consistently to support those targets.

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

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The curriculum is interesting and varied and a thematic or topic-based approach is being developed. Pupils enjoy the topics being covered and are enthusiastically involved in them. The school recognises the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills more regularly in their topic work.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Their needs are identified early and good use is made of outside agencies if necessary. Extremely good use is also made of other agencies to support potentially vulnerable pupils and their families, which contributes well to the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. A good example is the work with an educational welfare officer to improve attendance and rates of attendance are significantly higher than this time last year as a result. Very well-targeted support for all pupils has enabled them to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

There is a strong sense of ambition for the school to take that 'next step forward'. It is shared by all staff and the governing body and led ably by the new headteacher, who has refocused the drive for improvements well. The governing body is well informed and, through regular visits to the school, has good, first-hand knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. It is involved particularly well in ensuring health and safety are a priority and, consequently, safeguarding arrangements are good. All safeguarding procedures are secure and reviewed very regularly.

Equality of opportunity has a high priority and all staff are keen to ensure that all pupils have the same experiences and opportunities. That aim is mostly successful, although a few, more-able pupils are, occasionally, not doing as well as they might. The school is a very close-knit community and plays a full role in village life. There is an extremely good awareness of the local community. Although there are good links further afield, for example, with a school in Brno in the Czech Republic and one in Tanzania, pupils' awareness of the culturally and ethnically diverse nature of Great Britain is slightly less well developed.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The few children in the Early Years Foundation Stage experience a good provision and make good progress. The practice of separating them from older pupils to learn on their own for sections of the day is successful in enabling learning to be matched more closely to their needs. For instance, during the session when the pupils in Years 1 and 2 were learning their letters and sounds, the Reception-aged children were working at letter recognition, starting with the letters of their own name. Similarly, while the older pupils in the class were learning data-handling skills in mathematics, the younger children were counting objects and matching their count to the correct number symbol.

The classroom is well organised and the secure outdoor area is used well to enhance learning in a number of areas of the curriculum. Careful records are kept of gains in children's knowledge and understanding, although parents and carers have a more limited involvement in the process.

The setting has recently satisfied the criteria for the award of the Bristol Standard successfully and the submission of evidence for this was particularly thorough. It showed a very clear analysis of the strengths of the setting's provision and contained good plans for further improvement. There are very good links with parents and carers, who receive excellent information giving very clear guidance on how they can support their children's learning. There are good links with the adjacent pre-school group, from which most of the children come.



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

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

## Views of parents and carers

The response rate to the questionnaire for parents and carers was high and responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 100% agreeing with most of the statements. Several made affirmative comments, such as 'Down Ampney provides a stimulating and nurturing environment.' Another said 'The school is very responsive and quick to act on concerns or suggestions.' No significant concerns were expressed by parents or carers.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Down Ampney C of E 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 inspector received 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 35 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	61	7	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	6	33	12	67	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	39	11	61	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	56	8	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	10	56	8	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	67	6	33	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)	9	50	7	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	11	61	7	39	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	50	8	44	1	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	72	4	22	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	67	6	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	12	67	6	33	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



30 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Down Ampney C of E Primary School, Cirencester GL7 5QR**

Thank you so much for the way you welcomed me when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you very much and hearing what you think of your school. It was clear that you enjoy it a great deal and I am not surprised because it is a good school. These are some of the best things I found about your school.

- Adults look after you exceptionally well and keep you safe. You told me that there is always someone to turn to when you have a problem.
- You behave outstandingly well and are developing into extremely sensible and responsible young people who help a great deal around the school and in the local community.
- Your parents or carers are extremely well informed about what is going on in school and about how they can support your learning.
- You are making good progress in lessons because you are being taught well.
- Your headteacher, the governing body and staff have good ideas on how to continue to improve your school.

There are two things I have suggested need to be improved. You are not doing quite as well in mathematics as in English and are not sufficiently quick in recalling your mental arithmetic facts. You are sometimes given work that you find too easy or too hard, so I want teachers to make sure that they set work that is just at the right level for each of you, particularly those of you who find mathematics easy. I think you could make faster progress if lessons contained shorter times when you sit listening and more time getting on with your tasks. A few of you do not attend school regularly enough. You can all help by making sure you learn your multiplication tables and other mathematical facts and making sure you attend school regularly. I know you will continue to work hard.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie  
Lead inspector

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