

Upton St James Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113402
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	378699
Inspection dates	9–10 January 2012
Lead inspector	Rowena Onions

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Gabbott
Headteacher	Claire Pryn
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 December 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Rowena Onions

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Eleven lessons were observed and five teachers and some teaching assistants were seen teaching. Meetings were held with pupils, governors and staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at data about pupils' progress. In addition, she considered the school improvement plan, reports from the local authority and a range of other documentation. Twenty-six responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaire were received and analysed, together with responses from 45 pupils and 13 staff to their respective questionnaires.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Only a few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-above average, as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school at other than normal transition times is also well-above average. Over the last four years, more boys than girls have attended the school. Reception-aged children are taught in one class. Other pupils are taught in classes covering two age groups. The school has both breakfast and after-school clubs managed by the governing body. Pupils' attainment has exceeded government floor standards in each of the last three years.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Upton St James is a good school. The vast majority of pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Because there is very well-targeted support, both in class and through additional provision, pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- The progress of a small number of more-able pupils is more variable. They make good progress in learning to read and some make good progress in writing and mathematics, but there remains a small number for whom progress is only satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching pupils receive is good. Relationships are strong, so pupils are managed well and lessons are conducted in an environment that enables them to learn.
- In the main, time is used well, with lessons being conducted briskly. There are, however, occasions when pupils do not have enough time to complete work in a well-paced way.
- Through target setting and marking, pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work, and are keen to do this. The helpfulness of marking is not consistent, however, because it is not always sufficiently precise in showing pupils exactly where and how they could make improvements.
- Pupils report feeling safe and secure in school. Their behaviour is good and is instrumental in ensuring the school is a harmonious community.
- As a result of well-targeted actions to bring about improvement, rates of progress have increased significantly over the last four years and continue to rise. This, and the good teamwork between the headteacher, staff and the governing body, mean that the school is demonstrating good capacity for further improvement.
- Within overall good leadership and management, the headteacher provides excellent, dedicated leadership and is a significant driving force in the way the school has improved and continues to do so.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Ensure that all more-able pupils make the best possible progress by setting clear expectations for what they should achieve in all lessons.
- Improve the consistency of marking in showing pupils more precisely where and how to improve their work.
- Ensure that time in lessons is used efficiently by keeping introductions to a suitable length and by adjusting the duration of lessons in response to the demands of the work, so that pupils have enough time to complete their tasks.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Reception class successfully build on starting points that are well below age-related expectations. By the end of the year, many attain the goals expected for their age. The progress children make in personal and language development is particularly good. Throughout the school, pupils, including those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils making expected progress over Years 3 to 6 exceeds the national average. In class, pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves well. For example, older pupils were able to draw on previously learned approaches to help them effectively plan the writing of a story. Pupils enjoy the challenge of problem solving and through this learn to apply skills and knowledge. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils were fully engaged in attempting to find three consecutive numbers which added up to given target numbers, thus practising basic skills in an engaging, meaningful way.

The school is very successful in ensuring that pupils who join the school at other than normal transfer times, including those for whom English is an additional language, are helped to settle and make good progress. The more variable progress of a small number of more-able pupils is, however, evident in some lessons when the learning of this group is not maximised by the setting of clear expectations. Although small year groups mean attainment fluctuates, by Year 6 it is broadly average. The school places due importance on the development of reading, with well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn basic and more advanced skills. Consequently, pupils' attainment in reading is broadly average by Year 2, and above average by Year 6. Parents and carers agree their children are making good progress and pupils are confident they are helped to steadily improve.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are expected to work hard and they respond well, making good efforts to complete the work set. There are occasions, however, when they are not given time to do this, either because the teacher has taken too long in introducing the work or because the planned lesson is too short to permit it. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to explain new

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concepts clearly, an aspect which pupils commented on as being a particular strength of their lessons.

A recently revised curriculum focuses on making work relevant to pupils, as well as helping them build useful, transferable skills. Teachers plan work that stems from the pupils' interests, thus encouraging them to want to work hard. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, for example, pupils were motivated to develop investigative skills and their vocabulary because they were investigating and describing toys. In the Reception class, where currently more than 70% of the children are boys, counting was successfully encouraged by asking the children to count the number of goals they scored when playing football. Such activities ensure that pupils develop curiosity about the world and interest in learning new things. Pupils are encouraged to develop and use good personal skills through, for instance, working in pairs and groups. These features support the promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Teachers use the knowledge they gain from regular and accurate formal assessments and from day-to-day observations to plan lessons that meet the needs of the vast majority of pupils well. However, there are a few occasions when the teachers' expectation for the more able is not made clear to the pupils and they are not able to fully target their efforts appropriately. Marking, though evaluative and aimed at telling pupils how they could improve their work, is not always precise enough in giving advice, for example, by commenting that the work could have been improved by adding more adverbs, instead of showing the pupil where these could have been included. The good skills of teaching assistants are used well, especially in promoting the progress of less-able pupils. Parents and carers agree that teaching is good.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school promotes the good behaviour and safety of pupils in numerous ways. Pupils have opportunities to talk about their feelings. They are fully confident that issues arising in school will be dealt with and that help will be given to assist them in dealing with problems which stem from outside school. The safety and well-being of pupils is given high priority. Work to improve attendance has been highly successful, with rates of attendance rising from well-below average three years ago to above average over the last year. The school's breakfast club provides a valuable service in promoting both good attendance and pupils' well-being. Because the school is proactive in helping pupils understand how to avoid bullying, both pupils and parents report there is no bullying in school. Pupils are clear, however, what they should do should it occur. Strong personal, social and health education ensures that pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school. It also helps pupils to develop socially, morally and spiritually. For example, as part of their work, two pupils helped to organise a toy sale which raised funds for a national charity and the school.

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Behaviour in school is good. Parents and carers agree that this is the case. Pupils respond well to expectations of behaviour and are generally polite and anxious to please. They are respectful of each other, irrespective of background, and there have been no incidents of racism in school. The school has a number of pupils who have difficulty in controlling their behaviour. It is successful, through clear expectations and through additional support, in helping these pupils improve their behaviour and to achieve well. The school continues to work hard to assist pupils to become even more adept in managing their own behaviour in a range of situations.

Leadership and management

The school is well led and managed. Leaders, staff and governors hold high expectations of themselves, the school and of pupils. Accurate school self-evaluation is based on rigorous and regular checking of the quality of teaching and of the progress that pupils are making. Action plans to guide school improvement are detailed and contribute well to the improving outcomes and provision. The school has paid good attention to recommendations made during the last inspection and has improved its overall effectiveness. The professional development of staff has been a particular and successful focus. Over the last two years there have been many improvements, most significantly in raised rates of progress, especially in writing, in the quality of teaching and in improved attendance.

Data about pupils' progress are used very well, both to check that provision is being successful and to target extra help and support as required. In this way the school ensures good equality of opportunity. The school has already put in place strategies to ensure that all more-able pupils make consistently good progress, and there is evidence that these are beginning to be successful. Parental approval is high, with almost unanimously positive opinions being expressed in questionnaires completed for the inspection. The school is increasingly successful in engaging with a wide range of parents and carers and continues to seek ways of furthering this. The revised school curriculum is good. It successfully promotes good progress by providing pupils with skills to use in many contexts and by supporting many aspects of their personal development. Consequently, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is, however, correct in continuing to work to improve pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage is suitably balanced and supports children's good progress. The governing body fulfils its role well, both in holding the school to account for its performance and in supporting improvements. Safeguarding is robust and ensures the well-being of all.

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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



11 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upton St James Church of England Primary School, Torquay, TQ1 4AZ

I really enjoyed my time in your school and one of the highlights was talking to you. You will be pleased to know that I agree with you that yours is a good school.

These are some of the things I liked best.

- You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You work hard and want to succeed.
- You receive good teaching that helps you to be interested in what you are doing.
- Everyone in school takes good care of you. This makes you feel very safe and teaches you how to take good care of yourselves.
- You behave well and this helps you to learn in class.
- Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body have worked very hard to make improvements to the education you receive.

To make things even better I have asked your headteacher, governors and teachers to do these things.

- Make sure that pupils who find learning easier make the best progress they can in all lessons.
- Give you more precise information about how to improve your work.
- Make sure that lessons are organised so that you are given the right amount of time to complete your work.

You can help to do these things by continuing to work as hard as you can.

Thank you again for the way you made me feel at home in your school. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rowena Onions
Lead inspector

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