

# Upton Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	113671
<b>Local authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	378740
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Susan Mann HMI

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jayne French
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Nigel Helm
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Guest Road Upton Poole, Dorset BH16 5LQ
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<b>Fax number</b>	01202 624659
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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	13–14 June 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378740



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Mann

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Anderson

Additional inspector

Dean Pomeroy

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent time in classrooms observing how pupils learn and they visited a total of 21 lessons and also listened to pupils read. Inspectors observed 11 teachers in classrooms during the inspection, and saw a number of teaching assistants working with pupils. Inspectors looked at pupils' work, and observed them at lunch and playtimes, as well as in assembly and in the breakfast club. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and senior leaders. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and observed the school's work. Inspectors looked at some of the school's documentation, including previous and current data on achievement, policies and procedures, development plans, and minutes of meetings. Inspectors reviewed the responses given on 94 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff.

## Information about the school

Upton Infant School is larger than the average-sized infant school. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and has been in post since January 2011. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has doubled in the last three years and is now just below nationally found levels. A small proportion of pupils are helped in their learning by a level of support known as school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs. Almost all pupils have British White backgrounds and very few have English as an additional language. The governing body operates a breakfast club before the start of the school day, and an after-school club is provided by Upton Junior School, which is located nearby and does not form part of this inspection. The school holds a number of awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Plus, the Activemark, the Bronze Eco-schools Award and the Artsmark Gold.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Upton Infant School is a good school. Pupils have highly positive experiences in a caring and happy environment. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say they would recommend this school to others. Leaders have effectively implemented a number of significant changes over the past two years, which have resulted in improved standards. The school is not outstanding because several key initiatives have not yet had enough time to result in sustained improvements in teaching and the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is developing. An engaging, topic-based curriculum provides an imaginative and effective framework for pupils' learning.
- Behaviour is good. The vast majority of parents and carers believe their child is safe at school and inspectors support this view. A particular strength is the exemplary provision for those pupils who are facing challenging circumstances, which gives them excellent emotional support in a nurturing environment where they can relax and talk about their worries.
- Achievement has improved from standards that were broadly average overall. Pupils now make good progress from their starting points, especially in reading and mathematics and attainment is above average by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is of good quality, with some instances of teaching that are outstanding, and some that are satisfactory. Teachers demonstrate positive relationships with pupils. Most have high expectations of pupils' abilities to secure good progress, although this is not consistently the case. Marking and feedback help pupils to know how well they are doing, although the use of targets for all subjects has yet to be fully embedded.
- Rigorous yet supportive monitoring of teaching has improved performance in the classroom. Leaders have a clear view of priorities and are focused on the needs of all groups of pupils. Good performance management arrangements link with development planning and so promote consistent improvements across the school. Leaders had already identified the areas highlighted for development by the inspection process. For example, plans are in place to revise the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage because it does not provide sufficient opportunities for independent learning in its present form.

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

- Enhance the quality of teaching to ensure that all lessons are consistently good or better by:
  - embedding the use of targets so pupils have an increased understanding of what they have achieved and what they need to do in order to improve further
  - ensuring all teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils, so all can achieve their full potential.
  
- Develop the organisation of the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide greater opportunities for independent learning by:
  - implementing existing plans to increase the proportion of child-initiated learning for children in Reception Year
  - making greater use of the outdoor environment in the delivery of children's learning.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good progress during their time at school, having entered Reception with levels of skills that are below those typically expected for their age. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average. Data indicate a clear upward trend in achievement, with sustained strong performance in mathematics. In the last few years, pupils' performance in reading has lagged behind that in writing and mathematics. However, the school has made reading a priority over the last year and consequently, rapid improvements have been made. This view is supported by standards of work seen in the classroom. The achievement of all groups of pupils is rigorously monitored to enable the provision of targeted support. As a consequence, all pupils are doing well, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make strong individual progress as a result of support which is often exemplary.

In the classroom, pupils show enthusiasm for their lessons and participate well. One parent or carer explained, 'My child loves coming to school so much that she gets grumpy when I tell her it is the holidays.' Pupils' attitudes, work and reading skills support the picture of good progress indicated by the school's performance data. Most pupils receive a good level of challenge in lessons because teachers know their abilities well and ensure pupils learn at a rapid pace. As a result, more-able pupils do well over time, especially in writing and mathematics.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress overall and exceed the expected levels, particularly in their personal and numeracy development. Their progress towards the early learning goals in communication, language and

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literacy has improved greatly over the past year. Children are confident in their understanding of phonics; most know their letter sounds and can write competently as a result of daily phonics sessions. Many children readily talk about vowels and consonants that make up words. Parents and carers agree with this positive picture across the school, and almost all say their child is making good progress at school.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers deliver interesting lessons which pupils enjoy. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers believe their child is taught well, and pupils report that they enjoy their learning. The inspection supports this view. Teachers make good use of assessment data and have an accurate view of pupils' learning and accurately match tasks to pupils' abilities. This supports the good progress seen in most lessons. It also highlights where intervention is needed to give extra help to some pupils and has resulted in uniformly good achievement for all groups of pupils where none is at obvious disadvantage.

In the best lessons, all pupils are enthused by active learning at a rapid pace, where the teacher makes skilful checks on progress during the lesson and moulds teaching accordingly. For example, pupils learning how to add two-digit numbers succeed because explanations are clear and they are eager to do more sums. Where teaching is less strong, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of the quality of work produced; on these occasions a few pupils complete tasks too quickly and without enough thought about how to extend their ideas further. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for their learning and have a firm understanding of how to complete tasks successfully. The implementation of individual pupil targets is in its early stages, and does not fully help pupils to know how well they have done, and what to aim for next.

The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is effective and tailored to meet individual needs. Teaching assistants are used well and strong support programmes are presented consistently. For example, targeted support by the speech and language assistant has led to improvements and higher attainment. Trained teaching assistants work individually with pupils who need reassurance and additional opportunities to practise their reading and comprehension skills, and give meaningful encouragement so pupils become confident readers.

In Reception Year, children are settled and happy. Teaching rightly prioritises learning in phonics and numeracy. Children generally engage well with these sessions and make good progress. A very small minority of children spend too long sitting on the carpet or at tables and, on occasion, their attention drifts away from the task in hand. The school has already recognised the need to implement more child-initiated learning and make further use of the outdoor environment to meet the needs of these young children better, and plans are well underway to address this matter next year.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils say they feel 'really safe' at school. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare. Pupils believe that staff deal effectively with any issues that arise. They know what to do if they feel insecure, for example using playground 'friendship stops' if they feel lonely, or 'worry boxes' to discreetly highlight concerns that are then sensitively handled by staff. Pupils in need of emotional support are exceptionally well supported by thoughtful initiatives, for example 'pony therapy'. Exemplary emotional learning support is delivered by trained staff in the extremely caring Monkey Club.

Behaviour around the school and in the playground is good, and school records indicate this is almost always the case. Pupils are courteous and show great respect to one another and to adults, saying 'thank you' when someone moves to let them go past, or when sharing resources without prompting. In lessons, behaviour is usually good. Pupils apply themselves to tasks well. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour. On occasion, some more-able pupils do not show enough independence in their learning to seek out further tasks once set work has been completed, and this prevents behaviour from being outstanding overall.

The school works effectively with parents to maintain and improve on above average levels of attendance, often going above and beyond the usual routes when family circumstances make it difficult for children to attend. Lessons are not disrupted by latecomers as almost all pupils are consistently punctual.

## **Leadership and management**

Leaders of the school have been conspicuously successful in driving improvements through accurate evaluation and ambitious improvement planning. They can demonstrate many successful initiatives that have had a positive impact on how well pupils achieve, for example the reorganisation of the curriculum and teaching styles. All staff are supportive of these changes and proud to be part of the school, making comments like, 'The school just keeps getting better.' Many support the view that the headteacher 'is a breath of fresh air – his enthusiasm filters through the whole school'. The governing body fulfils its role well. Governors provide strong support while holding the leadership team to account to ensure rigorous monitoring. All leaders have high aspirations for the future of the school. As a consequence, the school has good capacity to improve further.

The topic-based curriculum provides memorable experiences for all pupils, while favouring an appropriate bias towards literacy and numeracy. A creative approach ensures pupils have great fun while they learn. 'Sparkly starters' ignite pupils' interests at the start of each topic and motivate them well. For example Reception Year children were fascinated to hold lizards and snakes; older children have learned about their own community and local environment through studying 'Unbelievable Upton'; and pupils and staff dressed up to begin their 'Superheroes' topic which covered learning about human biology.

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All practice gives high regard to the overall well-being of each pupil, especially those with significant needs. This leads to an exceptionally caring provision which is a very strong aspect of the school. Pupils are reflective, often showing a mature level of understanding of one another's needs. They celebrate local and cultural events, for example preparing for the school's own diamond jubilee. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well. Many take on areas of responsibility, for example sitting on the school council or acting as 'scooter lollipop people' to keep pupils safe as they leave at the end of the day. Safeguarding arrangements are robust, and effective procedures for protecting children's welfare are in place. Teaching is rigorously monitored and professional development is given high regard to promote further improvements. Robust analysis of achievement data enables leaders to check all pupils are doing well regardless of their backgrounds or individual needs, and as a result of this any gaps in progress between groups of pupils have already closed. The school promotes equality and diversity well and incidences of discriminatory behaviour are extremely rare.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are happy with the school. Successful partnership working between home and school is well established. Many parents and carers appreciate the support provided with their child's education through informative sessions such as 'Phonic Fridays' and 'Magical Maths', as well as the good quality childcare 'before school' provision, which children also enjoy. One parent or carer summed up the commonly held view, writing, 'We have found Upton Infant School to be the most wonderful start to our child's education.'

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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](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.

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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.**



15 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Upton Infant School, Upton BH16 5LQ**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed speaking with many of you and seeing how hard you work. We especially enjoyed hearing you sing so beautifully in assembly. These are the reasons why we think Upton Infant School is a good school.

- Your teachers do a good job in making sure you learn well in literacy and in mathematics and your lessons are usually interesting. They also make sure your other learning has lots of variety so that you can do different things like handling Stevie the lizard, or dressing up as pirates.
- Most of you work hard in lessons, and as result, you are doing well in your reading, writing and mathematics.
- We think your headteacher, governors and other leaders of the school have good ideas about how to make the school better. There have been quite a few changes recently, such as the building of the scooter trail and the development of the woodland areas. All the changes have been successful in helping you to learn better and enjoy school even more.
- We think you all behave well at school and you are usually kind to one another. We were impressed with how well you understand how to keep yourself safe when running around and playing on the fitness trail at playtime. We enjoyed seeing the Monkey Club and think that it is very helpful for those pupils who use it. The adults who work at the school try hard to make sure you stay safe when you are at school, and they look after you well.
- We have asked your headteacher, governors and staff to make the school an even better place for you all. We have suggested that they make lessons even better and that you are all given targets for your literacy and mathematics work. We have also asked your headteacher to give reception children more opportunities to play outdoors and to choose what they would like to do.

We hope you continue to enjoy your time at Upton.

Yours sincerely

Susan Mann  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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