

Upperthong Junior and Infant School

Burnlee Road, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD9 2LE

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typical for four year olds. By the time pupils leave Year 6 they attain well above average standards, representing good progress.
- Teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge helping them to question pupils well. Support staff are confident about their responsibilities and provide effective support for pupils.
- Pupils are polite and helpful. They behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning and feel safe. Their good enjoyment of school is demonstrated by their above average attendance.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. The progress that pupils make is carefully checked so that if any fall behind in their learning, they are quickly supported to catch-up. Teaching is checked regularly to ensure that it is of good quality.
- Senior leaders and governors are capable of taking the school further and have identified the correct priorities for improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is good and not yet outstanding. More-able pupils do not always receive the harder work which they are capable of completing.
- Teachers provide too much direction and pupils are not always given the opportunity to work by themselves.
- Not all pupils know how to improve their work in mathematics. This slows their progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine lessons and in addition, visited various classrooms for short periods of time.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, senior leaders, and teachers with responsibilities for leading and managing subjects and key stages. Meetings were also held with some governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Responses from the 40 completed on-line questionnaires (Parent View) were taken into consideration in planning the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a number of documents including: the school’s data showing pupils’ current progress; documents relating to the school’s own view of its performance; the school improvement plan; records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Pritiben Patel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Katherine Lee

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from a White British background. A small number come from mixed heritages. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action and at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, are below the national average. Pupils' needs relate mainly to speech, language, communication, behaviour, and emotional and social difficulties.
- The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that more-able pupils receive harder and more challenging work in all lessons
 - ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to lead their own learning in lessons by working by themselves
 - ensuring all pupils know what they need to do to improve their work in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills that are typical for four year olds. They make good progress in all areas of learning, including in their personal development, number and literacy skills. By the time they start Year 1 they attain above expectations. In 2012, their creative development was less strong so there is now a good focus on developing children's imagination, which is helping to improve achievement. Using the class reader, *The Gruffalo*, children drew pictures of the Gruffalo, played in the Gruffalo's den and some wrote recipes to make a crumble for the Gruffalo.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 and 6 are well above average. However, in 2012 standards dipped to average at the end of Year 6. Standards in mathematics were weaker in comparison to English. This was due to some pupils in the group having weaker skills and some started school after the Reception Year. School leaders have acted to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics, and this is having a positive impact. For example, at the start of all mathematics lessons pupils revise their understanding of numbers.
- The performance of boys in reading and writing was also weaker. There is now a greater focus on reading throughout school and books have been purchased that interest boys. There are regular opportunities for all pupils to read at school. All of these activities are helping pupils to make good progress. There are also greater opportunities for pupils to produce different types of writing, such as letters, diary entries and stories.
- Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 and 6 are well above average. More pupils than nationally attained the expected levels in the phonics test, about the sounds that letters make, at the end of Year 1.
- All groups within school achieve well. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported effectively in the classroom and have individual plans to help them with their learning. Pupils from mixed heritage backgrounds and the few learning English as an additional language also achieve well. Pupil premium funding has been used to buy extra resources and those pupils who are eligible also achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the best lessons, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work together and they rise to the challenge. For example, in an upper Key Stage 2 literacy lesson pupils were working in groups writing a pantomime. They sorted out their own parts and what each was going to say. This allowed pupils to take a lead in their own learning in working by themselves.
- Teachers demonstrate well to pupils how tasks should be completed and this helps them to understand clearly what it is they need to do, so they make good progress. For example, in a Key Stage 1 literacy lesson, the teacher wrote sentences on the board with the pupils, using pictures to help them to remember their recent visit to a museum.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and are keen to ensure that new ideas in the school to improve pupils' achievement are followed. For example, in a lower Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson pupils enjoyed a numbers game which helped them to revise their number skills whilst trying to beat their previous best time.
- Support staff provide effective support to pupils in lessons. This ensures that all pupils, including those with disabilities and learning difficulties, achieve well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge enabling them to question pupils well. This was shown in an upper Key Stage 2 literacy lesson where pupils were learning about Anne Frank, and subsequently used what they found out to write their own diaries. The teacher questioned pupils well about Anne's feelings and thoughts. However, there was too much direction from the teacher and not enough opportunities for pupils to work by themselves. This slowed the progress that pupils made.

- Pupils know what they need to do to improve their writing because teachers tell them when they mark their work. However, pupils do not know what to do to improve their work in mathematics because teachers' marking is not as helpful.
- Teachers are very aware of pupils' different abilities. However, sometimes all pupils are given the same activity. For example, in a lower Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, all pupils received the same mathematical game at the start of the lesson, when the more able pupils could have started harder work on their own. In addition, pupils' work in Key Stage 1 mathematics books, shows that more-able pupils are not always challenged to make the best possible progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy at school and their parents agree. Pupils enjoy coming to school and behave well. They conduct themselves in an orderly manner and are always willing to help one another. There have been no exclusions or racist incidents. Pupils say that bullying is not a concern for them but when it occurs occasionally, staff deal with this well. Pupils say that the term 'Gay' is sometimes used to hurt the feelings of others but staff deal with this quickly. Senior leaders are tackling effectively the issue of parents taking their children away from the school during term time.
- Parents say that their children are safe in school and inspectors agree. For example, a pupil, representing the views of many, said, 'this is a safe place where I can learn'. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, the fire-brigade have spoken to pupils about what to do in case a fire breaks out. They also have a good knowledge about 'stranger-danger' and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Pupils are proud of the opportunities provided to demonstrate responsibility. For example, classes write a 'Class Charter' at the start of the school year which is a code of conduct for behaviour. Pupils know that they have to follow this so that they do not let their classmates down. They also take their role on the 'Eco- Team' seriously and know about the importance of saving energy and recycling. Health Ambassadors ensure that pupils in school are happy and no one is left out at break and lunch times.
- Pupils have good opportunities to think deeply about different experiences. For example, pupils in Year 3 wrote poems about winter and used words such as, 'delicate snowflakes' and 'white falling snowflakes' which show good thought and expression. Pupils have good opportunities to think in assembly during prayer time, and, learn about important social values, such as caring for one another and thinking about others particularly near Christmas.
- Pupils who are known to be potentially vulnerable are supported well by staff both in their personal development and in their learning.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear view of how successful the school can be. Teachers and support staff work together effectively as part of curriculum teams who check pupils' work and teachers' planning to ensure that new ideas to raise achievement are put in place. As a result, all feel valued.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination is tackled effectively. All the staff know pupils individually and work hard to ensure they all have access to all school activities.
- Clear systems are in place to ensure that pupils achieve well. For example, pupils' progress is regularly checked and meetings are held to discuss those pupils who are falling behind, so that they can be supported.
- The performance of teachers is managed well. Teaching is checked regularly to ensure that pupils receive good quality lessons. Teachers are given areas to improve and are supported through training and stronger teachers work alongside colleagues who require support. This is helping to improve the quality of teaching further.
- The curriculum meets the needs and interests of pupils effectively. Meaningful links are made

between subjects so that pupils develop new skills and understanding in ways which are easier for them to understand. After-school activities such as cheerleading, a tennis club and gardening club, cater well for the different interests of pupils.

- Parents are kept informed about the school's activities and the progress that pupils make through weekly newsletters and termly plans of what pupils will be taught so that parents know what their children are learning. However, senior leaders know that there is more to be done to ensure that all parents are satisfied with the school's work.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides, 'light touch' support to the school, and ensures pupils' progress is assessed and the quality of teaching is checked regularly by senior leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well trained. They are knowledgeable about data, the management of teachers' performance and the quality of teaching and challenge senior leaders well, for example, in relation to the dip in standards in 2012 at the end of Year 6. Governors have a good understanding of the school's finances and about how the pupil premium funding is used, and how this is helping to improve the progress of this group of pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	107680
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	403044

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J Coulter
Headteacher	C Littlewood
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2008
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