

Upminster Junior School

St Mary's Lane, Upminster, Essex, RM14 3BS

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics. By the time they leave the school in Year 6, their attainment is well above average and very high in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan interesting lessons that pupils enjoy.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are very keen to come to school and feel very safe. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary. This outstanding personal development, together with high attainment in English and mathematics, means that they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders' and managers' main focus is the quality of teaching and achievement. They provide exceptional support and training for staff. The curriculum is outstanding and provides a rich range of opportunities which enable pupils to shine, whatever their skills or interests.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well.
- Governors have embraced their new academy status and have a strong vision for education in the community. They work closely with school leaders to ensure the best possible education for the pupils at the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Some pupils lack the knowledge of sounds (phonics) which would help them read and spell new words.
- There are some inconsistencies in the opportunities provided for pupils to respond to teachers' comments in their books and in the way that work is set for different groups of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, including small-group or intervention sessions.
- Pupils' books in all year groups were examined.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, year group leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority who is the School Improvement Partner.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils, including representatives from the school council.
- Documents scrutinised during the inspection included the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, governors' minutes of meetings, records of teaching, teachers' plans, assessment information, performance management documentation, the results of a recent pupil and parent questionnaire, behaviour logs and safeguarding records.
- The views of 62 parents and carers expressed on the Parent View website (including one paper submission) were taken into account.
- The responses to 34 staff questionnaires were considered.

Inspection team

John Sweet, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gavin Jones

Additional Inspector

Janet Tomkins

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Upminster Junior School is a larger than the average junior school. The school was newly established as an academy on 1 November 2012 as part of a multi-academy Trust with Upminster Infant School. The predecessor school of the same name was judged as good when it was last inspected.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus and with a statement of educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families, is below average. There are currently no pupils from service families or children in local authority care in the school.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the number of pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- The school meets and exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - there is more consistency in the use of criteria in lessons to judge the success
 - teachers always match work to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils
 - pupils receive feedback in teachers' marking which informs them how to improve their work
 - more opportunities are provided for pupils to respond to teachers' comments in their marking of pupils' work.
- Ensure pupils have the necessary phonics knowledge so they are able to read and spell unfamiliar words.
- Engage in further work with partners in infant schools to establish a common understanding of assessment levels, particularly in writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Attainment in Year 6 is very high and pupils are achieving standards in English and mathematics which are well above average. Most pupils, in every year group, are working at a level which is much higher than average.
- Pupils' attainment is well above average when they join in Year 3. The school endeavours successfully to build on these strong foundations and takes great care to ensure that pupils are settled well into the new school and that they are ready to continue their education. The school is currently working resolutely with infant school partners to ensure there is greater consistency in assessments between Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in writing.
- School assessment information shows that pupils, including those from different ethnic groups, make good progress overall, building very well on these strong foundations. Pupils have their own targets which help them to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils' progress is carefully monitored by the headteacher and the year-group teams, so that any pupil not doing as well as they should is picked up quickly and the right support or intervention is provided.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making good progress as a result of the good teaching and support they receive from the adults who work with them, whether in class or in small groups outside the classroom.
- All pupils who benefit from the pupil premium make good and often better progress than their classmates in writing and mathematics and are keeping up with them in reading. They benefit from well-targeted support, including one-to-one tuition. The attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals currently in Year 6 is at the national average in writing and reading and below for half of these pupils in mathematics. However, this is an extremely small group and the attainment of this group of pupils across the school is often above average in both English and mathematics.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language are often helped in small groups and enjoy the support of their peers and their teachers. As a result, they make very good progress.
- By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are very confident readers. Even those who have struggled to be good readers read aloud with fluency and understanding. They enjoy reading and can talk with some conviction about their likes and dislikes, including their favourite authors and texts recently studied in class. However, some lower attaining readers in Year 3 lack the knowledge of sounds which would help them to decipher new or unfamiliar words.
- Parents and carers are generally very pleased with the progress that pupils make.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good in all year groups, and there is some outstanding teaching. All teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they will behave. The teaching of reading and mathematics is a particular strength.
- Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with their teachers and other adults in the school. Together with very good behaviour management, this results in very calm classrooms which are especially conducive to learning. Another strength in the teaching and learning is the way in which pupils readily collaborate, for example, when they are asked to discuss their learning with a partner.
- Pupils are very productive, whether they are working in books or on mini-whiteboards. Teachers mark their work and set homework regularly. There are some examples of excellent marking. In a few classes however, pupils do not regularly have opportunities to respond to comments that teachers have made in their marking. In a few others, they do not receive detailed feedback or

suggestions about to how to improve.

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They use technical vocabulary well and understand what pupils need to do in order to improve. This mostly ensures that pupils make the progress they should and that they are often very confident in talking about their learning and explaining their thinking, particularly in mathematics. There are mostly good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning both in lessons and in their books.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught very well across the school and there are good opportunities to apply the skills learned in other subjects, for example, in their topic work.
- Lessons are well planned and fun. Teachers mostly use their good knowledge of what their pupils know and can do to plan lessons which are well matched to their learning needs. On occasions, work is not set well enough to match the needs of different groups of pupils.
- However, while pupils know what they have to do, they are not always so clear about how well they have to do it and whether this is the same for all the pupils in the class. The criteria used to judge success are not very clear to them.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the quality of teaching, because they are well trained and work very well with the teachers in supporting pupils' learning in class.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour was at least good and often outstanding in lessons observed during the inspection because teachers have high expectations of behaviour and there are clear policies to reward good behaviour or to deal with any poor behaviour. There was no evidence of low-level disruption observed during the inspection. School records and the views of pupils, staff and parents and carers confirm the view that this is typically the case.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are unstintingly enthusiastic and willing to learn. They work extremely well in groups and their willingness to help and support their classmates is quite exceptional.
- Behaviour around the school and at break times is excellent. Pupils walk silently to and from assemblies and they are unfailingly polite and well mannered to each other, to staff and to visitors. Due to pupils' very high motivation and levels of self-discipline, behaviour management is hardly ever required. There have been no exclusions.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of bullying in all its forms and say that is rare. In the occasional instances that they can remember, they say it was dealt with effectively by staff.
- Pupils feel safe in school and understand what is meant by an unsafe situation and they know how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils enjoy learning and coming to school. As a result, attendance is very high. They are proud to wear the 100% attendance badge and receive other awards for good attendance.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- There is an exceptionally high level of commitment to the school's vision of 'providing a safe, inspirational environment where children develop a lifelong love of learning and fulfil their potential'. This commonly held vision has led to exceptional standards of behaviour and personal development. By the time they leave school, pupils are mature, have highly developed social skills and are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- There is unanimous agreement that Upminster Junior School is a great place to work and many staff say they are proud of the school and that they feel well supported by the leadership team.
- The leadership of the headteacher and other senior leaders is outstanding. They know the

school and all the pupils very well and middle leaders provide a very strong lead in their areas of responsibility. Year leaders have played a key role in establishing and running the highly successful approach to the monitoring of pupils' progress. This work is leading to improved standards for pupils. Curriculum team leaders plan and evaluate the impact of their work and have a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas and can make adaptations to improve things quickly. This work is leading to very high standards in a range of subjects.

- There are rigorous systems in place for monitoring the performance of teachers. Clear targets are set which reflect the priorities of the school as well as providing support and challenge for individual members of staff. The school has established a way of sharing good practice and expertise.
 - The headteacher and senior leaders undertake a regular and careful analysis of the school's work to arrive at an accurate self-evaluation and set well-judged priorities for school improvement.
 - The curriculum is outstanding because there are very strong links between subjects and opportunities to apply the skills learned in one subject in another. Topics studied involve workshops, visits out and visitors to the school. These activities serve to motivate pupils and lead to purposeful learning in a range of subjects. There is a huge range of clubs and activities that pupils can and do participate in. Over a third of the pupils are learning a musical instrument. The curriculum contributes very strongly to the pupils' outstanding social, moral, spiritual and moral development.
 - School leaders are rigorous in ensuring there is equality of opportunity and in tackling discrimination if it occurs. There is an extremely low incidence of recorded bullying, harassment or the use of racist language. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are included well in lessons and all other school activities. The school is active in removing potential stumbling blocks for all its learners to ensure there are equal opportunities for all.
 - There is a clear focus on improving the quality of learning and leaders have made a significant impact on the quality of teaching and accelerating the progress of pupils. This can be seen in the improved standards in all subjects in Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics. School assessment information indicates that progress is accelerating in many important areas and that pupils are on course to meet challenging targets in 2013 and 2014.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a bold vision and high ambitions for the school. They hold senior leaders to account to ensure that pupils receive a very high quality of education and regularly receive reports from school leaders. They know about the strengths of the school and the key areas for development and that performance management is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. Visits to the school, undertaken by a number of governors, add to their overall direct knowledge of the school and so they can see first-hand how initiatives in the school development plan are progressing. Their detailed knowledge of the school enables them to make informed decisions about staffing, pay rises and the use of the pupil premium grant.
 - Governors ensure that the school meets all legal requirements for safeguarding, and vetting procedures to determine the suitability of staff and regular visitors are rigorous. Governors undertake a range of training which helps them fulfil their roles effectively.
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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	138944
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	412346

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Smith
Headteacher	Miss Emma Field
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01708 220453
Fax number	01708 640758
Email address	admin@upminster-jun.havering.sch.uk

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