

Upton Primary School

Waggon Lane, Upton, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF9 1JS

Inspection dates

18–19 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' attainment is consistently low in all subjects at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils' progress is not uniformly good in all year groups.
- Teaching is not leading to all pupils achieving well over-time because not enough lessons are good and outstanding.
- Not enough pupils, particularly in mathematics, are reaching the higher levels in their work because activities in some classes are too easy for the more-able.
- Too few children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make better than expected progress because of inconsistencies in their provision and weaknesses in how staff use information on how well children are achieving.
- Less attention is given to the development of pupils' independent skills because in some lessons teachers control too tightly what pupils do.
- Governors do not always provide sufficient challenge to senior leaders in improving the school.
- Some of the targets and criteria for measuring success within the school improvement plan are not as sharp as they could be to fully inform staff and governors about how successfully the school is improving over-time.
- The monitoring of teaching by senior leaders is not sufficiently focused on how pupils and groups of pupils achieve in lessons and in pinpointing with precision, the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' positive attitudes and their typically good behaviour make a strong contribution to their learning.
- The school takes good care of all pupils, whatever their circumstances. There are strong supportive relationships which help pupils to feel safe and secure.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the support their children receive, particularly for those with special educational needs.
- There are examples of good teaching with elements of outstanding practice within the school.
- Staff are proud to work at the school. Their responses to the inspection questionnaire were highly positive in support of school leaders.
- Well-planned extra enrichment activities mean that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to express themselves in art, music and physical education.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and staff, a group of pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and evaluated a range of information including: the school improvement plan; the tracking of pupils' progress; records of lesson observations; details regarding performance management and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspection team carried out 17 lesson observations, looked at work in pupils' books and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met some parents informally at the start of the school day and took account of the 23 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View)
- The information from 29 staff questionnaires was also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Steve Isherwood, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Julia Wright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Davis	Additional Inspector
Baljinder Khela	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals, and from armed service families is above average.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 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 in order to raise pupils' achievement to good by:
 - ensuring that teaching is consistently good and more is outstanding
 - increasing the numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels in their work, particularly in mathematics
 - raising pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in all subjects
 - using assessment information more precisely to plan lessons which are sufficiently challenging and closely matched to pupils' needs, particularly for the more-able
 - ensuring that pupils get sufficient opportunities to use their independent and thinking skills
 - accelerating children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their starting points.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - sharpening the school improvement plan to include clear targets for improvement against which success can be measured
 - strengthening the monitoring of teaching with a clear focus on how effectively pupils learn and make progress in lessons
 - develop the skills of the governing body to challenge and hold senior leaders to account by improving their understanding of the links between attainment, progress and the quality of provision
 - ensuring that leaders in the Early Years Foundation Stage analyse and record children's progress more effectively, improve the learning environment and strengthen children's continuous provision.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because standards in English and mathematics are consistently low at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils' progress is not uniformly good in all year groups and not all more-able pupils achieve as well as they should.
- Despite some encouraging improvements to pupils' attainment and progress in 2012 at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, current evidence from the school's assessment data, from lesson observations and pupils' work, alongside the provisional test results for 2013, confirms that in some lessons pupils underachieve. Not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels in their work, particularly in mathematics. This is because of inconsistencies in how assessment information is used by staff to plan work that is sufficiently challenging and in some classes teachers underestimate what pupils can achieve.
- The progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement. From their below typical starting points not enough children are making better than expected progress because staff are unsure of their individual starting points, do not record and analyse their progress effectively and because children's continuous provision is weak.
- In reading, pupils' attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 2 and low at the end of Year 6. Pupils generally read with expression and enjoy talking about the author and content of their books. Younger pupils in particular are consolidating their skills in reading unfamiliar words by using their knowledge of letters and sounds to build words and blend sounds together.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, while improving is not yet good. Low attainment in basic literacy and weak provision in previous years has impeded their learning. However, there is some evidence to suggest that these pupils are making better progress than previously and are benefitting from improvements in the way the school plans their support and intervention activities.
- The achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is showing signs of improving but is inconsistent from one year to the next. In 2012 for example, all of these pupils made expected levels of progress which was above their peers. Currently, the progress made by these pupils is similar to that of other pupils in the school and the gap between how well they and other pupils achieve is closing. This is because the school is beginning to see some impact from the use of the extra funding which has been targeted appropriately to increase pupils' literacy and numeracy skills with the appointment of extra staff, the purchase of additional resources, improved learning facilities and in extra 'master classes' after school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not strong enough to raise pupils' attainment further and accelerate pupils' achievement to good because too many lessons require improvement. Over-time, teaching has not been good enough because pupils' progress is not consistently good in all year groups and not all more-able pupils are achieving as well as they should. The proportion of good and better lessons needs to increase quickly to make up for the gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers have good subject knowledge and question pupils effectively; teaching assistants provide an effective layer of extra support, particularly for those pupils who find learning difficult; new skills build well on pupils' prior knowledge; links with other subjects are made clear; work is matched well to pupils' different abilities and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
- When the planning and teaching come together, pupils are absorbed in their learning and are excited by the tasks in hand. For example, pupils in Year 3 made excellent progress in physical education by developing their skills to send and receive a ball in a team game and in making suggestions about how to improve the skills of others. This lesson confirmed how well the pupils

can achieve when expectations are high and the teaching imaginative.

- In the lessons that require improvement not enough is expected of pupils. Work is not matched well enough to pupils' needs. All too often, tasks for more-able pupils are confined to writing a longer story or tackling a harder sum with insufficient attention given to the promotion of pupils' thinking and reasoning skills. In addition, in some lessons, pupils sit and listen to teachers' explanations for too long and in some activities teachers control too tightly what pupils do which limits pupils' ability to work independently and make the learning their own.
- The quality of teaching for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not good yet because children should be making more progress from their starting points and improvements are required in the learning environment, both inside and outside the classroom, in the children's continuous provision and in how leaders analyse and record information to plan activities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Pupils feel safe in school and say there is little threat from bullying or harassment in any form. They report that the school teaches them about the dangers of each, although senior leaders correctly recognise that further discussions with pupils over homophobic bullying are required.
- Pupils are courteous, polite and tolerant of others. Typically their behaviour is good around school and at playtime. They have positive attitudes to learning and are keen and enthusiastic learners. However, where teaching fails to motivate them sufficiently and where activities in class lack demand, stimulus and activity, some pupils understandably become restless and their interest wanes.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is improving. When asked to express their views on the school they found it difficult to think of any changes they would like to see. They would recommend the school to anybody. There was strong praise for staff, the new outdoor play equipment and the reward and merit system, including golden time to encourage their good behaviour.
- Pupils' views on the quality of their learning were mixed. 'We enjoy the master classes because we do top work', 'we like teaching that is hard and fun at the same time', 'learning is just right most of the time but could be more challenging in maths' and sometimes our work is too easy because we can do all the work', were typical of their comments.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities on offer in music and the arts and are keen to participate in physical and sporting activities at lunch time and after school to promote their health and well-being. To encourage this further the school has used the additional funding for primary school sport wisely by investing in specialist coaches, developing links with other schools and in the purchase of new equipment.
- Pupils are very keen to take on extra responsibilities around the school and develop a strong social conscience. They were particularly friendly and welcoming to the inspection team by engaging in conversation, opening doors and in helping the inspectors find their way around the school.
- Parents are hugely supportive of the school. They agree that their children are kept safe and are well cared for by staff. They appreciate also the opportunities for them to engage with the school through parental workshops and family learning activities.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher and senior staff have successfully brought some stability to the school following a prolonged period of major staffing disruption. The school is a more settled place to be and staff are increasingly proud to work there. Staff responses to the inspection questionnaire show that school leaders have a high level of support to get the school back on track. As one member of staff commented, 'I love working at this school, we are working as a team more now. If I need any help with anything, I know I can ask and people will help me'.
- Nevertheless, leadership and management are not good because the achievement of pupils and

the quality of teaching require improvement. There are weaknesses too in the strategic planning of the school. The school improvement plan is not sufficiently focused on clear, measurable milestones for improvement to raise achievement or set against local and national benchmarks. This makes it difficult for senior leaders and governors to gauge with precision how successfully the school is improving over-time.

- The monitoring of teaching and learning is strengthening because the performance management of staff is becoming more effective. Further improvements are required in how senior leaders make judgements on the progress of pupils and groups of pupils in lessons and in measuring the impact of teaching more effectively on pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders and staff are focused on improving the life chances of all pupils. There are improved systems to collect highly useful assessment information about pupils' progress from term to term. Pupils who are in danger of falling behind are identified more effectively. There are clearer expectations of the progress pupils should make. The regular reviews of how well pupils are achieving are beginning to hold staff to account for the progress their pupils are making. This means that the planning of support and intervention is becoming sharper. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equality and in tackling discrimination.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement because staff are not totally sure of the progress children are making from their starting points and because of weaknesses in the planning for continuous provision and in aspects of the learning environment.
- The curriculum has strengths in enrichment and in the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development through a wide range of visitors to school and visits to places of interest. These add considerable enjoyment to pupils' learning and development. The curriculum is less strong in the promotion of pupils' independent skills and in providing for the full range of learners because some pupils are not achieving as well or as rapidly as they could.
- The school improvement partner and the local authority are acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and where further support is required. They have intensified their support to the school and are committed to developing the capacity of leaders at all levels to enable them to monitor the quality of provision and use the outcomes of this more effectively to improve the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are developing their understanding of what goes in school and the standards pupils' achieve. They are committed to see the school improve further and are keen to access further training to support their own development. They ensure that their statutory responsibilities are met. For example, systems to safeguard and protect pupils meet requirements. In addition, they ensure that all staff have been vetted and trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. There is still further work to be done to increase the confidence of governors to challenge and hold senior leaders to account by raising their awareness of the links between attainment, progress and the quality of teaching and learning.

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	130862
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	427298

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Liz Elliot
Headteacher	Paul Franklin
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2010
Telephone number	01977 723845
Fax number	01977 723845
Email address	headteacher@upton.wakefield.sch.uk

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