

Upton-upon-Severn CofE Primary School

School Lane, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcester, WR8 0LD

Inspection dates 29–30 January 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- There have been significant improvements to key aspects of the school's work in the two years since the previous inspection.
- Good teaching helps all pupils, including those who need extra help and those who are most able, to make good progress in their learning.
- Children in the early years classes get a good start to their education.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school and that the adults look after them well. They know what to do if they need help.
- Pupils' behaviour in school and in lessons is good. They follow adults' instructions willingly and show that they want to do well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered successfully. This helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' attendance has steadily improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching is improving because of the rigorous systems put in place by senior leaders to check how well all pupils are doing. All staff are keen to listen to feedback on their performance.
- The senior leaders make sure the staff get the training that will help them to develop their skills, including those responsible for leading and improving specific subjects.
- Governors visit the school regularly and have an extremely good understanding of what it does well. They provide high levels of challenge in order to make sure the school continues to improve.
- Pupils have lots of opportunities to take part in a wide range of sports.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Currently, pupils' achievement in writing is not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not encourage pupils enough to revisit their writing so they can make changes and improve it.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of pupils' handwriting or encourage them to take pride in the presentation of their work.
- On a few occasions, pupils are not given enough to do to keep them busy in lessons, particularly those who are the most able. As a result, their learning is not as rapid as it could be.
- The school does not publish all the information it should on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons, including one that was jointly observed with the headteacher, and two assemblies. Inspectors talked with pupils, and looked at their work and records of their progress.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work on display. They also undertook learning walks, which comprised a number of short visits to lessons to look at the teaching of reading, including phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make), and learning across different subjects.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, staff and members of the governing body. In addition, an inspector talked with a local authority adviser.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading. They observed and talked to them at play during breaktimes and at lunchtime.
- The school’s safeguarding policies, improvement plans, notes from meetings of the governing body and records of pupils’ behaviour were reviewed, as well as the 15 replies to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors took account of parental communications with inspectors and of the 76 responses to Ofsted’s online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Parental views were also sought at the start of the school day as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Sarah Warboys, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barry Yeardsley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Upton-upon-Severn Church of England Primary is smaller than most primary schools.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- Around 17% of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for disadvantaged pupils in local authority care or known to be eligible for free school meals. This is below average.
- Approximately 22% of the pupils are disabled or have special educational needs, which is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A pre-school, managed by the governing body, operates on the school site and caters for children aged two to four years old. Children under three are subject to separate inspection. Therefore, this inspection looked at those children who were three years old and above.
- Children in the Reception class attend full-time. Children attend the pre-school either in the morning, the afternoon or both.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - encourage pupils to routinely edit and improve their writing
 - insist on high-quality handwriting and presentation in pupils' work
 - provide pupils with enough to do in lessons to keep them learning, particularly those who are the most able, so that they make the best possible progress.
- Ensure that all the information required by the government is available on the school's website.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Led by a determined headteacher and supported effectively by the deputy headteacher, governors and staff, the school is moving forward at a good pace. Senior leaders have fostered a culture of continuous improvement. Staff fully support the headteacher's drive to raise pupils' achievement. They are keen to undertake suitable training to improve their own performance and develop their skills.
- Senior leaders have taken decisive action to tackle weak teaching. Since the previous inspection, they have invested much time into making sure that teachers use assessment information to plan appropriately challenging activities for pupils. They have developed rigorous systems that allow them to keep a close check on the progress pupils make in order to give all pupils an equal chance to succeed. Discrimination of any kind is not accepted.
- Teachers meet each term with senior leaders to identify any pupils who may not be making sufficient progress. Comprehensive plans are drawn up which set out how these pupils will be provided with the extra help they need. Teachers are set targets to ensure they are held to account for the progress their pupils make. Pay rises and promotion depend upon reaching these targets.
- The headteacher leads the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Close links with outside agencies enable pupils with often very complex difficulties to get effective specialist help. For example, effective support provided for pupils with particular behavioural difficulties has led to a reduction in the number of exclusions.
- The headteacher has developed an effective team of senior and middle leaders who steer the development of English, mathematics and other subjects. The leadership of the early years is also good.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well supported by the pupil premium. Leaders check that these pupils make at least similar progress to their peers.
- An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, or who spoke to inspectors were positive about the work of the school. One explained that her children were thriving and she 'couldn't be happier' because the school had supported her children very well.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values is carefully planned throughout the curriculum. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain by studying different faiths and religious traditions, and learning about other countries.
- Pupils are given opportunities to experience British values at work in elections for the 'School Council'. Applicants first consult previous councillors and prepare a speech explaining why they would make a good councillor. Pupils then vote for their choice.
- Pupils have opportunities to learn a musical instrument, join in communal singing, and appreciate and create art. Lessons stimulate pupils' curiosity and fascination about the world around them. Year 2 pupils, for example, were highly interested in finding out facts about planet Earth. Pupils consider such issues as whether, because daddy bear is large, he should have the largest bowl of porridge. Such activities provoke pupils' thinking.
- The sports funding has been used very effectively to increase the number of sports available to pupils. In addition, sports coaches have worked alongside teaching staff in order to improve their ability to teach sport. More opportunities to engage in competitive sport have also had positive results in the form of pupils' success in winning a recent tennis tournament.
- The local authority has provided effective support in improving teaching and developing the skills of the school's leaders at all levels.

■ Senior leaders and governors make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet national requirements and are effective. Although inspectors found that all the necessary documents were fully and properly in place, the information that the school is required by the government to publish on their website was not accessible.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors responded decisively to the previous inspection. They reorganised their committee structure to increase their efficiency and looked carefully at the skills they brought to their role so that they could be used more effectively. They have made the most of training and support from the local authority so they can make more informed decisions.
- Governance has improved in all aspects, not least their involvement and visibility in school. They visit very regularly and meet with senior and subject leaders to check on how well pupils are doing. They provide high levels of challenge to senior leaders about the school's data, including investigating why the 2014 published results were at odds with the school's own assessments.
- The school development plan drives the work of the school. Governors look at this every term and check that actions have had the desired effect on pupils' achievement. They know this aspect is closely linked to the quality of teaching. They manage the performance of the headteacher and have supported her in addressing weaknesses in teaching.
- Governors manage the school's finances well, and are reducing a deficit budget. Governors check how the school is using the sports funding and the pupil premium. They are aware that pupils are more actively involved in sport and that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They demonstrate good manners as they move around the school. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils standing aside for each other and for adults as they moved along corridors and used the stairs. Pupils proudly received merit certificates in assembly and celebrated earning house points for their team.
- Teamwork is especially important to pupils. This is emphasised through the idea of 'lessons from geese' which is displayed at key points throughout the school. Its message demonstrates to pupils how each member plays a role that is crucial to the team as a whole. Pupils elect a 'goose' whose teamwork has been noted throughout the week to receive recognition for their efforts. This helps pupils to develop important life skills.
- In lessons, pupils show positive attitudes to their work. They do as they are asked by teachers and other adults and settle down to work without fuss. On the whole, from the youngest children in the pre-school to the oldest in Year 6, they listen attentively to adults' instructions so that little or no learning time is lost.
- Pupils work well together, taking turns to speak in group work. They reflect on their own learning and are proud of their achievements. For example, after reading to inspectors, one child delightedly said, 'I told that story using my best expression!'
- Almost all parents, pupils and staff were positive about pupils' behaviour. The school's records show that incidents of poor behaviour are few. On rare occasions, however, pupils do not have enough work to keep them engaged. Their attention wanes momentarily and as a result, their learning slows.
- Attendance has risen steadily each year since the previous inspection as a result of an increased rigour with which policies and procedures are applied, and is now average. Pupils' punctuality is good and improving.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. They say they feel safe at school and are clear about how to seek help should it be needed. They feel well cared for and parents agree.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying - unkindness that is repetitive - but say it does not happen

often. They report a little 'play fighting' as they put it, but say that teachers will not tolerate it and that it is dealt with quickly by adults. Staff keep very detailed records of such incidents, the action taken and how effective it is. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

The quality of teaching is good

- Children in the early years classes are taught well. Adults plan lots of activities for children to develop their skills across all areas of learning. They note what children can do and so plan their next steps.
- Similarly, teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 have an accurate knowledge and understanding of what pupils can already do and what they need to learn next. This enables them to plan learning activities for pupils, including those who need extra help and the most able, that help them to make good progress over time.
- Good teaching is underpinned by good relationships. Adults plan well with other adults, and praise pupils for trying hard. Pupils get on well together and support each other. As a result, there is a positive climate for learning.
- Teachers show that they have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They give clear explanations so pupils know exactly what it is they are learning and what they are expected to do. Consequently, they can get on quickly with their own work.
- Teachers make good use of computer technology to engage pupils and this helps to maintain their interest. In Year 5, for example, pupils looked at advertisements and noted the key features of the persuasive language and strategies used to sell products. As a result, they were able to put their ideas together and successfully create an advertisement of their own.
- Staff ask questions skilfully to check pupils' understanding and help them to develop their knowledge and skills. Pupils are required to think carefully about their answers and on some occasions, they share their ideas with each other. This often helps them clarify and refine their thinking.
- Teachers' marking is helpful in letting pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils respond to their teachers' comments by answering their questions or practising a particular skill. This moves their learning forward.
- The teaching of writing has, rightly, been a key focus for school improvement and this has led to pupils making better progress. Although pupils have plenty of opportunities to learn about and try different styles of writing, teachers do not routinely expect pupils to revisit their writing and try to make it better - for example by adding more interesting vocabulary, or varying the length of sentences for effect. This hinders their progress as writers.
- Not all teachers show high enough expectations of pupils in consistently using neat handwriting. Some pupils are not encouraged to take enough pride in the presentation of their written work. As a consequence some work is untidy and difficult to read.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the pre-school with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age, and make good progress. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 varies each year but has been broadly average overall. Most of the pupils currently at the school are working at or above the standards expected for their age. Standards are rising, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The published progress results for Year 6 pupils in 2014 are not wholly accurate. This information suggests that pupils made inadequate progress in writing across Key Stage 2. However, the school's own assessment records show that they made better progress, as confirmed by external monitoring. These records confirm that most pupils made progress at least at the nationally expected rate and a greater proportion exceeded it, particularly in reading and mathematics.

- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected level in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2014 was below average, because of previously weak teaching. However, pupils catch up quickly in Year 2. Almost all pupils who retook the test in Year 2 met the standard. An above-average proportion of pupils currently in Year 1 are on track to reach the required level in 2015.
- Pupils' standards in reading are improving across the school. This is because there is a whole-school approach to teaching reading which includes regular, dedicated sessions where pupils' skills are guided and developed. Good links with the local library service ensure that there are lots of books available for pupils to read and to find out about different subjects in their topic work.
- The school's most recent assessments, confirmed by work in pupils' books, show that most pupils are making progress at a good rate in reading and mathematics. Progress is slightly slower in writing, and standards are not quite as high.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive. Adults' assessments indicate precisely what pupils need to do to move their learning to the next level. Pupils are provided with extra help in lessons and in one-to-one sessions where specific gaps in their knowledge and skills are filled. Adults work alongside pupils, giving them additional explanations, showing them pictures and diagrams to reinforce new ideas and practise what they already know.
- The school uses the pupil premium to provide one-to-one support for reading, writing and mathematics. It has enabled the school to buy computer technology resources to inspire and motivate pupils. It also enables access to outdoor learning through 'Forest School' sessions to build their self-esteem and self-confidence. The school's assessment information indicates that these pupils are making good progress. There were too few Year 6 pupils who left the school in 2014 eligible for the pupil premium to comment on their attainment without identifying individuals.
- The most-able pupils make good progress because teachers set work that is at just the right level of difficulty to deepen their understanding and move their learning on. For example, pupils in Year 6 are working at above expected levels in mathematics. They can confidently and accurately explain the relationship between algebraic equations and lines drawn on a graph. Occasionally, they do not start this harder work soon enough to make progress at an even faster rate.

The early years provision is good

- Most children in the early years start in the pre-school and Reception class with typical skills for their age. Their abilities are least well developed in reading, writing and mathematics. Almost all children, including those who need extra help, catch up quickly and are well prepared for when they enter Year 1.
- Teaching is good. It engages children's interest and gives them plenty of activities that encourage them to practise and develop their skills across all areas of learning. For example, children in the pre-school developed speaking and listening skills well in retelling the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. In the Reception class, children's mathematical knowledge and skills were enhanced as they used control technology to move a robot forwards and backwards.
- Children across the early years play and work well together and their behaviour is good. Adults actively teach good and safe behaviour, and children respond well to their guidance. Good relationships between adults and children are clearly evident.
- Children enjoy exploring their environment. They move freely between indoor and outdoor activities, putting on and taking off coats and boots without reminders. Snack time is a social event. Children learn hygiene routines and enjoy chatting to their friends.
- Children are keen to share their achievements. They record these in 'Proud Books' which they share with their parents. Parents contribute to the books, and this provides staff with useful information about their children's interests and abilities. Adults take note of what children can do in school by asking them

questions and talking to them as they play so they can plan new learning opportunities.

- Leaders are clear about what the setting does well and where it could improve. They ensure that children's welfare requirements are met. Parents say their children feel safe at the setting and are well looked after. Induction arrangements and information evenings enables parents to be fully informed about how well their children are doing.

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	116853
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	453415

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	Worcestershire
Chair	Clare Quinn
Headteacher	Julie Wills
Date of previous school inspection	13 February 2013
Telephone number	01684 592259
Fax number	01684 594341
Email address	office@upton-upon-severn.worcs.sch.uk

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