

Upton Primary School

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

Inspection dates

26–27 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders, managers and governors have not yet managed to raise achievement or improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or improving at a fast enough rate.
- The quality of teaching, particularly of reading, is not yet good enough and so pupils' reading skills are not well developed.
- The most-able pupils are not challenged well enough in mathematics.
- Pupils do not always present their work neatly and legibly.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils and of boys across the school lags behind that of other pupils.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years is not good enough to prepare pupils for Year 1, particularly in mathematics and literacy.

The school has the following strengths

- Changes in leadership and staffing over the past year have increased the school's capacity to sustain improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous. Their personal development and welfare are good.
- Staff provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of fundamental British values and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching so it becomes at least good by ensuring that:
 - pupils read books that they do not find too easy and that their comprehension skills are developed so they are able to confidently discuss what they have read
 - the achievement of boys and disadvantaged pupils rises in all subjects
 - the good practice that is in the school is shared more widely
 - pupils always present their work neatly and legibly
 - the most-able pupils are challenged, particularly in mathematical problem solving.
- Improve the effectiveness of the early years provision so that it becomes at least good by:
 - narrowing the gap in achievement between boys and girls and between disadvantaged children and others across all areas of learning
 - improving the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) so that children are more focused and work harder, particularly the boys.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and governance by ensuring that:
 - effective plans are in place for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to receive the best possible support
 - there is sharper analysis of different groups, particularly disadvantaged pupils and boys, so that swift action can be taken to raise their achievement and improve their attendance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher and her senior team have introduced a raft of measures to improve the school. These new measures are starting to make a difference. It is still early days and school leaders are under no illusion that there is still much left to do to ensure that the school's overall effectiveness becomes good. The headteacher has managed to enthuse staff through high-quality professional development and good partnership working with other schools.
- Middle leaders are acting quickly to improve the quality of teaching across different subjects. This work has been more successful in some areas than in others. Teachers' subject knowledge of teaching mathematics, particularly helping pupils to apply their mathematics skills to solve problems, is well developed. However, their knowledge is less secure in developing pupils' reading skills.
- An extensive range of data is now collected on pupils' achievements, and this is giving leaders a good idea of where there are strengths and weaknesses. However, in relation to the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and boys, this information is not used sharply enough to pinpoint where the school should take fast action to raise these pupils' achievement and attendance.
- There are, at the moment, few plans in place to support disabled pupils and those that have special educational needs. Leaders are aware that this now needs urgent development so that packages of support can be closely monitored and then evaluated to see if they are making a positive difference to the pupils.
- There is a broad, fairly balanced curriculum in the school. Science, history and geography varies in coverage and depth across the school and between teachers. Music has a high profile, with an active choir and orchestra. Morning dance sessions are enjoyed by pupils and staff as part of the breakfast club. French is taught in Key Stage 2. Phonics is now a regular part of the literacy diet in Key Stage 1. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school and their increasing rates of attendance.
- The primary sport premium is used to purchase expertise from a local secondary school to help staff improve their PE teaching skills. This will ensure that there is a good legacy of the funding once it ceases. The new headteacher has a plan in place to use the pupil premium to close gaps, although it is still too new to positively impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in a modern democratic Britain. Elections are held for head boy and girl, the school council plays an active part in the decision-making processes and a good programme of assemblies ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - receives high-quality, honest information from senior leaders that is increasingly enabling governors to ask relevant questions to help improve teaching and raise achievement
 - is highly committed and has a range of skills among its members, such as in safeguarding, to support the school well in its journey to becoming good
 - are mostly frequent visitors to the school who check out the quality of teaching and provision for themselves rather than rely on the word of school leaders
 - has ensured that the management of teachers' performance is now more rigorous and related directly to the quality of teaching
 - does not yet have a sufficiently developed understanding of the gaps that exist between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally and how these are to be tackled robustly.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and appropriate checks are made when staff are appointed. The site is safe and secure. A small minority of parents expressed concerns about security in the morning when parents dropped off their children. This was checked by inspectors, who found there was good supervision by staff and so pupils were safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is improving, but because it varies, pupils' progress is faster in some years than in others and between subjects. This means that, despite improvements, it has not improved to the point where it can be considered good overall.

- There is sometimes a lack of pace and urgency in the classroom. Pupils are sometimes waiting for others to catch up which means they are not stretched well enough. Inspectors saw examples of this in both key stages. In particular, the most able are not challenged well enough in mathematical problem solving.
- Pupils sometimes present their work rather scruffily because they are not reminded of the importance of neat handwriting by teachers.
- Sometimes, teachers do not spend enough time explaining or demonstrating a skill to pupils. This means that they are not ready to tackle the task that is set for them and so their progress is slow.
- School leaders have been working hard to improve the quality of marking and feedback. This is now strong across the school. Pupils are given very specific tips on how to improve their work. Time is then set aside in lessons for pupils to revisit the work and make improvements. This is having a positive effect on their progress.
- Teaching assistants vary in quality. Some do not add much value to pupils' learning, but most know exactly how to intervene and offer good-quality support. Teaching assistants were seen by inspectors giving high-quality support to pupils in mathematics, using apparatus to help pupils gain a deeper understanding of calculating methods.
- Some teaching is of high quality. Inspectors saw high levels of motivation and challenge in some classes, pupils being encouraged to work out answers independently and some good work on developing pupils' mathematics skills in Key Stage 1 and Year 5. There is, therefore, scope to share this good practice more widely in the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are proud of their school and show respect towards each other and to staff. They are smartly dressed and inspectors were impressed with their good manners. Pupils willingly take on responsibility at lunchtime and tidy up after themselves.
- Staff have worked hard to ensure that pupils grow into confident, self-assured young people and in this respect they have been successful. Pupils are confident to take part in lessons and 'have a go' even if they are not sure if they have the correct answer.
- Pupils feel safe and secure. They say that bullying is very rare, as is name calling, but when it does happen, there is a caring adult to turn to and they are sure it would be dealt with quickly.
- Pupils participate in a range of sporting activities and eat healthily at lunchtime, being aware of which foods are good for them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They say it has improved a lot over the past year. Parents too expressed how much they thought behaviour had improved. Inspectors found that pupils moved around the site sensibly and were often impeccably behaved.
- Pupils feel safe from any threats of bullying or intimidation, saying these are very rare. The school log has very few incidents of behaviour recorded. A small minority of pupils said that there is sometimes some name calling, but it is dealt with quickly by staff. Fixed-term exclusions are very rare.
- In lessons, pupils apply themselves diligently to their work. They concentrate hard and are quick to respond to the teachers' requests.
- Pupils are well aware of what they should do if faced with any threats or bullying. This includes knowing about threats associated with the internet or mobile phones, as a result of talks provided by the school police liaison officer.
- Pupils' attendance remains below average but has improved significantly over the past two years.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- In Key Stage 2, pupils make much slower progress compared with other pupils around the country in all subjects. Moreover, few make better than expected progress.
- In 2015, the most-able Year 6 pupils made weak progress, particularly in reading and writing.

- Inspection evidence shows that for the pupils currently in the school, their progress is accelerating as the quality of teaching improves. However, for many, too much time has been lost, leaving gaps in their skills and resulting in their attainment remaining below average. The most able are now making better progress, particularly in mathematics. Inspectors found that for the current Year 6, outcomes are improving. The school's predictions for the year group based on the quality of the pupils' work are overgenerous, particularly in reading.
- In 2015, a smaller proportion of Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in phonics compared with other pupils around the country, particularly boys and disadvantaged pupils. This was because these pupils had very little teaching in how to relate sounds to letters, either in Year 1 or when they were in the early years classes. To a great extent, the school has had to play 'catch up' with reading in Year 2, which has led to historically low standards in Key Stage 1. Now that a systematic approach to teaching phonics is in place, standards are rising in Key Stage 1, with more pupils expected to reach the expected standards for their age than previously.
- In 2015 there were large gaps in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils compared to others nationally and between them and others in the school. Inspection evidence shows that for pupils currently in the school, gaps remain, but are closing most rapidly in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Moreover, gaps between boys' and girls' achievement remain wide, particularly in reading.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs was weak in 2015. It is improving, although still has not reached the point where it is good.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Leadership of the early years provision is ably supported by a visiting senior leader in education from a nearby school. Leaders have created a vibrant, exciting learning environment and good systems to track children's achievement across all areas of learning. Parents are well engaged, being encouraged to contribute 'wow moments' to children's assessments. The outdoor area is well stocked and routines across both classes are well established. Record keeping is reasonable, but insufficient information is collected on the achievement of disadvantaged children. Safeguarding arrangements are good, with sound systems in place to risk assess the indoor and outdoor areas and for parents to collect and drop off their children.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. The teaching of phonics is very hit and miss. Some is of excellent quality, with children learning their letter sounds, applying them to words, then using fun activities to write these letters, sometimes within words. Some is weak. Boys often lack concentration, tasks are too vague and children do minimal work. Other teaching is similarly inconsistent. There are missed opportunities to engage boys in mathematics and literacy activities, including in the outdoor area. Explanations are sometimes confusing for children, for example when an adult explained that 'one and six is sixteen'. These inconsistencies mean that children are still not being well prepared for the demands of Year 1.
- Inspectors were impressed with children's good behaviour, which has arisen as a result of the strong routines across both classes. Children willingly take on responsibility such as tidying up and relate well to each other and to adults. Children take turns and chat politely to each other at the snack table. Adults skilfully intervene when children show negative attitudes and model correct ways of behaving, which has a good effect on children.
- Outcomes for children are improving. Leaders have now begun to collate assessments that are accurate, based on their good understanding of children's abilities across all areas of learning. The tracking shows that some good progress is being made with the lower foundation (Nursery) class. However, inspection evidence shows that boys make less progress than girls. Moreover, past years' data shows that there are large gaps in achievement between disadvantaged and other children in school and nationally. Leaders are not analysing these gaps with children currently in the school so it is not possible to see if these gaps are closing.

School details

Unique reference number	130862
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10002028

This inspection 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	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Bolton
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Helen Green
Telephone number	01977 650820
Website	http://www.uptonprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@upton.wakefield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2013

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school, serving the village of Upton, located midway between Wakefield and Doncaster.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional money provided by the government to support disadvantaged pupils) is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or pupils who have special educational needs is similar to other schools around the country.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and so the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are from minority ethnic groups is below the national average.
- There have been significant changes in governance and leadership over the past 12 months. The headteacher took up her post in January 2015.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Support is being provided in the early years classes by a senior leader in education from St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Wakefield.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching throughout the school. They scrutinised pupils' books and listened to them read. A number of these activities were carried out alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked with pupils both in meetings and around the school at lunchtimes and playtimes. They also held discussions with senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with the school improvement partner from the local authority and with several members of the governing body.
- Various documents were scrutinised by the inspection team, including the school's checks on the quality of teaching, development planning, school policies and child protection records. Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector looked at information on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered the 20 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Additionally, various parents were met by an inspector during a meeting and informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, Lead Inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Kenworthy	Ofsted Inspector
Dominic Brown	Ofsted Inspector

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