

# Upton Noble CofE VC Primary School

Chapel Street, Upton Noble, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 6AU

## Inspection dates

1–2 February 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' actions have not brought about teaching or pupils' outcomes that are consistently good.
- Leaders have not prepared teachers fully for the most recent changes to the national curriculum. As a result, pupils have received too limited access to the heightened expectations.
- Pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics is not good enough. Pupils do not make enough progress from their high starting points. Too few pupils exceed the national standards at key stage 2.
- Teaching does not consistently build on what pupils can already do. Sometimes work is too easy or does not encourage pupils to think. This limits the progress that pupils make.
- Governors have not ensured that the school site is secure, although they have urgent plans to rectify this.
- Work on offer for middle-attaining and the most able pupils is not challenging enough.
- Some pupils do not attend regularly enough. Systems in place to reduce persistent absence need to be strengthened.
- Children in the early years with high starting points do not make enough progress. Adults do not use assessment consistently to extend children's thinking, particularly in number work.
- Weak spelling and grammar hinders pupils' fluency in writing and their ability to produce high-quality sustained writing.
- The few disadvantaged pupils do not all make good progress in reading and writing. Some have poor understanding of what they read.
- The school's personal, social and health education programme does not have enough impact.

### The school has the following strengths

- A greater proportion of pupils are on track to meet and exceed expected standards in Years 4 and 6.
- The interim leadership is taking robust action to minimise risk on the school site.
- Most parents are positive about the school. They recognise the determination and hard work of the head of school to make the required improvements.
- Most pupils enjoy school, behave well and are keen to learn.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good, by:
  - insisting that teachers use assessment information effectively to give pupils the right level of challenge, particularly middle-attaining most-able and pupils
  - ensuring that grammar and spelling skills are consistently well taught across the school and applied in sustained writing
  - ensuring that pupils understand what they read and can infer and deduce information with confidence
  - ensuring that differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally are diminished quickly.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - governors hold the school to account for ensuring that pupils' progress is consistently good in reading, writing and mathematics so that a greater proportion of pupils exceed national expectations
  - governors check regularly that the school is taking effective steps to keep pupils safe
  - leaders' checks on the quality of teaching focus strongly on monitoring the progress of groups of pupils' achievement over time.
- Improve pupils' personal development and welfare, by:
  - improving the attendance of the few pupils who do not attend regularly enough
  - ensuring that the personal, social and health education curriculum provides sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping safe and managing risk in modern Britain.
- Improve the early years by ensuring that:
  - assessment is improved so that learning builds consistently on what children know, can do and understand, particularly in mathematics
  - children's progress is measured robustly from their starting points so that they are supported to make good progress, especially the most able children.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness is overgenerous. Shortcomings in strategic leadership at the school have hindered school improvement. As a result, pupils' progress is uneven from year to year and so some pupils underachieve, particularly the middle-attaining and most-able pupils.
- Leaders' checks on teaching are not regular enough. Feedback to teachers is detailed and offers clear guidance on how to develop their teaching strategies. However, there is too little focus on the progress of groups of pupils, particularly middle-attaining and most-able pupils. As a result, teaching does not challenge pupils and is not matched closely to pupils' needs. This hinders the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders' actions have not resulted in pupils making good progress. In 2016, pupils' achievement in mathematics and writing, as well as in spelling, punctuation and grammar, was not good enough. Leaders did not fully equip teachers to ensure that the higher expectations of the national curriculum were fully understood.
- The strategic leadership of site safety has not been good enough in recent years. Leaders have not kept up to date with health and safety requirements. The recently appointed interim executive headteacher is working quickly to rectify this.
- Current leaders are working with determination, week on week, to improve the quality of teaching and learning. For example, the school's feedback policy and pupils' improved mathematical fluency are beginning to embed well. Non-negotiable minimum expected standards are fully understood by most staff. However, low teacher expectations remain in some year groups. This creates inconsistencies in the quality of teaching overall.
- Leaders' work to increase levels of challenge for the most able pupils is not fully effective. Although staff training and support has taken place, it has not led to consistent sustained improvement. Leaders' actions have not brought about sufficient improvement in the quality and consistency of teaching.
- Middle leaders do not have enough impact across the school. They do not have a full understanding of the standards achieved in their subjects. Middle leaders can articulate the impact that they are having in their own classes and key stage but they are unable to account for pupils' progress in other key stages and classes. This hinders leaders' ability to precisely support and develop teaching across the school. As a result, teachers do not get the feedback they need to improve their teaching and strengthen outcomes for groups of pupils.
- The energetic leadership of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well catered for. Her strategic leadership and day-to-day leadership are very effective. She accounts for the impact of additional funding and support well. Pupils are accurately identified and offered targeted, precisely focused intervention. The SENCo provides additional teaching and coaching support to ensure that pupils have appropriate access to teaching that meets their needs. As a result, many pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points.

- The current school improvement plan is detailed and focused on the right aspects of improvement. The head of school has stoic determination and is tackling weaknesses in provision systematically. She has not shied away from making difficult decisions. Rightly, she accurately identifies that there is work still to be done.
- The school promotes Christian values well and there are plentiful opportunities for pupils to grow spiritually. For example, planned meditation sessions actively encourage pupils to reflect and explore the school's values. British values are also promoted through the curriculum. However, pupils were not secure in talking about cultural diversity and the language of difference.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the impact of additional funding, including sport premium funding and pupil premium funding, is monitored effectively. However, the information on the school's website does not comply with the latest guidance.
- External support has been effective during this time of leadership transition. This support is helping leaders to prioritise aspects for improvement. For example, ensuring that the school's agreed non-negotiables are embedded, and the quality of work in pupils' books improved.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have not been accurately informed about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Governors do ask questions and visit the school regularly to undertake their own monitoring and evaluation of school performance. However, they have not been fully successful in holding leaders to account for providing a consistently good standard of education. They have not challenged slower rates of progress for some year groups.
- Governors responsible for safeguarding check that staff training is up to date and understood. However, governors have not been strategic in their leadership of site safety requirements. They have not assured themselves that records of governors' safeguarding checks are entered onto the single central record. Although governors undertake very regular health and safety inspections, they have failed to ensure that the site is secure.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective overall. Senior leaders and governors ensure that training is up to date and reviewed regularly so that a clear culture of safeguarding practice is embedded across the school. Staff have been trained to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism through the government's 'Prevent' duty programme. Staff show a good understanding of their responsibilities and are vigilant in making referrals if they suspect that pupils are at risk of harm.
- Staff recruitment checks to ascertain staff suitability to work with pupils are compliant. Some aspects of ongoing risk assessments, including site safety, need to be sharpened. Statutory safeguarding requirements are met.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. Teachers' expectations are not high enough. This slows pupils' progress. Therefore, teaching requires improvement.
- Teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for the most able and middle-attaining pupils in some classes. Teachers' questioning does not stretch pupils' thinking sufficiently. This limits the progress that pupils make.
- Teachers do not use their assessments of what pupils can and cannot do well enough to plan work at the right level. Pupils are regularly given work that is too easy. Some activities do not allow pupils to apply and deepen their learning. Consequently, some pupils coast in their learning, and do not make enough progress.
- The teaching of reading is too variable. Pupils' understanding of the texts they read is too limited. Too few pupils are able to infer meaning in text. Conversely, in Year 6, teaching stretches pupils' understanding and pupils catch up quickly, often developing a sophisticated understanding of the text.
- Leaders have not provided enough high-quality reading books in the library and this limits pupils' exposure to appropriately challenging texts. While teachers work hard to deploy available resources, including the wider variety of additional text available in individual classes, they do not make strong enough links between high-quality reading and writing.
- The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is effective in helping pupils to develop their early reading. However, pupils' application of phonics to their early writing is less secure for some lower-attaining pupils.
- Teachers' expectations of writing are not consistently high. Teachers do not expect enough of pupils and a first draft of writing is too readily accepted. Poor spelling is a feature for many pupils in key stage 2. Until recently, spelling patterns and rules have not been taught effectively so some pupils in lower key stage 2 have gaps in their understanding. This hinders pupils' ability to produce high-quality, sustained writing. There is too limited an opportunity to write across the curriculum.
- The teaching of mathematics in Years 4 and 6 is strong. Pupils are encouraged to use and apply their mathematical understanding of number to reason and solve problems. However, in some other classes pupils are moved on too quickly or have insufficient opportunity to practise and consolidate their mathematical skills. As a result, pupils' progress speeds up and slows down across the school and gaps in learning remain.
- Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is monitored carefully. Targeted support and fair access to teaching and learning ensures that most of these pupils make strong progress.
- Pupils experience a wide range of subjects. Pupils told an inspector how motivated they are about learning French. However, the teaching of science is not consistent and some misconceptions go uncorrected. There is too limited evidence of pupils using and applying scientific principles in their work. As a result, too few pupils are on track to meet or exceed standards expected nationally.
- Teaching assistants offer caring support. However, their support is not always precise enough to help pupils move forward in their learning. This is because there is fragility

in teaching assistants' subject knowledge.

- The feedback pupils receive is generally supportive. Because of this, pupils can talk about what they need to do next to meet their targets. However, sometimes feedback to pupils does not focus on the right aspects for improvement and this leaves pupils with gaps in their learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Important aspects regarding site safety have been overlooked. The school's personal, social and health education programme does not allow pupils to gain a substantial understanding of keeping safe, managing risk and stranger danger. As a result, pupils are not prepared fully for life in modern Britain. This aspect requires further development.
- Most pupils spoken to on inspection say they feel safe. Pupils know about keeping safe on the internet but are less secure about stranger danger.
- Pupils have a large space to play outside and benefit from the range of equipment on offer. They talk positively about the roles of the peer mentors who support younger pupils.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are articulate and demonstrate good manners. They are genuinely inquisitive about the world around them and eager to help each other. Older pupils take on board additional responsibilities with pride. For example, Year 6 monitors check that younger pupils get to their classroom safely after lunch and playtime.
- Even when their work is too easy, pupils do their best and complete what is asked of them. Most pupils show high levels of motivation in lessons but they too readily accept work that is too easy or does not stimulate their thinking as the norm.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and they know who to go to if they have a concern. There are consistent systems in place and pupils and teachers follow these well. Pupils say that teachers sort out any misunderstandings quickly.
- Pupils' attendance is good overall. However, there are a small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. These pupils say that teachers help them to catch up on work that they have missed.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Requires improvement**

- Outcomes at the end of the early years have been above the national average for the last three years. Boys do consistently less well than girls but still attain more highly than other boys nationally. However, many pupils enter the early years with knowledge and skills above their chronological age. The most able children do not make

consistently good progress from their high starting points.

- Outcomes in the phonics screening test in Year 1 have been well above the national average for the last three years, including for those pupils who are disadvantaged. This enables pupils to read well but some pupils are less successful in applying their knowledge of phonics to their writing.
- 2016 outcomes at the end of Year 2 were variable from pupils' starting points. Too few pupils exceeded the expected standards in reading and writing.
- In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards was above the national average. However, too few pupils exceeded the expected standards in mathematics and writing. Some pupils did not make enough progress from their middle and high starting points. Scrutiny of current pupils' work and school assessment information confirm that this is still the case.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make enough progress. Most-able writers do not receive sufficient exposure to challenging work and this inhibits their ability to write at depth. Weak application of spelling is also evident. By the time pupils reach the end of key stage 2, the most able readers are accomplished in their skills. However, progress for this group is too variable across the school.
- In 2016, the differences between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and others nationally were large. Inspection evidence confirms that current disadvantaged pupils across the school make variable progress in reading and writing.
- Most pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the targeted support they receive.
- Pupils' work in books confirms that progress is uneven across the school. Because the quality of teaching is variable, this affects the rates of progress from year to year. As a result, some pupils underachieve and need to catch up.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Leaders are ambitious and determined to ensure that children's outcomes are strong. However, children do not make good enough progress from high starting points in some aspects of learning. Activities planned do not consistently build on what pupils can and cannot do. Consequently, the most able children do not progress well enough.
- Adults make detailed assessments of what children know and understand. However, these assessments are not used consistently well to plan activities to meet children's needs. Adults do not fully maximise opportunities to notice, prompt and facilitate children's learning. Consequently, some activities are over directed and do not facilitate children's language development.
- Some activities planned do not successfully deepen pupils' understanding of number. While children receive plenty of opportunities to practise and consolidate, they do not get enough opportunities to explore numbers in real life context. School assessment information confirms that progress in number is too limited for some children.
- The focus on improving children's writing is paying dividends. Children are able to apply their understanding of phonics. Most children can write simple sentences and

increasingly, some children can include additional detail.

- In Reception, routines and relationships are well established. The environment is vibrant and children's learning is celebrated through displays.
- Children are safe. However, leaders need to be more vigilant to ensure that regular checks to the site are carried out. The strategic leadership of health and safety requires improvement.
- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery provision. The calm and purposeful environment supports children well. Adults show care and encouragement. Children and adults have strong relationships, so positive learning takes place. Adults use questions to develop children's language skills, confidence and knowledge. As a result, children enjoy their learning and play and engage fully in the activities on offer. However, from their high starting points children do not make consistently good progress by the end of the early years.



## School details

Unique reference number	123782
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10019460

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phillip Butler
Interim Executive Headteacher	John Jeffery
Telephone number	01749 850375
Website	<a href="http://www.uptonnoble.org.uk">www.uptonnoble.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@uptonnoble.somerset.sch.uk">office@uptonnoble.somerset.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	28–29 November 2011

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium funding on its website.
- The vast majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school is part of a hard federation with Bruton Primary school. There is one governing body across the two schools.

- The part-time interim executive headteacher has been in post since January 2017 and works one and a half days per week. The outgoing substantive headteacher left in December 2016. Governors have successfully appointed another executive headteacher who takes up her role in April 2017.
- There is a full-time head of school.
- The SENCo works across the federation and shares her time across the two schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across the school. Some lessons were observed jointly with the head of school or interim executive headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the interim executive headteacher, head of school, school business manager and middle leaders.
- A meeting took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Two meetings took place with governors.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documents including the school's action plan and the school's self-evaluation document. Records relating to behaviour and safety, attendance and safeguarding were also reviewed.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with some pupils to seek their views of the school and discuss how they feel about their learning and development.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books to establish the quality of their current work and their progress over time, and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors considered 33 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also considered comments provided by parents' text messages and spoke to parents during the inspection. The views of staff were also considered through an online survey and discussions on inspection.

## Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ross Newman	Ofsted Inspector
Faye Bertham	Ofsted Inspector

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