

Upton Primary School

Iris Avenue, Bexley, Kent DA5 1HH

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Senior leaders and governors work exceptionally well together to create a vibrant, caring, hard-working climate for learning across the school. The headteacher's calm, thoughtful and decisive leadership helps other leaders to thrive and be successful in their roles. The school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. Teaching, learning and assessment have improved significantly, resulting in outcomes for pupils which are now outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They learn and play together extremely well and are able to recognise and celebrate their similarities and differences. Pupils 'live' the school's values of tolerance and respect. They are confident, caring, friendly young British citizens.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons and create a stunning learning environment around the school, which pupils benefit from and are proud of. Teachers provide precise guidance to pupils to help them improve their work.
- Children in the early years provision benefit from a wonderful start to their education. They make excellent progress from their starting points and a very high proportion of them achieve a good overall level of development.
- Leaders and teachers have ensured a sharp focus on checking pupils' progress regularly and systematically. As a result, past differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others are diminishing rapidly in all year groups.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were above the national average for all pupils in 2016. Provisional outcomes for 2017 show improvements on these results. Leaders and governors have used additional funding for disadvantaged pupils very well. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017 is expected to be well above last year's national average for all pupils.
- The absolute priority of all staff in the school is to keep children safe and to ensure their well-being. As one parent put it, 'The best thing about this school is that the children are so happy.' Parents are very positive about the work of the school.
- Teachers and support staff demonstrate excellent subject knowledge in all subjects taught. However, the progress that pupils make in science is not consistently strong in all year groups.
- Pupils would benefit from further opportunities to apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills in all subjects across the curriculum.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen outcomes further by supporting pupils in all year groups to:
 - apply their literacy and mathematics skills consistently across the curriculum
 - make strong and sustained progress in their science work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is an exceptional leader. He motivates and guides leaders and staff to do the very best that they can to improve the life chances of the pupils at Upton Primary School. The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher for inclusion provide inspirational leadership under his direction. Middle leaders are well supported in their roles. As a result, the leadership capacity to both sustain recent improvements to teaching, learning and assessment, and to build on them further, is formidable.
- Since the headteacher took up his post two years ago, he has made sure that leaders and teachers have been relentless and rigorous in their focus on learning and assessment. Leaders analyse information about pupils' achievement in great detail. Their very regular checks on the progress pupils make ensures that gaps in pupils' learning are filled swiftly through effective catch-up sessions.
- The pupil premium funding to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is used very effectively and provides them with equal opportunities to be successful in their learning. As a result, past differences between their achievement and that of other pupils nationally have been addressed. Any small differences in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others are diminishing rapidly throughout the school. The provisional Year 6 test results for 2017 indicate that the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils are set to improve significantly on the 2016 outcomes. Disadvantaged pupils attained well above the 2016 national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Systems in place to manage the performance of teachers are rigorous. The headteacher has used appraisal well to eradicate weaker teaching. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the current quality of teaching in all year groups and are incisive in their feedback to teachers to help strengthen teaching further.
- Funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well. Leaders have an incisive knowledge of every pupil and provision is tailored to meet pupils' needs. The autistic spectrum disorder provision (The Pad) and the speech, language and communication provision (The Ark) are led and managed extremely well.
- Leaders use the sports premium funding effectively. The specialist sports coach teaches a range of sports with great enthusiasm during the school day and during lunchtimes. Teachers' skills are improved through watching specialists teach. The funding has also enabled pupils to benefit from a range of sporting equipment. Pupils enjoy sports and understand the impact of exercise on their health and well-being.
- The curriculum inspires and motivates pupils to do their best in a wide range of subjects, within and beyond the school day. A wide range of after-school activities, including music and sports clubs, have a good impact on pupils' well-being and personal development, as well as developing their skills in the various activities. Pupils are given a voice in deciding on curriculum content. They are proud to show the outcomes of their work across the school. The learning environment around the building and in classrooms is stimulating and thought-provoking. Work is displayed beautifully and instils a great sense of pride and achievement within the school

community. Homework is presented in an innovative and exciting way. For example, pupils in Year 4 select from a range of tasks which earn them value points that link to the reward system. Pupils in The Pad select from a 'menu' of activities with value points as the 'price' list.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted highly effectively throughout the curriculum. Pupils understand the differences that may exist between them and they celebrate them. For example, during assembly, pupils from The Ark led the singing. Other pupils joined in enthusiastically. The large number of pupils in the assembly then discussed the theme of happiness in pairs. There was a delightful sense of community, respect and affection.
- Parents appreciate the work of the school and believe that it has improved considerably since the time of the previous inspection. Most parents believe that leaders and teachers do the best that they can for their children.
- The local authority has provided good challenge and support to the school during its journey to being outstanding. This has helped leaders to strengthen their rigorous self-evaluation processes.

Governance

- Governance is a great strength of the school. Governors are rigorous in the challenge they offer to school leaders. They are also extremely supportive of the work of the school and play an active part in school life. For example, they organised a 'tea party' for local pensioners which they helped to run with the pupils.
- Governors take their roles and responsibilities very seriously. They constantly review their effectiveness and seek appropriate training to further improve their skills. They exude a strong moral purpose and a passion for making education the very best that it can be for pupils at the school.
- Governors monitor spending carefully and ensure that additional funding is spent wisely to benefit pupils.
- Governors carry out a suitable range of checks to make sure that their statutory duties regarding safeguarding are met. They maintain good relationships with staff and parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Keeping children safe lies at the heart of the school's work. Leaders ensure that all staff receive appropriate training on all aspects of safeguarding, including radicalisation, extremism and female genital mutilation. Staff understand and use the school's safeguarding policy well. They know that 'everything stops' if a child is in need.
- Leaders work tirelessly to secure support from external services to help vulnerable pupils. They operate within a time of great challenge. Local services are much reduced. However, they go 'above and beyond' to ensure that pupils are kept safe and cared for. The inclusion leader has a detailed understanding of every vulnerable or 'at risk' pupil in the school. Her level of commitment and care for these pupils is commendable. The

impact of her work to safeguard pupils is evident throughout the school. She is an inspiration to staff and pupils alike.

- Parents are very positive and grateful for the work that leaders do to keep pupils safe. They value the calm, supportive way in which leaders deal with any child protection issues.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now outstanding. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They have high expectations for pupils. They use pupils' mistakes as teaching points and pick up on misconceptions quickly. During the morning, teachers carefully assess pupils' work to see if there are any misconceptions or if progress appears to be weak. They then immediately target pupils for catch-up sessions in the afternoon. This ensures that gaps in understanding are tackled swiftly and effectively.
- Supportive, trusting relationships underpin teaching, learning and assessment. Pupils know that their teachers want them to do well. The climate for learning is extremely positive. Classroom displays celebrate success but are also used as teaching tools. Pupils refer to 'learning walls' to help them.
- Pupils are provided with clear guidance from teachers on how to improve their work. Teaching assistants are deployed very well and make a good impact on pupils' progress. Pupils also evaluate each other's work with confidence and sensitivity.
- Teachers have worked hard to implement the school's mathematics programme. They have responded well to training and to support from leaders. As a result, pupils across the school make consistently strong and sustained progress.
- Writing is taught very effectively. Pupils write confidently and competently for a range of purposes and audiences. Teachers use literature as a stimulus for writing along with themes and topics related to other subjects. In all current year groups, most pupils are working at or above the expected standard for their age. Many pupils across the school are producing writing which is well above the expected standard.
- Reading is taught well and pupils understand the importance of reading widely and often. Strong phonics teaching in the early years and in Year 1 ensures that pupils are confident in tackling unknown words. Pupils read a range of literature with teachers and independently. The new approach to teaching group reading is having a good impact on further strengthening pupils' progress.
- Pupils in The Pad benefit from high-quality teaching and support. As a result, they make excellent progress from their starting points, because leaders and staff understand their individual needs and plan for them. Pupils are very well cared for in this provision. They are given homework which reinforces the work done in school and offers further stretch and challenge in a motivating way.
- Pupils who attend The Ark provision also make excellent progress from their starting points, despite the changes in teaching staff which have occurred over the past two years. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for pupils and have given them a sense of continuity and stability. The inclusion manager is training and supporting a highly skilled teacher who will take up her post in The Ark in September. When pupils

from the provision integrate into their mainstream classes, they are given excellent support to access the learning and as a result, they make very good progress indeed.

- Pupils are given a range of opportunities to apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills across a range of subjects. Leaders recognise that this aspect of the school's provision could be strengthened further.
- The teaching of science is improving but is not yet leading to consistently strong progress in all year groups.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are confident, happy learners who care about their community. As one pupil put it, 'Everyone has the responsibility of making the school a better place through being kind.'
- Pupils work hard and try their best. They take pride in their work. The school 'aspiration tree' reinforces the steps pupils need to take to achieve their individual goals.
- Pupils take care of each other. Mainstream pupils are particularly caring when pupils from the resourced provision join them in lessons and in the playground. Pupils who are new to English quickly find that friendship awaits them at Upton. Pupils celebrate the diversity within the community and they learn to respect other views and beliefs.
- Members of the 'junior leadership team' are elected by their classmates and represent the views of the pupils. They led on plans to improve the playground and were proud that they were able 'to make the playground bright and colourful'.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and when they are outside the school community. They feel safe and valued when they are at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is impeccable.
- Playtimes are sociable and friendly. Pupils from different backgrounds and with different abilities and needs play happily together. Typical of this was a group of three pupils sharing a joke and having fun. One was a pupil who was at the early stages of learning English, one was a pupil who attends The Ark provision and one was a highly articulate, very able pupil. The school has successfully taught pupils that there are no barriers to friendship.
- Pupils and parents agree that there is no bullying at school. One pupil stated confidently, 'We don't do bullying here!' School records show that rare cases of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively by leaders.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. Leaders ensure that pupils from all

groups attend well.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Leaders analysed the outcomes for all pupils in Year 6 and in Year 2 following the end-of-year assessments in 2016. They took swift, incisive action to ensure that there are no longer any differences between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. Pupil premium funding was forensically targeted to provide pupils with group and classroom support to ensure that any gaps in learning were filled. Provisional data indicates that disadvantaged pupils' achievement in 2017 will be well above the 2016 national average. Leaders have also taken effective action to ensure that pupils in Year 2 make similar sustained strong progress, irrespective of their different starting points.
- At the end of key stage 2, overall attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. The 2017 provisional data indicates that this has been sustained. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 was in line with the national average. Provisional information for 2017 indicates that there has been significant improvement this year. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the higher standard increased by almost 20% in mathematics, which indicates a much higher level of attainment than that achieved by all pupils nationally in 2016.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well above the national average. The school's assessment information indicates that this achievement will be sustained in 2017.
- Pupils in all year groups have made strong and sustained progress in reading, writing and mathematics this year. Differences between the progress that disadvantaged pupils and other pupils make are diminishing rapidly. The most able pupils across the school, including those who are disadvantaged, make strong progress similar to that of their classmates. Provisional results for 2017 indicate that the proportion of pupils achieving a higher standard in reading and mathematics is well above the 2016 national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in writing is in line with last year's national average.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress from their starting points. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress because teaching helps them to quickly catch up.
- Pupils' outcomes in science were below average at the end of key stage 2 in 2016. Provisional data for 2017 shows that outcomes are broadly average. Some year groups make strong, sustained progress in science but this is not yet consistent in all year groups.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- From broadly average starting points, children in the early years make outstanding progress. A much higher proportion of them achieve a good overall level of development by the time they leave the early years than is seen nationally.
- Approximately 50% of the children who start in Reception have attended the Nursery class. Children make very good progress in the Nursery and then build on this in Reception. Children who start the school in Reception quickly make very good progress from their starting points.
- Children are extremely well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum when they leave the early years. As a result of excellent phonics teaching, many children are already working within the expected standard for Year 1. Transition arrangements are very effective. Sessions to inform parents about the changes to the curriculum and to routines in Year 1 are very well attended.
- Leadership of the early years is outstanding. Leaders ensure that planning meets the needs of learners and that children's progress is tracked rigorously. The learning environment inside and outside is exceptional. Children benefit from a range of exciting tasks and activities which help them make excellent progress in all areas of learning in a creative, innovative and enjoyable way. Children are enticed into learning and they know that 'learning is fun!'
- Children delight in telling visitors what they are learning and what they are doing. A Reception child carefully showed inspectors how to examine a caterpillar with a magnifying glass. She later invited them to see the cosy den she had made.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. Children behaved sensibly and calmly to make sure that they had everything they needed when preparing for a trip during the inspection.
- Children are kept safe in the early years. Parents are rightly delighted with the provision.

School details

Unique reference number	101413
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10031807

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joanne Leech
Headteacher	Mr Mark Oldfield
Telephone number	020 8303 7266
Website	www.upton.bexley.sch.uk
Email address	admin@upton.bexley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is part of the Inspire Partnership. This is a collaboration of schools which share best practice in the area. The school secures some professional development opportunities from the partnership.
- Upton is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is slightly smaller than average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The next largest group are of Black African heritage.
- The school has a resourced provision for eight pupils who are on the autistic spectrum disorder (The Pad), and a resourced provision for 12 pupils with speech, language and

communication difficulties (The Ark).

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups at least twice. Observations were undertaken with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the inclusion manager and the English subject leader.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss their learning and their views on the school. Pupils took inspectors on a 'curriculum tour' of the school.
- All leaders met with inspectors to discuss their roles and the impact of their work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to pupils in the lunch hall, in lessons and as they moved around the building.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, improvement plans, curriculum plans and checks on the quality of teaching. They also examined school records relating to safety and behaviour.
- Inspectors scrutinised books to see what progress pupils make across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors took account of 42 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection.
- Children from the early years were out on a school trip for most of the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alison Moller	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Wagstaff	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jude Wilson	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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