

Uplands Manor Primary School

Addenbrooke Road, Smethwick, West Midlands B67 6HT

Inspection dates

26–27 September 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- In the absence of a permanent headteacher, the school's current leaders do not have the time they need to improve the school quickly. Some management actions, such as those funded by the pupil premium, are not fully coordinated.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teachers set work that is sometimes not well matched to pupils' needs. In particular, the tasks set for the most able pupils often do not require them to think hard enough.
- Leaders do not check specifically on the competency of pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils are sometimes expected to read texts that are too hard.
- Until recently, academic standards in the school had declined. In recent years, pupils have left key stage 2 with attainment below that of pupils nationally.
- Pupils, especially those in the older years, have not made strong progress in reading. Staff do not focus sufficiently on pupils' weaker reading skills.
- Teaching in mathematics only occasionally encourages pupils to reason mathematically and apply their skills in new ways.
- In some foundation subjects, teachers do not take account of pupils' variable prior knowledge and understanding. Pupils do not learn enough about how scientists think and work.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders at all levels have a good understanding of how to improve the school, and a great commitment to doing so. This term, the acting headteachers have addressed key issues effectively.
- Pupils who have complex speech, language and communication needs make good progress because they receive expert support.
- Standards in the school are rising. The large majority of pupils, especially in the younger years, are working at the level expected for their age.
- Children in the early years make good progress, often from low starting points.
- From Nursery onwards, staff ensure that pupils respect each other and adults. Behaviour is good, and safeguarding is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers identify accurately those reading skills which pupils most need to acquire, and teach them effectively
 - making sure that the work set for the most able pupils, including in the early years, provides sufficient challenge to deepen their understanding
 - providing pupils with mathematical tasks which require them to reason mathematically and apply their knowledge in new contexts
 - ensuring that work in foundation subjects is securely based on what pupils already know and understand.
- Extend the impact of leadership and management by:
 - making the most effective use of those staff who understand and demonstrate good practice to improve the skills of their colleagues
 - tracking the competency in English skills of pupils who speak English as an additional language and ensuring that teachers use the information well to plan their work
 - ensuring that development plans allocate sufficient priority and resources to those actions which will have the greatest impact on raising achievement.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium 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

- The effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement because leaders have not maintained a consistently good standard of teaching. As a result, achievement has declined since the last inspection, especially at key stage 2. The absence of a permanent headteacher is stretching the capacity of leaders to raise standards as consistently and as rapidly as they would like.
- The expenditure of the pupil premium grant is a case in point. Leaders know how the money has been spent primarily to overcome disadvantaged pupils' social and emotional barriers to learning and improving their attitudes to their work. Staff know that a greater impact is now needed on academic progress. They have good ideas about how to achieve this, but leaders have not given a high enough priority to implementing these ideas in a coordinated way.
- Leaders have not kept track of the developing competency of each pupil who joins the school speaking English as an additional language. Staff are unaware of precisely what they can expect from these pupils and, as a result, teachers sometimes set inappropriate work. Inspectors found on occasion that these pupils could not read the texts teachers had given them.
- The school's current improvement plan identifies too many actions, and gives only limited criteria by which success can be measured. However, the acting headteachers have a very sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and their views of teaching during the inspection concurred with those of the inspectors.
- Leaders check regularly on pupils' progress, and use the information to hold teachers to account and to identify pupils at risk of falling behind. Teachers' judgements are checked against those of their colleagues and those made by teachers in other local schools. Some additional teaching planned to help pupils catch up had not begun at the time of the inspection.
- Since they took up their posts at the beginning of this term, the acting headteachers have taken some important steps to improve the school. As an example, they have tightened the implementation of the school's attendance policy. They have wisely allocated more time to middle leaders to allow them to have a greater impact on achieving consistency in the quality of teaching.
- The school provides pupils with good access to the national curriculum. Leaders ensure that each topic begins with a memorable experience, such as a visit to a museum, to help pupils understand the context of their work. They promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, so that pupils respect religions and traditions other than their own. Pupils who spoke with inspectors have a strong understanding of fundamental British values.
- Pupils enjoy a good range of clubs that offer activities in music and a diverse range of sports. The physical education (PE) and sports premium is spent effectively in support of competitive sport and developing teachers' skills in teaching PE.
- Staff at all levels, including teachers at an early stage of their careers, told inspectors that they receive effective training. They understand how the school needs to change,

and are eager to develop their skills. The management of teachers' performance is closely based on classroom standards and the school's objectives.

- Leaders manage the support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. They know the needs of individual pupils in detail, and keep a close eye on their progress. They ensure that additional money provided to meet their needs is well spent.
- In general, the local authority has supported the school effectively. It makes a strong contribution to the progress of pupils in the special provision by giving expert advice on how best to meet these pupils' complex needs.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Parents know who the governors are, and are confident to approach them with any concerns. Governors make sure that they are well trained. They are fully aware of their responsibilities in securing the future leadership of the school.
- Governors know the school well. Leaders regularly provide governors with detailed information about pupils' performance, including the achievement of groups of pupils. On this basis, governors very effectively hold leaders to account for their actions. They challenge leaders about any weaknesses or problems, and expect them to explain how these will be resolved.
- Governors exercise strong financial controls and make sure that the school works within its budget. They check on the expenditure of additional funding provided to support groups of pupils and are aware of its variable impact on pupils' progress. They make appropriate arrangements for the management of the headteacher's performance.
- The governing body fulfils its role in helping to keep children safe. It has a thorough understanding of the risks faced by pupils in the local community, including those associated with radicalisation. It has a good knowledge of online safety.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's arrangements meet all statutory requirements, and all policies and procedures are up to date. Leaders have ensured that all staff are familiar with child protection guidance and have been trained to an appropriate level. They ensure that the right checks are made when staff are appointed. Important documents are readily available in print and online.
- Staff are vigilant and well aware of how to report any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Records, held both electronically and in files, are detailed and well organised. Leaders work well with other agencies to help those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Parents who spoke with inspectors value the support that the school had given them in caring for their children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable. Leaders at all levels know its weaknesses, but have not checked on teaching rigorously enough to ensure that teachers address the weaknesses consistently. The quality varies between different year groups and different subjects.
- Teachers sometimes set work which does not take full account of what some pupils in the class already know and understand. When this happens, the most able pupils in the class have work that is too easy or that emphasises basic knowledge at the expense of deeper understanding. Occasionally, less-able pupils are confused by the task the teacher has asked them to complete. In these circumstances, teachers do not use pupils' time in lessons effectively.
- The teaching of phonics is generally effective, and many pupils develop an early love of reading. However, teachers do not assess pupils' progress in acquiring higher reading skills such as inference carefully enough to set tasks which develop these skills rapidly and consistently. The planning and organisation of guided reading lessons during the inspection was variable, and sometimes insufficiently precise.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure that pupils become proficient in performing routine operations. However, they rarely require them to reason mathematically, and to explain their thinking. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to apply their mathematical understanding to new situations.
- Leaders rightly recognise the importance of making sure that pupils understand the background to their studies in foundation subjects such as geography and history. They ensure that topics are appropriate for pupils in a particular year group. However, teachers do not know enough about pupils' varying knowledge and understanding in these subjects to plan work which reliably develops their skills. Teaching in science does not build up pupils' understanding of how scientists work.
- Leaders measure the competence in English of pupils who speak it as an additional language when they enter the school, but do not update their assessments. As a result, teachers sometimes expect them to read texts which are too hard. Occasionally, they do not focus sufficiently on developing these pupils' skills in spoken English.
- Teachers set high expectations for pupils' attitudes to learning. Staff are quick to acknowledge good behaviour and perceptive answers, and use the school's reward system consistently. Lessons are characterised by very constructive relationships. Pupils collaborate willingly, discussing their work with enthusiasm and a good level of concentration.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally explain new ideas clearly, using the correct subject-specific terms. Teaching assistants typically work well with individual pupils and small groups, refocusing questions and breaking learning down into smaller steps. Pupils reported that homework makes a useful contribution to their learning, especially when it is closely related to work in class.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. During their first days at the school, pupils are warmly welcomed and encouraged to treat adults and other pupils with respect. This care and these expectations continue strongly throughout the pupils' time at the school.
- Pupils feel entirely safe throughout this particularly large school. They said that bullying is rare, and that there are plenty of people to turn to if a problem arises. Leaders' commitment, knowledge and vigilance make them highly effective in maintaining the welfare of all pupils, including those most at risk.
- The school teaches its pupils how to keep themselves safe from a wide variety of risks, including those posed by the internet. Leaders promote healthy eating and encourage pupils to adopt an active lifestyle. Pupils in Year 4 learn to swim.
- Through religious education lessons, assemblies and attention to topics such as Black history month, school leaders ensure that pupils learn to understand and value different cultures and traditions. As Year 2 pupils told one of the inspectors: 'We all believe in each other so we can get better.'
- Pupils are very clear about fundamental British values such as the rule of law and individual liberty. Elections to the school council demonstrate how democracy works. Pupils who spoke with inspectors understand the importance of equality, including for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Older pupils feel well prepared for secondary school.
- During the inspection, pupils were universally polite and friendly towards adults, and showed positive attitudes towards their work. Some, nevertheless, lack a little initiative, for example, when they finish their work or get stuck in lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, and appreciate the wide range of subjects they can study. They are willing to work hard. In the classroom, pupils follow instructions sensibly and settle to work without fuss. They understand and respect the school's behaviour policy and its reward system. During the inspection, pupils took considerable pride in their work and presented it neatly. There was very little disruption.
- Although the school building is large and complex, pupils' conduct in the corridors and in the dining rooms is orderly and responsible. During break and lunchtime, they play happily together.
- A small minority of pupils join the school in the early years or other than at normal points of transfer, and they display challenging behaviour. They typically settle well, and their behaviour improves markedly in response to skilful behaviour management and the orderly atmosphere of the school. In recent years, the school has not excluded

a pupil permanently, but has made use of fixed-term exclusion on rare occasions.

- During the last academic year, pupils' attendance was below the national average and fell slightly. The proportion of pupils who were absent persistently was also above that found nationally. These rates reflected an inconsistent application of the school's attendance policy. However, the acting headteachers have now applied the policy rigorously, and in the early weeks of the current school year attendance has been average. The attendance of all vulnerable groups of pupils has risen.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because, across the school, pupils have not made consistently strong progress. Pupils' progress reflects very clearly the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- In 2016, the last year for which results have been published, key stage 2 pupils left the school having made progress in writing that was above average. Progress in mathematics was below average, and progress in reading was in line with that seen nationally. Provisional information about outcomes in 2017 shows that Year 6 pupils have made progress which was below average in reading and in mathematics. Leaders attribute the weaker outcomes to pupils' difficulties in applying their mathematical knowledge and in responding to the implications of a text.
- In general, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in all key stages is broadly similar to that of other pupils in the school. This reflects leaders' success in overcoming the social and emotional factors which inhibit the learning of some disadvantaged pupils. Leaders presented information that showed some long-term improvement in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. However, the expenditure of the pupil premium grant is yet to ensure that the difference between their achievement and that of other pupils nationally is diminishing decisively.
- The progress of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, has typically been close to that of pupils of average and below-average ability. However, provisional information shows that the progress made by the most able mathematicians who left key stage 2 in 2017 was particularly weak. The proportion of pupils who achieved at greater depth in reading, writing or mathematics was low. The most able pupils do not make accelerated progress because they spend too long completing work which is straightforward and not enough time thinking more deeply.
- Leaders have recently improved the range of books available to pupils, and they ensure Year 4 pupils join the public library. Many pupils told inspectors of their enthusiasm for reading, but a minority said that they do not read at home.
- Pupils have generally made strong progress in writing, because teachers have ensured that they have a good grasp of English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Handwriting is often well formed, but pupils sometimes take less care when writing in subjects other than English.
- Information supplied by the school showed that historically the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been sluggish. Inspection evidence found, however, that teachers and teaching assistants have been well trained to meet individual pupils' needs. They plan pupils' learning effectively, and during the

inspection many pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were seen to be making good progress.

- Pupils who attend the specialist provision for pupils who have speech, language and communication difficulties make good progress. They benefit substantially from the advice which teachers receive from experts and the skill with which staff execute the detailed plans for their development. Information supplied by the school shows that pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress in line with that of their peers.
- Attainment in the school is rising. The large majority of pupils, particularly in the younger years, are working at a level appropriate to their age. Provisional information shows that in 2017, key stage 1 pupils' attainment was in line with the national average. Inspectors saw pupils working at an ambitious level in several lessons, and noticeably in music and information technology. Leaders rightly claim to be improving the school 'from the bottom up'. Nevertheless, gaps remain in the understanding of many pupils, and closing these gaps is crucial if pupils are to fulfil their academic potential.

Early years provision

Good

- The majority of pupils enter the school in either the Nursery Year or the Reception Year with skills and abilities below or well below those typical for their age. Leaders rapidly assess their capabilities and identify those who require additional support. Teachers draw effectively on the advice of other professionals to plan the work for children who have particular needs.
- Children settle very quickly because adults show them a conspicuously high degree of care and establish clear routines. Children rapidly feel secure in the setting, and learn to work and play happily together. They enjoy coming to school. Adults explain and demonstrate acceptable behaviour, and provide effective support for those pupils who join the school with emotional difficulties. Consequently, relationships between children and adults are excellent, and behaviour in the early years is good.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is good. Staff observe children's skills keenly and plan the next steps in their learning accordingly. They introduce children to a wide variety of interesting activities. Staff question children carefully to encourage them to think harder. Children concentrate well. The teaching of phonics is secure, although occasionally staff do not pronounce sounds accurately.
- In recent years, the proportion of children who have left the Reception Year having attained a good level of development has been below that seen nationally. However, a detailed analysis shows that in both Nursery and Reception children typically make good progress from their starting points.
- Unvalidated information shows that in 2017 few pupils in the Reception Year exceeded the expected standard in any of the areas of learning. Staff sometimes do not challenge the most able pupils to build on their existing knowledge sufficiently and so deepen their understanding.
- Leaders in the early years record pupils' achievements regularly, and make sure that teachers' judgements are checked against those made by other schools. Leaders are

skilled at using information about children's achievement to establish those aspects of the setting which require further development. As a result, they have been able to develop the curriculum, for example, to make activities more appealing to boys.

- Leaders work very effectively with parents, visiting pupils' homes before the school year starts, and making any arrangements necessary to ensure that individual pupils get off to a good start. Teachers encourage parents to look at children's achievements in their learning journeys, and to help them with learning at home.
- The school's procedures to keep children safe and promote their welfare in the early years setting are rigorous. All statutory requirements are met. Both the indoor and the outdoor areas are well organised and stimulating. The environment encourages children to recognise and learn about numbers, but the outside area in particular does not promote reading so well.
- Leaders plan effectively for children to make the transition to key stage 1. Year 1 teachers continue to track carefully the progress of pupils who are not ready to move on to the national curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	131184
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10037113

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	946
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Feiven
Acting headteachers	Frances Barnes Joanne Copestake
Telephone number	0121 558 1602
Website	www.uplandsmanor.sandwell.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@uplandsmanor.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2012

Information about this school

- Uplands Manor Primary School is a much larger than average-sized primary school. The school roll has increased markedly since the last inspection. Almost all children who attend the Nursery classes do so part time.
- The school hosts a 12-place provision that supports the needs of pupils who have complex speech, language and communication difficulties whose needs cannot be met in mainstream provision.
- The headteacher left his post in August 2017, and a permanent headteacher is yet to be appointed.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.

- Pupils are drawn from several ethnic groups. No one group constitutes more than about a quarter of the school's population.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the recent attendance at governors' meetings and its assessment results on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons and on 10 learning walks. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. The inspectors also observed pupils' conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, other leaders, class teachers, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Four groups of pupils, two chosen at random, met with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke with many other pupils informally. One inspector listened to pupils in Year 2 read.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' current workbooks in lessons. They also scrutinised in depth the work produced last academic year by a sample of pupils from every year group. Inspectors considered a range of information about pupils' recent performance.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, both electronically and on paper. These included: development plans and evaluations of the school's performance; minutes of meetings held by the governing body; policies; and anonymised information showing how the headteacher manages the performance of teachers. Inspectors scrutinised in detail records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- The inspection team also took account of the 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and comments made by email and using the free-text facility. Inspectors looked at a parental questionnaire conducted by the school. They spoke with several parents bringing their children to school on the second day of the inspection. Inspectors also considered the 45 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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