

Inspection of a good school: Upton-upon-Severn CofE Primary School

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

Inspection dates:

22–23 October 2019

Outcome

Upton-upon-Severn CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders' philosophy is that 'geese travel much further when they all fly together'. This ethos is at the heart of all they do. Parents, carers and staff agree that pupils are happy and safe at school. Pupils confirmed this too. Everyone looks out for each other as part of a team.

Pupils behave well in and around school. They know that there is an adult they can turn to if anything worries them. If any incidents of bullying arise, pupils said that leaders deal with them well.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They are especially enthusiastic about mathematics. They get off to a rapid start with their reading when they first join school. Those who find reading difficult show perseverance when tackling tricky words.

Leaders make full use of the nearby River Severn to provide pupils with wider learning opportunities. Pupils make extensive use of the bell boat which the school owns. Pupils' writing comes to life when they write about their experiences. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils wrote about different buildings after they visited Avoncroft museum. This was part of their topic on homes and houses. Older pupils took part in Macbeth workshops with the Royal Shakespeare Company.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Children start well with their learning in Nursery and Reception. They learn new subject-specific vocabulary early on. For example, pupils in Nursery talked with confidence about water 'hydrating' us. Pupils settle into routines in a prompt fashion to learn phonics in the early years. By Year 2, most pupils have learned the phonics skills they need to become fluent readers. They can read books that are well matched to the sounds and letters they know. They can sound out unfamiliar words with confidence. Pupils enjoy reading often and for pleasure. Leaders successfully encourage parents to read to their children at home from an early age.

Pupils do well in their writing by the end of Year 6. This has been a major focus for the school since the last inspection. A range of subjects, including mathematics, provide pupils with varied opportunities to write.

Pupils have not made as much progress in mathematics by Year 6 compared to reading and writing. Leaders are making sure that older pupils have a deeper understanding of their work. Pupils encounter challenging mathematical vocabulary in Year 6. They know the meaning of 'quotient', 'dividend' and 'divisor'. Pupils can recall such terms with confidence. Pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic about their work. They enjoy challenges such as measuring the circumference of pumpkins. Some younger pupils find it hard to remember key mathematical terms and concepts, however.

Pupils study French, with a French specialist, every week throughout key stage 2. Leaders have reflected on and revised their schemes of work. This is because pupils struggled to remember French words they had not learned for a while. Some class teachers now provide time to practise what pupils have learned before. As a result, pupils can recall more of what they learned, such as greetings and instructions. Leaders know that these opportunities to practise what they have learned in French need to be more consistent across key stage 2. Pupils do not get the opportunity to write long sentences in French. Leaders know that they also need to develop their curriculum plans in the other foundation subjects further.

No pupils miss any of the subjects taught on a regular basis. Some pupils, including those who have joined the school midway through the school year, receive booster sessions in literacy and numeracy in the afternoon. However, each of these sessions is short and is time-limited. Teachers ensure that these are never at the same time each week. Leaders check the impact of the extra support with care to make sure that it is effective. Parents appreciate the support their children receive. This includes for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Lessons are free of low-level disruptive behaviour. Serious incidents are very rare. Pupils are polite and courteous. They work well with each other in lessons. Pupils agreed that the good behaviour seen during the inspection visit is typical. They take on wider responsibilities, such as running the library themselves. There is a rich variety of clubs and extra-curricular activities for pupils. These include a choir in music and sports tournaments.

Staff appreciate the way leaders consider their workload and well-being. Leaders have reduced the burden of assessment by reviewing policies on marking. This has included a 'no-marking' trial in one class. Staff were complimentary about leaders' efforts. One summed up the views of others by saying, 'Without the consideration of the headteacher, staff absence would be much higher.'

Governors support leaders well. They also challenge them. This includes over pupil test results and leaders' plans for the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take their responsibilities very seriously. They respond promptly and effectively to any concerns. They reflect carefully on how to improve their procedures and policies further. Leaders encourage staff to report 'any niggles' they have, however small they may appear. Staff know how to respond to a safeguarding incident. They are up to date with training and their knowledge of the latest guidance. Staff are alert to the social media dangers and of local risks such as far-right activity. They raise awareness with pupils and parents constantly. Governors carry out their duties and responsibilities effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in key stage 2 do not do as well in mathematics as they do in writing. Leaders should ensure that improvements made to the quality of education in mathematics in upper key stage 2 are consistently applied throughout the school.
- Plans for the development of the wider curriculum in the foundation subjects are still at an early stage of implementation. These should be embedded more consistently across the school.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise what they have learned in French and write in sentences by Year 6. Leaders should ensure that more class teachers enable pupils to practise what they have learned and to start writing words and phrases at an early stage.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	116853
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10082163
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tracy Kelly-Freer
Headteacher	Julie Wills
Website	uptonprimaryschool.education
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2015

Information about this school

- A new deputy headteacher post was established from September 2019.
- The chair of the governing body took up her post in 2018.
- A pre-school, managed by the governing body, operates on the school site and caters for children aged two to four years old. Children under three are subject to separate inspection. Therefore, this inspection looked at provision for those children who were three years old and above.
- There is a high level of pupil mobility in the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, subject leaders, the coordinator for early years and other members of staff. Two leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, were absent on a school trip during the inspection. The inspector met two members of the governing body, including the chair. He also spoke by telephone to the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector took account of 11 responses to the Parent View free-text service and 59 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. He also reviewed 62 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 16 to the staff questionnaire.

- The inspector considered information on behaviour, personal development, safeguarding and child protection.
- There were no children in alternative provision.
- The inspector focused deeply on reading, mathematics and modern foreign languages. The inspector visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to subject leaders, teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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