

Inspection of a good school: Upminster Junior School

St Mary's Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 3BS

Inspection dates:

26 and 27 January 2022

Outcome

Upminster Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Upminster Junior School and feel safe here. If they have any concerns, pupils know that they can tell staff or use the 'worry box'.

Pupils are polite, well-behaved and considerate of each other. They enjoy telling visitors about their learning and the ways in which staff make their lessons enjoyable. Pupils said that bullying rarely happens. Through assemblies and workshops, they learn about bullying and what it means. If bullying does happen, pupils know that staff will deal with it effectively. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the school values, such as self-belief and resilience. They take pride in their school.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities to take part in clubs and activities before, during and after school. Pupils in the 'school parliament' appreciate the part they play in making decisions about aspects of school life.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils like the range of subjects they study and learn well in all subjects. Most pupils join the school from the neighbouring infant school. Staff make sure that this process is smooth and well managed so that pupils settle in quickly.

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

Leaders ensure that all pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. Trustees and the local governing body ensure that school leaders' expertise can be shared with other schools. Some curriculum leaders are new in post. Experienced leaders support them well and make sure that staff have opportunities to develop through a range of training.

Leaders' careful curriculum thinking helps pupils to develop their knowledge well. Teachers have a consistent approach to teaching new vocabulary. They make sure that pupils understand the definitions of important terms and consider the language that will be used. In mathematics, for example, staff plan the teaching of new words and their

definitions in each class. This forms part of a well-structured curriculum. Staff explain and model clearly what they want pupils to know. They reinforce prior learning before moving on to new learning.

Reading has a high profile in the school. Pupils enjoy the chance to come in early each day to use the school's library and choose books for themselves. Pupils are supported in their reading through a systematic approach to teaching and they read high-quality texts. Teachers help pupils to deepen their understanding of the books they read, and make the most of opportunities to broaden pupils' vocabulary. Pupils enjoy reading and talk about their favourite authors and books. Staff provide extra help to the small number of pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. In these sessions, staff use a well-planned phonics programme but do not always use suitable resources to support pupils' learning.

Leaders provide teachers with the support they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. They help teachers to deliver well-planned and structured lessons. Senior leaders give staff time to work together to plan and assess pupils' learning. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify pupils' next steps. Pupils talk confidently about their learning and take pride in their developing knowledge. Leaders and staff accurately identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). If pupils with SEND need the curriculum broken down into smaller steps, or need to practise their previous learning, staff provide effective support.

Pupils have opportunities to learn about the world around them and find out about different cultures. In art, for example, pupils study a range of artists. Pupils develop their understanding of different approaches to art, such as the influence that cubism had on the pop art of Romero Britto. Pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. These concepts are reinforced through the school values. Pupils said that staff listen to their ideas and treat them as individuals.

Staff said that they have received high-quality training to develop their knowledge and understanding of how to teach different subjects. Staff spoke highly of the support that leaders have given them. They said that leaders care about their professional development and consider their workload carefully.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that pupils have a range of ways to raise any concerns that they may have. For example, 'worry boxes' around the school enable pupils to let staff know if they are feeling anxious, unhappy or want to ask questions. Staff act quickly to sort out any problems.

Staff know what they must do to keep pupils safe. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained. Staff have regular updates to reflect on safeguarding issues throughout the year. Leaders have effective systems to monitor and track behaviour and safeguarding incidents. Staff know about potential risks and are vigilant to spot where pupils may need help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although the school's phonics programme is in place and implemented well, sometimes staff choose resources that do not closely align with it. This means that pupils at the early stages of learning to read are not as well supported as they could be. Leaders should ensure that staff know how to select the most suitable resources in phonics and reading sessions for pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	138944
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10204484
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gillian Thumpston
Headteacher	Alison Edgcombe
Website	www.uj.s.havering.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2016.
- Upminster Junior School joined the Hornchurch Academy Trust in September 2018.
- The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2021.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of staff. The inspector also met with members of the academy trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each of these subjects the inspector held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the views of parents, staff and pupils through the Ofsted online surveys.

- The inspector spoke with parents and considered the 127 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses from parents and parents' correspondence with the inspector.
- The inspector observed behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime. He spoke to a range of staff about their views of behaviour, their workload and well-being. The inspector also spoke with pupils to consider their views.
- The inspector spoke with pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. The inspector also considered safeguarding records and documentation and the single central record of staff's suitability checks.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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