

# Inspection of a good school: Upottery Primary School

Upottery, Honiton, Devon EX14 9QT

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Inspection date:

20 April 2023

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to come to this happy and safe village school. Pupils live up to the school's core values of 'respect, resilience, celebration, happiness, care and learning'. Pupils are polite and courteous. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils know it is important that everyone is treated equally. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Older pupils enjoy helping younger pupils by acting as play leaders and mediators at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils value these leadership roles, and feel they have a voice through their school council.

Pupils participate in extra-curricular visits. For instance, they enjoyed singing at the local cathedral and performing at a music festival. Pupils are enthusiastic about the range of clubs on offer, such as fencing, choir and football.

However, leaders have not yet ensured that pupils receive a consistently strong education across all subjects. Some younger pupils are not supported well enough when learning to read. In some subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge that go unaddressed. This means they are not well prepared for the next stage in their education.

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

In some subjects, the curriculum is well planned. Leaders understand how learning builds from the early years through to Year 6. Leaders have clearly identified the important knowledge that pupils need to know and by when. For example, in the early years, pupils are taught about different musical genres, and pupils experience performing together with instruments. This prepares them well for future learning. However, in other subjects, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum has enough breadth. For example, in

mathematics, pupils do not develop their problem-solving or reasoning well enough. Because of this, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and struggle to build on what they have learned before. Children in the early years learn about number; however, the precise mathematical knowledge they should acquire is not identified well enough. Leaders and governors fully understand the steps they need to take to improve the curriculum further. However, much of their work is in its infancy. They are being supported by a local federation and the local authority in this work.

Leaders are keen to promote a love of reading. They have purchased new books to interest and stimulate pupils. Older pupils talk excitedly about the books adults read to them. Leaders have implemented a new curriculum to support pupils in the early stages of reading. However, some pupils do not learn the phonic code well enough. This means some pupils struggle to read words independently. Those who need extra help with reading do not have books that match the sounds they know. These pupils do not develop sufficiently as confident and fluent readers. Leaders have not ensured that all staff have the required expertise to teach early reading. This hampers their ability to support pupils who are learning to read.

Staff develop positive relationships with pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the help that they need to learn the curriculum. Leaders work in partnership with parents to gain their views and then set targets for pupils to support their learning.

Staff follow a well-considered curriculum to support pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about the emotional and physical changes that will occur when they get older. For example, older pupils learn about puberty. Pupils understand how to look after their well-being. In the classroom, pupils are provided with ten tips to improve their mental health.

Staff are unanimously positive about the school. They share leaders' passion for improvement and want the very best for pupils. However, leadership at the school remains underdeveloped. Leaders have not ensured that the impact of the curriculum is evaluated well enough. This means that they do not have a precise enough understanding of how well pupils are learning. Leaders have begun to address this, but the impact of their actions is in the early stages.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training and briefings to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff are clear about the procedures and processes to follow when they are worried about a pupil. They know the signs to be alert to. They report concerns quickly.

Leaders make appropriate checks on staff who are new to the school.

Pupils understand risk in a range of situations, including staying safe online. They know whom to talk to if they come across something that worries them, and pupils feel safe in school.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not sequenced as well as it could be. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and do not learn as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that curriculum plans are ambitious and implemented consistently in all subjects.
- The early reading curriculum is not effective enough. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their phonic knowledge and struggle to decode words accurately. Leaders need to ensure that pupils acquire phonic knowledge successfully and that books match the sounds that they know.
- In some subjects, leaders do not check the impact of the curriculum sufficiently well. They have not yet had the time or training to be able to monitor the changes they have made to the curriculum. As a result, in these subjects, pupils do not learn with sufficient depth. Leaders and governors should ensure that subject leaders have the expertise to ensure the curriculum is implemented as intended.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113112
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10284066
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	91
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Nicola Cornish
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Legg
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.upottery-primary.devon.sch.uk">www.upottery-primary.devon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is currently being led by an interim executive headteacher and an interim head of school in the absence of the substantive headteacher.
- The school is in an informal managed partnership with Devon Moors Federation.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the interim executive headteacher, the interim head of school, staff and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school.
- The lead inspector considered responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors looked at the school’s plans for improvement, leaders’ self-evaluation, minutes of governors’ meetings, monitoring documents and reports from the local authority.

### **Inspection team**

Gavin Summerfield, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

James Oldham

His Majesty’s Inspector

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