

Inspection of a good school: Uphill Village Academy

Old Church Road, Uphill, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset BS23 4XH

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 July 2023

Outcome

Uphill Village Academy continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Uphill Village Academy is a welcoming, inclusive place to learn. The school's vision, 'learning without limits,' is a fundamental part of every pupil's school day. Parents are overwhelmingly positive. Many comment on the care and attention staff show towards pupils.

Leaders have high expectations for all members of the school community. Staff know pupils and their families well. Relationships are warm and respectful. Older pupils are exceptional role models. As a result, pupils become articulate learners, who are responsible and thoughtful of one another.

Pupils feel safe. They say bullying is rare and if it were to happen, they are confident that adults would deal with it quickly. Pupils behave extremely well, both in and outside the classroom. As a result, the school is a calm and purposeful place to learn.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs on offer, such as sport, debating and art. Leaders encourage pupils to have a voice through the council crew and pupil parliament. Pupils say these roles help them to make a difference to their school and community.

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

Leaders and staff have the highest ambitions for every pupil. They are relentless in the way in which they strive for improvement in all areas of the school. Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum that is designed exceptionally well. They have carefully considered what pupils need to know and when they need to know it.

Leaders ensure learning to read is a high priority. Pupils read widely. They enjoy listening to a range of stories, including those from different cultures. Pupils talk enthusiastically

about how teachers develop their knowledge of new words and encourage them to take part in discussions about the texts they are reading.

Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start school. They learn and remember new sounds well. Staff ensure pupils read frequently to adults. They routinely check how well pupils learn. If pupils fall behind, they receive the help and support they need to enable them to catch up quickly. Books that pupils read match the sounds they learn. This supports them to become fluent and confident readers.

Leaders ensure that teachers have the subject expertise they need to teach the curriculum effectively. From the early years onwards, teachers understand how their lessons build on what pupils have learned and what they will learn next. In history, for example, pupils in Year 2 talk confidently about the causes of the Great Fire of London. Older pupils expertly share their knowledge of different periods and make links to concepts, such as legacy. In most subjects, staff use assessment well to check on what pupils have remembered over time. In the few areas where assessment is used less well, leaders are making improvements.

Leaders are ambitious for what all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can achieve. They expertly identify pupils' additional needs. Staff know pupils well and ensure that they receive the support they need to learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. For example, older pupils with SEND use their mathematical knowledge well when calculating the percentages of an amount.

From the early years onwards, staff manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well. They set clear and consistent expectations for pupils' behaviour. Leaders and staff have the highest expectations for pupils' conduct. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and fully apply themselves to their learning. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary.

A rich range of experiences are woven throughout the curriculum and daily life at school. Pupils debate issues of importance to them. For example, the effect of climate change is discussed in lessons and through the eco council. Pupils learn respect and tolerance of diversity, and of other traditions and cultures. They have a strong understanding of right from wrong.

Leaders provide pupils with wide-ranging and exciting opportunities to develop personally. Pupils confidently debate issues of importance to them, such as the effect of climate change. They have a mature understanding of respect, tolerance and diversity. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The academy council and the trust share the school's aspirational culture. The checks they make provide an effective oversight of the school's work. Staff agree that leaders, including the academy council and the trust, take their workload and well-being seriously. All staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding. All staff, including the academy council, are well trained and informed to recognise when pupils may be at risk of abuse. Staff use systems effectively for reporting and recording concerns. They check these are making a difference. Leaders promptly seek the support of outside agencies when families need their help. The procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are thorough.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep safe, including how to use the internet safely.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Uphill Primary School to be good in April 2018.

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

Unique reference number	148160
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10268642
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Professor Paul Olomolaiye
Principal	Samantha Hodder
Website	www.uphillvillageacademy.cdf.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Uphill Village Academy opened as an academy in October 2020.
- This school is part of Cabot Learning Federation.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 principal, school leaders, groups of staff and representatives from the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. The inspector looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at various times of the day, including breaktime and lunchtime.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector listened to pupils in years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. The inspector considered how well the designated safeguarding leader acts on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. The inspector talked to pupils, staff and governors about safe working practices.
- The inspector considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses and responses to the staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Richard Vaughan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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