

Inspection of Upton Junior School

Upton Junior School, Edge End Road, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 2AH

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| Inspection dates: | 7 and 8 January 2025 |
| The quality of education | Outstanding |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Outstanding |
| Personal development | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The head of school is Darci Arthur. This school is part of the Viking Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Michaela Lewis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Neil Roby.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Upton Junior School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Upton Junior School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as an academy. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this warm and caring school. They strive to meet the high aspirations that staff hold for them. Pupils achieve very well. They learn the important skills and knowledge they need. They are confident and articulate in discussing their learning. Pupils are extensively prepared for their next steps.

Pupils' conduct is excellent. They show high levels of courtesy and respect to all. They love learning and work hard in lessons. Classrooms are purposeful and are alive with the sound of learning. Staff have warm and nurturing relationships with pupils. This helps pupils feel happy and safe in school. One member of staff said, 'working with these pupils makes the job a pleasure'. The positive atmosphere in the school reflects this.

The school has prioritised pupils' mental health and well-being. All pupils have access to calm spaces or strategies to help them regulate their emotions effectively. Pupils value these and use them appropriately. They know that staff listen to them and work hard to help them. Pupils who require further help can work with the highly skilled pastoral team. They can discuss any concerns they may have. Pupils also have access to a range of therapeutic support to manage their well-being.

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

The school has designed a very ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all. It clearly identifies the skills and knowledge that pupils need. Pupils build deeply on their prior learning over time. This helps pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to rapidly improve their skills and understanding from their starting points.

Teachers are experts in the subjects they teach. This helps them to explain learning exceptionally well and check pupils' understanding rigorously. These checks mean that staff quickly identify any gaps in learning. Teachers design high-quality activities that allow pupils to fill these gaps and to catch up swiftly.

Pupils love reading. They say it is a 'golden thread' which allows them to achieve well in school. Pupils read regularly. This helps them to leave the school as very confident and fluent readers. The school identifies pupils in the early stages of reading accurately. These pupils receive the support they need to catch up quickly. Expert staff teach phonics to the pupils who require additional help. The books that pupils read are carefully selected and matched to the sounds and letters they learn.

The school ensures pupils reach their potential. Staff identify the needs of pupils swiftly. This helps them to break down barriers to pupils' learning. Teachers prioritise those pupils who require additional support through the use of 'focus tables'. Staff also adapt the learning to meet the needs of pupils. This means that pupils, including those with SEND, learn a deep range of skills and knowledge.

Pupils become highly skilled communicators. They write with purpose in a variety of styles that draw upon knowledge from the range of subjects they learn. Pupils learn the important mathematical concepts they need and apply them skilfully to solve complex problems. Pupils recall their prior learning in detail and draw upon it to answer questions confidently.

The school has well-established routines which pupils quickly adopt. This helps to create a culture that values learning. This is evident in the frequent attendance of pupils. The school also responds quickly to support pupils who may require additional help. This work is effective and attendance is improving over time.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's excellent work. The school ensures that the curriculum extends far beyond the classroom. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs throughout the school day, which allows them to develop a variety of skills and talents. Well planned trips and visits deepen learning or expand pupils career aspirations.

The school works tirelessly in the best interests of pupils. The skilled governors and trustees ensure they offer high levels of challenge and support. Staff are exceptionally proud of working at the school and feel that leaders ensure they are well trained and cared for.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 143220 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10341815 |
| 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 | 518 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Neil Roby |
| CEO of the trust | Michaela Lewis |
| Headteacher | Darci Arthur |
| Website | www.uptonjunior.com |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school manages wraparound breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils.
- The school's headteacher and senior leadership team have changed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of the school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher as well as with other leaders and staff.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors spoke to staff and pupils during the inspection and took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspection team reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Gavin Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kate Magliocco

Ofsted Inspector

Kirstine Boon

Ofsted Inspector

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