



Upottery Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113112
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279095
Inspection dates 12 September 2005 to 12 September 2005
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan RISP

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Upottery
School category	Community		Honiton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon EX14 9QT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01404 861292
Number on roll	91	Fax number	01404861152
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs G Thomas
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Jill Nickels

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors over a period of one day.

Description of the school

Upottery Primary is a small Devon village school that serves the community of Upottery and the wide area around it. A third of the children travel some distance by bus each day to attend. The school has recently been reorganised into three classes because the number on roll has fallen to 78 this year. The pupils' families are of white British heritage. There are no children of other ethnic groups or with English as an additional language. The school has strong links with other schools in the area, the village church and the local community.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school that provides a satisfactory standard of education and sound value for money. The school's knowledge of its strengths and the areas it needs to improve is satisfactory. The headteacher's view that the school places a strong emphasis on improvement is accurate. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that this move towards future improvement meets their expectations. Relationships are strong and the school's provision for pupils' personal development and well-being is good. The school is beginning to involve pupils more in the evaluation of their own work, but this is an aspect that needs further improvement if pupils are to make better progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils make steady progress through the school. There are strengths in the teaching of mathematics and in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is sound but changes in the grouping of pupils means that planning for Year 2 has some weaknesses.. There is a good partnership between parents and the school. The school has effectively addressed concerns expressed in the previous report.

What the school should do to improve further

- revise curricular planning, especially for pupils in Year 2 to ensure consistency of learning.
- encourage pupils to evaluate their own work so they understand how they can make better progress
- improve the school's self-evaluation by developing more rigorous systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Upton is a very small school. The numbers in each year group vary from year to year but are generally much smaller than those found in most schools. Children enter the reception class with a wide range of abilities, but because the number is small, standards fluctuate enormously from one year to the next. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and make a positive start to their education. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, partly because of the good teaching and partly because they are mixing with older pupils in their class who act as positive role models. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain expected standards.

Standards of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 also fluctuate from year to year because of the small numbers but, taken over a period of time, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning through the school, although they do not always meet the targets set for them in some year groups. These pupils are identified for further support in the following year so that better progress is made. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets in their individual educational plans. In the 2005 tests, standards were better than they had been in 2004 in Year 2 and in Year 6.

They were broadly average overall, but standards in mathematics were higher in both year groups. The school sees standards in mathematics as a strength and this has been borne out by the tests results this year. The potentially higher attaining pupils achieved well in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school gives good attention to pupils' personal development and well-being. This results in good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' social development is good. They interact well with one another and relationships are good. Pupils' involvement in supporting younger pupils as part of the 'Buddy' support system successfully promotes their understanding of right and wrong and how to care for one another. Pupils' good personal development has been maintained since the last inspection and staff have worked hard to improve pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of British society.

Pupils say they enjoy school and parents agree. Pupils come to school regularly and attendance is better than the national average. Pupils behave well and their attitudes to their work are positive. Pupils see the school as a friendly and happy place. Parents say that bullying is rare and pupils are confident that, should it occur, it would be dealt with very quickly. They are encouraged to take responsibility in their classes and through the school council. During the inspection, pupils in the oldest class were electing the head boy and head girl for the year. Pupils are enthusiastic about these responsibilities, which provide good opportunities to develop skills that will help them make a positive contribution to the wider community.

Pupils are encouraged very effectively to embrace healthy lifestyles. The 'Healthy Eating' programme has been successfully introduced into school and pupils show good understanding of the benefits of eating sensibly. Activities such as 'Huff and Puff' games in the playground and the 'Foot Club', which have been introduced, also encourage pupils to keep healthy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory. Recent initiatives created through a successful partnership with the local education authority (LEA) and three other schools have led to an effective focus on developing the teaching of reading and writing which is beginning to raise standards. Information on pupils' standards and progress is well used and potential underachievement is identified so that additional support is given. This is helping to raise standards, as can be seen from the 2005 test results.

In the reception year, teaching and learning are good. The teacher plans very well to ensure that children have an appropriate curriculum for their age, despite being in a class with two other year groups. She is well supported by other adults working in the

class. As a result, children are given interesting and practical activities to promote their learning. Challenging questioning stimulates children's understanding and contributes to good achievement, especially in their mathematical development. Consistently high expectations for behaviour, cooperation and taking the initiative lead to the children achieving well in personal, social and emotional development.

In all classes, there are many strengths in the teaching. Activities are well managed and good relationships promote pupils' good attitudes to work. Classroom assistants are well informed and they play an important part, especially in the support of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers use assessment well to help them plan activities that generally are well matched to pupils' needs, including those with special educational needs. The school is beginning to involve pupils more in the evaluation of their own work, but this is an aspect that needs further improvement if pupils are to make better progress. Pupils' 'writing progress books', for example, show satisfactory progress year on year but teachers' marking and annotation have only very recently focused on areas for improvement. A sample of pupils say they do not always know how well they have done or how to improve. This is something the school is working on to improve their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good. The school has improved its outside classroom area, but staff regret that at present it cannot be permanent and so cannot include all the apparatus they would like. Staff and parents look forward to the planned new buildings that should improve these facilities. The curriculum for all the other pupils is satisfactory and meets requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has recognised the need to reorganise the planning of many subjects now that the number of classes has been reduced and pupils in Year 2 are taught in two different classes. Initial changes have been made and future needs have been discussed but important aspects of these plans have not yet been clarified.

Pupils talk enthusiastically of the many additional activities provided by the school. They enjoy the extra-curricular activities and residential trips. The school has developed links with a range of outside agencies to support pupils in their work. They make many visits to places of interest and work with visitors who help them understand new ideas. The school aims to strengthen the curriculum for science further by enabling the coordinator to teach all classes, which should ensure greater consistency of pupils' learning in the subject. This has just started and so is too soon as to have an impact.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school gives good attention to pupils' personal development and well-being. Vulnerable pupils are supported well through the school's good links with outside agencies and with the home. The school nurse, in particular, provides very good support. There has been an above average proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs in the school. They are well cared for and supported. Since the

previous inspection, the school has improved the quality of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs so they make better progress. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety.

Tracking systems are used well to monitor pupils' attainment and progress and to identify those pupils who need greater support. Predicted targets for pupils' future development are based on secure knowledge of their abilities and personal circumstances. At present the system is mainly for Years 3-6 but it is being developed to track pupils through the school.

Opportunities for children from the on-site pre-school group to visit the school are very good. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils in Year 6 to the local secondary school are also good and this eases pupils' movement to the next stage of their education. Parents of pupils who have joined the school recently have been very pleased with how quickly their child has settled and made friends.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has a satisfactory understanding of what it does well and where it could improve. The headteacher's assessment that the effectiveness of leadership and management is satisfactory is accurate. The school is a small, close-knit community where communications, although informal, are effective. The headteacher has built a united staff that work well together. A suitable range of strategies and procedures are used to monitor the work of the school. Tracking systems are used well to monitor pupils' attainment and progress and to identify pupils who need greater support. Systems for monitoring teaching, and for scrutinising planning alongside pupils' work, are also well established. They are not sufficiently rigorous, however, to ensure that weaknesses are identified, strategies for improvement adopted and progress monitored. The headteacher recognises that this slows improvement and is planning to strengthen procedures. The school has successfully tackled the concerns of the previous report and has the capacity to maintain satisfactory improvement.

The governors support the school well. They have been fully involved in discussing the financial and personnel difficulties created by the school's falling roll and, with the headteacher, are making strategic plans for the future. The school has gone through a difficult time while these plans have been developed and it is to the credit of the headteacher and her staff that it continues to be a harmonious community where relationships are strong and professional support is shared by all. The governors and headteacher ensured that parents were kept informed as much as was possible, took on their suggestions and listened to their concerns. The questionnaires returned by parents clearly show strong support for the school.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you for helping us find out about your school when we visited you recently. It was delightful to hear your comments which we found very interesting and helpful. I thought you would like to know the results of the inspection.

We thought:

that children behaved well and usually tried hard with their work

you made good friends with other children and tried to look after each other

teachers are quite good at helping you learn and to make progress

the standards of your work are similar to that of most pupils of your age

last year pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 they reached higher standards than in the previous year

we agree with you that there are lots of interesting things for you to do to help you learn, such as going on visits and enjoying clubs and other activities out of class

the headteacher and staff work hard at improving the lessons you do and making sure they helps you succeed

more could be done to help you understand how to improve your work.

We have asked the headteacher and staff to:

make sure the lessons pupils have in Year 2, in both Class 1 and Class 2, help them all make good progress

be better at judging how well the school is doing

help you to understand how you are getting on and what to do to get even better.