



Uplands Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115543
LEA Gloucestershire
Inspection number 279623
Inspection dates 10 November 2005 to 10 November 2005
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Ikin RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Thompson Road Uplands Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 1TE
School category	Community		
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01453 762409
Number on roll	100	Fax number	01453 762409
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Stephen Locke
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Carol Baron

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 10 November 2005 - 10 November 2005	Inspection number 279623
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors

Description of the school

Uplands Primary School is a small community school on the outskirts of Stroud. Nearly all pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average as is the proportion who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The current headteacher has been in post for just over two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory overall and the school has many strengths. The school broadly agrees with this. Pupils' moral and social development is good with some outstanding features. The good leadership of the headteacher and deputy head has led to an improving picture in every aspect of school life and ensures that it is on the right track for further improvements. However, leadership and management are only satisfactory overall as the role of subject leaders has not yet been fully developed, particularly in relation to checking standards, teaching and learning in their subjects. Governance is increasingly influential in moving the school forward. Teaching is satisfactory and also improving but assessment is not yet used precisely enough to inform planning for pupils' different needs. Pupils join the school with average standards and make satisfactory progress. Standards have improved more rapidly in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2, and progress is better in mathematics and science than in English in all years. Standards are not yet as high as they should be in writing, particularly for boys and more able pupils. Children's progress and achievement in the Reception class are satisfactory and most children reach the goals that are expected for this age. They receive a thorough grounding in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy but opportunities for learning through play need further development. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

Focus on: • Improving standards and achievement in writing • improving opportunities for reception aged pupils to learn through well planned play • making greater use of assessment to inform planning for the different needs of pupils and to make teaching even better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and progress is satisfactory but there is an improving picture as a result of the strong teaching team which is now in place. Children enter the school with broadly average standards and most pupils reach the targets that are set for them. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are picking up after a period of decline and are now average in mathematics and science. Progress is good in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6 where standards are above average. Standards in reading are above average throughout the school but there is some underachievement in writing, particularly for more able pupils and boys. Standards and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) which were a weakness at the last inspection are now average. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. There are some outstanding features including aspects of pupils' moral and social development and the relationships that pupils have with each other and their teachers. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils respond perceptively to numerous opportunities to talk about their thoughts and feelings and the richness of the world around them. Their cultural development is good and the children are well prepared for meeting people from backgrounds and cultures that are different from their own. Behaviour is exemplary and the pupils move around the school and apply themselves to their work with confidence and self assurance. They are keen to learn and improve. Pupils' ability to initiate, participate in, and manage activities in the school and the local community is excellent and this helps them to develop the skills that they need for later life. Discussions on issues such as 'fair trade' further raise their economic awareness. All pupils have a voice through the School Forum. Their ideas have led directly to improvements in the school environment, particularly in outside seating and relaxation and play areas. Attendance is above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The improved picture of teaching was seen in some good lessons during the inspection. One lesson in Year 3 and Year 4 was excellent. Standards are improving as a result of this but there has not been enough time to have a full impact throughout the school and in all subjects. Mathematics is generally well taught with consistently high expectations and challenge. There is good use of questions, which make pupils think, and interactive whiteboards to engage the interest of pupils and move learning on. Reading is generally well taught but the teaching of writing is more variable. Work is not always sufficiently focused on the specific needs of individual pupils, particularly higher attainers. The school is aware of the need to improve standards in writing, particularly for boys, and teachers are beginning to develop strategies for this. There is a good emphasis on the direct teaching of basic skills in the Reception class, but not enough emphasis on choice and decision making and learning through well planned play.

Assessment is satisfactory overall. Some good procedures have been put into place in English, mathematics, science and ICT. They are being used well to set individual targets and to check how well individual children are doing. However, they are not always used as precisely as they should be to inform planning for pupils' different needs, particularly in writing. Pupils receive good feedback on a day to day basis both in discussions with teachers and in written comments in marking. The school is currently working to good effect on increasing the involvement of pupils in evaluating their own work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is soundly planned to ensure all the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and there is a good range of strategies to help pupils with difficulties in learning to make progress. However, the needs of some more able pupils are not always met, particularly in writing and there are weaknesses in provision for learning through play for reception aged pupils. Planning for the children in the reception class to learn through play is not yet fully in place. The school enriches the curriculum well to add to pupils' learning and enjoyment. The school has made innovative use of specialists to teach additional subjects such as drama and Spanish. They also have weeks when they focus on particular projects, such as 'one world week' as a whole school. The beneficial impact of that was shown when pupils decided to support financially the education of a young girl in Haiti as an ongoing project. There is good use of activities that take place at the end of the school day to enrich the curriculum. In addition, many Years 5 and 6 pupils benefit from residential trips. The good attention to pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship contributes to the high standards of behaviour and social growth that are evident throughout the school. The effective links that the school has with the church make an important contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care and guidance for pupils. Pupils grow in confidence through opportunities to express their concerns and ideas openly and honestly and through knowing that they will be listened to. Health and safety and child protection procedures are good. The school works successfully with outside agencies to support the pupils that need their help. There are very good links with the community playgroup on site and the youngest children get a very smooth start to their school life because of this.

The pupils receive very good feedback to support their personal and social development. The guidance to support their academic development is becoming increasingly effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, and there are some considerable strengths.

The leadership of the headteacher is a significant strength. She has high aspirations for the school which are shared by the staff and governors. The senior management of the school has been strengthened further by the appointment of a new deputy headteacher who sets a very good example by her exemplary teaching. Together they make a formidable team and their drive, energy and enthusiasm are major factors in the school's capacity to improve.

Many of the staff are new to the school and their work has not yet not yet had time to have a full impact. Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory overall. Good use of data and observations of lessons by the headteacher are ensuring that senior managers and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to improve. Subject leaders do not yet have the precise information that they need to inform their improvement plans in all subjects. The school recognises that this is an area for improvement. The school has responded positively following consultations with parents. It now provides more information on the curriculum and has improved security when children are collected from school at the end of the day. The chair of governors leads his committed team well and governors soundly fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They have developed efficient procedures to support their work and have some innovative plans for improving their roles even further. There is efficient management and administration of the budget to ensure that all the money available to the school is used well.

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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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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	2	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	1	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	2	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	3	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

Uplands Community School Thompson Road Uplands Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 1TE

11 November 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for all the help that you gave to us when we inspected your school. Your views on the way that the school works and how it helps you to learn were very helpful to us.

Like you, we believe that the school has improved a lot over the last year or two and is getting better all the time. We were particularly pleased that you like the school so much and were very impressed by how well you all behave and settle to your work. We think that the standards that you are achieving are now better than they were because of the way that you are now being taught. We saw some really good lessons when we were in the school.

Although most of you are now making good progress in reading, mathematics, and science, some of you could be doing much better in writing. We have asked your headteacher and teachers to improve this. We have also asked them to make sure that the work they give you always helps each of you to do your best and improve more quickly. We are also asking them to give more opportunities for the children in the Reception class to learn through play.

We wish you well for the rest of your time at Uplands and your future education.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Ikin Lead inspector