

# Upper Horfield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108970
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	288236
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geoff Burgess

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	118
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maria Damsell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynne Passfield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 June 2001
<b>School address</b>	Sheridan Road Horfield Bristol BS7 0PU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9031281
<b>Fax number</b>	0117 9031280

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a small school serving an inner city area with considerable social deprivation. The number on roll has fallen in recent years. Around three quarters of the school's pupils are White British. The rest come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds with some for whom English is not their first language. A high proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is well above average and increasing.

At the time of the inspection, an acting headteacher had recently taken over the running of the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

The school acknowledges that it has underperformed for several years and that its current overall effectiveness is inadequate. Very recent changes have made it possible for a start to be made on putting things right but it is much too early to say how effective this will be. Ineffective leadership and inefficient management have led to a situation where overall provision has failed to meet the learning needs of pupils who, as a consequence, have made very poor progress through the school. For several pupils, school has not been 'a good place to be' as shown by sustained high levels of absenteeism and too regular exclusions for poor behaviour.

Standards in English, mathematics and science remain exceptionally low as they have been for many years, with insufficient signs of improvement in current work. Inadequate overall provision in the Foundation Stage means that standards are lower than might be expected. The achievement of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds is inadequate. Most pupils make much less progress than might be expected. Very few pupils achieve higher standards. Pupils receiving support for their learning difficulties and disabilities make only marginally better progress than their classmates. Comfortable school targets have not been met.

All aspects of provision, including teaching, the curriculum, and care, support and guidance are inadequate. Deficiencies in each have combined to inhibit learning and hinder pupils' personal development and well-being. Until very recently there was very little accurate information on how well pupils are doing or what they need to do to improve. Teaching is therefore not well matched to pupils' capabilities and targets lack challenge. Routine activities do not excite or engage pupils who lose concentration and behaviour suffers. Failure to identify the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or those who speak English as an additional language (EAL) means they have not received the focused support or the modified work they need to succeed.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are inadequate. This stops many pupils from getting the most out of their education. Most pupils behave well and enjoy their time in school. However, a significant minority find conforming to school expectations difficult which wastes time and disrupts the smooth running of the school. Others miss too much school.

Leadership and management have been inadequate for some time and, in important respects, the school is not as good as it was when last inspected. Until very recently, the school's view of its own performance was inflated and not based on good evidence. Efforts by the governing body and the local authority to support the leadership to face issues and raise expectations have only recently begun to show signs of success. Recent changes have given the school the opportunity to make a fresh start. The signs are promising but it is much too soon to be sure that all members of the school community have the capacity to make the fundamental improvements needed. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Significantly improve standards by using assessment information to raise expectations, and by improving the quality of teaching and learning.

- Ensure that all pupils who find learning or conforming to school expectations difficult, or who speak English as an additional language, get the support they need to succeed.
- Create a positive learning environment with an exciting and stimulating curriculum where good behaviour and high attendance levels are the norm.
- Involve all leaders and managers in promoting high quality care and education by providing clear direction and challenging targets.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Recent national test results show that achievement was very poor in 2004, improved a little in 2005 but fell back again to very poor in 2006. The school was in the bottom 1% of schools nationally in 2006. This inadequate trend is confirmed by an analysis of the school's records and pupils' work which shows relatively little progress year on year, or through the current year, especially in the older classes. Progress is a little better in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and others with English as an additional language, many not identified as needing support, make poor progress. Achievement is inadequate.

Standards are exceptionally low throughout the school as shown by consistently poor national test results in Years 2 and 6, which fell to their lowest ever in 2006. Most children start school in the Reception class with poor language, physical and social skills. Very few reach expected levels at the end of their Reception year. In most years, less than half the pupils in Year 2 reach expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics and none reach the higher level. Inadequate provision in the older classes means that the position does not improve with the great majority of pupils working below expected levels and very few above.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 4**

There are some encouraging aspects to pupils' personal development and well-being, such as the way the Healthy Schools programme has helped them to know how to stay fit and healthy. Most pupils say they enjoy school and know how to stay safe, for example when they go swimming. They enjoy the opportunities presented to make a contribution to the community, such as selling fruit at break times. However, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not good enough because this is not built into planning. For instance, despite having pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds in the school, pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of other cultures is limited. Pupils have few opportunities to reflect on their feelings and life. Significant numbers have poor skills in literacy and numeracy and are not fully prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Attendance has improved this term, but levels of unauthorised and authorised absence are far too high and the school is right to make it an urgent priority. Punctuality is poor with some arriving late every day. Although in most lessons pupils were on task and listened quite well, routines for assuring positive behaviour are not firmly established and behaviour can deteriorate too easily. Records show that pupils too often use bad language or behave aggressively resulting in them being excluded from school for short periods.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Although teachers and support staff work hard and care about their pupils, the inherent weakness in teaching is best shown by the consistently poor progress made by pupils throughout the school. A lack of detailed information from assessments means that work is often not pitched at the right level or planned at a range of levels to meet the complex needs of pupils present in each class. Expectations for both standards and pupils' work output are much too low. Behaviour management is fragile in some classes and sometimes learning is slowed by poor behaviour. Another consequence is that teachers are wary of risking activities which might result in poor behaviour. All of these factors inhibit the effectiveness of the support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and English as an additional language.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 4**

The curriculum covers all the required elements and has some strengths, such as in information and communication technology (ICT). However, in the older classes, activities fail to catch the imagination of pupils or match their interests for several reasons. An understandable focus on literacy and numeracy has been at the expense of work in other areas. Much work in literacy and numeracy is mundane and not very creative. Few links have been made between subjects to make learning more relevant. Fewer than usual enrichment and extra-curricular activities are available to stimulate pupils' interest. Activities are often poorly matched to pupils' learning needs because teachers are not fully aware of what they are capable of, as is the case with pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities or English as an additional language, what they need to succeed. Children work in all the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage but activities too often lack focus or challenge.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 4**

There are some satisfactory elements to pastoral care and policies for health and safety and for safeguarding pupils suitably meet requirements. Pupils get on well with their teachers and other adults and will happily go to them if they need help. Limited use has been made of outside agencies to support pupils and parents. Support is now being sought for the recently identified pupils who do not behave appropriately or attend regularly. Reward systems are in place but positive and improving behaviour is not sufficiently reinforced and in this respect pupils are not being guided carefully enough. Efforts to improve attendance and punctuality have not been effective.

Academic guidance has been weak because specific needs have not been accurately identified. Pupils now have challenging targets but most still do not understand what they need to do to improve. A significant number of pupils with very low attainment or whose first language is not English have not been provided with extra help. For some this means they find it difficult to join in with the activities provided. From this term, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are being more accurately identified and provided with appropriate support.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

Given the school's poor track record in national testing, with no signs of a change for the better, its leadership and management have been a cause for concern for the governing body in recent years. With the active help of the local authority and the chair in the lead, the governing body has taken its role as critical friend very seriously. Together, they initiated a process designed to significantly improve the school's effectiveness by developing its leadership and management. However, staff in management positions were not empowered to carry out their responsibilities and felt no sense of ownership of developments. Lessons and pupils' work were monitored but not evaluated or used to promote improvement. After some initial gains, a lack of rigour and follow through saw momentum lost. The school carried on as before.

At this time, the school's view of itself was unrealistically positive and plans for improvement did not address the deep seated issues involved. A very recent change of leadership revealed the true extent of these issues. Areas perceived as good are now judged by the school to be inadequate. For instance, behaviour was said to be no longer a problem but the inspection evidence agreed with the revised school view that it is a serious issue. A great deal still needs to be done but the school is already benefiting from the fresh start provided by the acting headteacher and the very wide-ranging support being provided by the local authority.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	4
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	4
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The behaviour of learners	4
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	4
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	4

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

24 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upper Horfield Primary School, Bristol, BS7 0PU

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed our day with you although it was a bit rushed getting around to see everything and everybody.

What we liked most about your school:

- Most of you behave well in class and try your best.
- You enjoy school and know how to stay safe and healthy.
- You are good at working with computers.
- Although the buildings are old, you have lots of space and plenty of equipment to help you learn and play.
- You like your teachers and helpers and are happy to ask them for help.

Your new headteacher and the governors are keen that you learn as much as you can and they know that there are a lot of things that need to be improved in your school. With this in mind, we feel that the school needs a lot of extra help to make it as good as possible and this is being arranged. Inspectors will visit regularly to check on the progress being made. We know you will do your best to help.

To make things better, this is what we have asked your school to do now:

- Help you learn better by making sure both you and your teachers know what you need to do to improve, setting you targets which you have to work really hard to reach, and making teaching better.
- Make sure that, if you find learning hard or if you are learning to speak English, you get all the help you need to succeed.
- Make the things you do at school more interesting and enjoyable so that everyone will want to come to school regularly and behave well.
- Improve the way it is led and managed so that everybody can do their best.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Burgess Lead inspector