



# Upton Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 113681  
**Local Authority** Dorset  
**Inspection number** 289693  
**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Melvyn Hemmings

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>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	St Martin's Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Upton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Poole BH16 5NQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01202 622649
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	336	<b>Fax number</b>	01202 621018
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority	<b>Headteacher</b>	Adrienne Allen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 September 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
7–11	11–12 December 2006	289693

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Pupils enter school with average levels of attainment. They are housed in the main building and six mobile classrooms. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. Over the last two years there has been a significant number of teachers leaving and joining the school.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Upton Junior is a friendly school that provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Pastoral care is strong, with all pupils being valued as individuals by staff. The vast majority of parents are appreciative of the way their children are looked after while in school. As one wrote, 'My children are new to the school but they have settled in well due to the care and diligence of the staff'. Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school and can turn to an adult if worried or upset.

Since the last inspection the school has overcome its difficulties and established a committed forward-thinking leadership team. During this time the headteacher has shown strong leadership and has been well supported by the governors and local authority. As a result, leadership and management have improved and are now satisfactory. The senior management team has a shared vision of how the school should go forward and staff work cooperatively as a team. The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate but not sufficiently focused on checking what impact new initiatives are having on improving pupils' achievement. The high turnover of staff has been managed well to minimise disruption to pupils' learning and maintain standards.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and over the past few years they have achieved broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. However, few pupils have reached the higher levels in these subjects. In the national tests in 2006, pupils reached broadly average standards in mathematics and science and more pupils reached the higher level in both subjects, though the proportion was still below the national average in science. Standards in English were below average because of weaknesses in writing, especially for boys. Pupils in the current Year 6 class show similar standards to last year in mathematics and science. The school predicts these pupils will meet the challenging target set for them in English and reach broadly average standards, though writing is still a weaker aspect of this subject.

Teaching and learning and guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory. Lessons are interesting and pupils enjoy the activities they are given. There are times when these activities lack sufficient challenge, especially for more-able pupils, and so progress is not as good as it could be. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to extend their basic writing skills by writing at length in English and other subjects. A broad variety of extra-curricular activities and visits to places of educational interest enlivens the curriculum and makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being, which is good. Pupils are well behaved and show care and consideration for others. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and the school shows sound capacity to make further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing, particularly for boys, by providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their skills in subjects across the curriculum.

- Ensure that work, particularly for more-able pupils, is sufficiently challenging to raise their achievement.
- Ensure that evaluation is more focused on the impact on pupils' progress of steps taken to bring about improvement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Since the last inspection, pupils have generally attained broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. This shows satisfactory achievement from when they entered the school. The disappointing result in English in 2006 was not expected by the school and was not representative of the standards normally achieved. In English tests in 2006, pupils did well in reading but results in writing were disappointing, particularly those for boys. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on target to do better and reach average standards. However, weaknesses in the teaching of writing mean this is still a less-developed aspect of the subject. The work of an advanced skills teacher for science resulted in much-improved results in science in 2006. However, too few pupils are attaining the higher levels particularly in English and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve in a satisfactory way because of the extra help they are given.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respect each other's points of view and are willing to voice their own opinions. Pupils work very well together in pairs and groups and this has a positive impact on their learning and the progress they make. Their attitudes and behaviour are good in lessons and around the school. Older pupils use their initiative in looking after younger ones during playtimes. Attendance is good but some parents do not bring their children to school on time, which disrupts the start of the school day. Pupils' contribution to the community is satisfactory, though they are capable of taking on more responsibility. They have a good understanding of why they should adopt a healthy lifestyle and the importance of keeping themselves safe. Pupils' preparation for life after school is enhanced by skills such as teamwork and problem solving but hampered by the weaknesses in their writing skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Lessons are managed well and this leads to a friendly and orderly learning setting. Pupils are given many opportunities to work collaboratively in small groups and pairs and this effectively supports their personal and social development. Some lessons are

planned effectively to enable pupils to use prior knowledge to develop their learning. This was seen in a science lesson for pupils in Year 5 in which they were challenged to design an experiment to find out how different solids dissolve. They were able to use their existing scientific investigative skills to complete the task successfully. In some lessons, the activities lack sufficient challenge, especially for more-able pupils, which leads to them not doing as well as they could. The teaching of writing focuses too much on techniques and skills and not enough emphasis is placed on pupils working on extended pieces of writing. Teaching assistants play an important role in developing pupils' skills, particularly for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Since the last inspection, planning for art and design and technology has been improved and is now fully embedded to enable pupils to gain the required skills in these subjects. Provision for music is enhanced by the specialist accommodation and range of good quality resources. Visitors and themed activities, such as Poetry Days and Greek and Roman Days, add interest to the curriculum. The broad range of after-school activities, productions and trips suitably develops pupils' academic, creative and personal skills. There is sound provision to develop key skills in literacy and numeracy but not enough opportunity for pupils to write for a range of purposes in subjects across the curriculum. Work with specialists, such as professional gymnasts and sports coaches, effectively extends the curriculum and contributes to pupils' enjoyment of learning. The nature of the school site, with over half of pupils taught in mobile classrooms, sometimes hinders learning. For example, a good deal of teaching time is lost in moving to and from the main building for lessons in information and communication technology and physical education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school offers a safe, secure and friendly environment for pupils to work and play. As one pupil said, 'If you are feeling lonely in the playground someone will always come up to you and ask you how you are feeling'. Child protection procedures and arrangements for risk assessments are secure. There is carefully targeted support for all pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and, because of this, they make the same progress as other pupils. Academic guidance is satisfactory, with improved systems for tracking pupils' progress having been recently introduced. These are not fully embedded and so the information collected is not yet used consistently to set targets for individual pupils to improve their performance.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate and this has enabled senior managers to correctly identify priority areas for development. However, there

is insufficient emphasis on assessing the impact of the strategies put in place to bring about improvement. Because of this, the school is not clear if these strategies are having an impact on pupils' progress and raising achievement. Performance management successfully links school priorities with teachers' own professional development. All teachers have an improvement in pupils' writing as a target, but it is too soon to evaluate the impact of this on pupils' progress. Subject leaders have a secure view of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject, which has enabled them to develop action plans for improvement. However, systems to evaluate the effectiveness of these plans lack sufficient rigour. Governors are very supportive of the school and are also willing to question the decisions of the senior management team.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We really enjoyed talking to some of you about all the things you do. We would like to tell you what we found your school does well and how it could improve further.

Your school is a friendly place and all of you are well behaved and show care and consideration for others. We saw this when older pupils looked after younger ones at playtimes. Teachers are proud of you and enjoy helping you to learn. Many of you are not as good at writing as you are at reading and sometimes the work you are given is too easy. I have asked the school to give you more opportunities to practise and improve your writing skills and to make sure the work you are given always makes you think hard. I have also suggested that the school checks on whether the work that goes on to improve it further really makes a difference to your learning. Your attendance is above average, which is a credit to you. Your parents are pleased about the way that you are looked after in school. You say you enjoy coming to school because there are lots of interesting things to do.

We hope you continue to work hard and have a successful year ahead.