



# Upshire Primary Foundation School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 115310  
**Local Authority** ESSEX  
**Inspection number** 290200  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Raminder Arora

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 address</b>	Upshire Road
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Upshire, Waltham Abbey
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Essex EN9 3PX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01992715567
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	185	<b>Fax number</b>	01992710642
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Aidan Little
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ralph Silverman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Most pupils in this average sized primary school are of White British heritage and from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The school has a nursery funded by the Essex Early Years Partnership. There are additional services such as, the breakfast and after school clubs.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Upshire School is much liked by the parents and children. The school has passed through a difficult period and for several years standards have been very low. Initiatives to raise these have not been effective because staffing difficulties, particularly long-term absences, have interrupted pupils' learning. The school has now turned the corner with clear signs that pupils' learning is improving and they are beginning to make much better progress. There is still a lot of catching up to do, especially in writing and mathematics, but standards are rising. Pupils enter school with below average skills. While standards at Year 2 and Year 6 remain below average there are clear signs of an improving trend. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress overall, but in Year 6 this accelerates and pupils make good progress. The systems introduced to measure progress and set targets for further learning have been a key factor in these improvements. Teachers now have a clear idea of how much progress each pupil should make in literacy and numeracy, and are determined to do everything in their power to meet the set targets. Another key factor is the improved effectiveness of the senior management team who work together effectively to raise standards. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Pupils' personal development is good. They are polite, well behaved and eager to learn and succeed. They clearly enjoy school and make a satisfactory contribution to the community. Care, support and guidance are good. Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to look after themselves, eat sensibly and stay healthy. Parents are pleased with the education of their children. One wrote, 'The school is a happy place to be.' Another commented, 'There is a great community feel.'

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but with good and sometimes outstanding teaching being observed. Lessons are suitably planned, but sometimes the more able pupils are not extended enough to make the progress they are capable of. Staffing problems in the Reception class have affected teaching, learning and provision, all of which are currently inadequate. Children do not make the progress they should and standards are too low.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Significant improvements have been made to pupils' achievement and standards are rising as a result of the new initiatives. The curriculum is satisfactory but not yet developed in a creative way that captures pupils' imagination. Technology has been introduced to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Each classroom is equipped with an interactive white board which teachers use frequently to enrich pupils' learning. There is a good computer suite used regularly by all classes. Pupils make satisfactory progress in information and communication technology (ICT). They are beginning to use of ICT skills to enhance learning in other subjects. Governance is satisfactory. The role of the governors in reviewing and evaluating the work of the school has been strengthened and they now work closely with staff to monitor the school's performance thoroughly. Finances are managed well to provide satisfactory value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and accelerate improvement particularly in writing and mathematics by ensuring that all teaching meets pupils' needs, especially the more able.
- Improve the provision in the Reception class to ensure a solid foundation of basic skills for all children.
- Develop the curriculum so that it engages pupils more and promotes greater creativity in their learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

The achievement of pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, is satisfactory and they make adequate progress. Within this overall picture, however, there are inconsistencies. The progress of children in the Reception class is inadequate because expectations are too low and basic language and literacy skills are not taught rigorously enough. Pupils are not on track to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. The foundations for learning are not securely laid and gaps in children's learning impede progress in the older year groups. Standards at Year 2 in 2006 were below average in writing, well below average in reading, and exceptionally low in mathematics. While pupils' achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics is now satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, standards remain below average. However, data from the school's tracking shows that progress is improving and results have risen.

The school has succeeded in ironing out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 and pupils are making better progress. The results of national tests for pupils at Year 6 in 2006 were below average in mathematics and science and exceptionally low in English. Early indications are that the standards have improved this year but remain below average, particularly for the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are self-assured, talk sensibly about their work and are proud of their achievements. They are determined to do their best and are enthusiastically rising to the challenge of the demanding targets set. As one pupil said, 'I've got to get a Level 5'. Behaviour is good and pupils are sensitive to the feelings of others. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school, are well motivated and keen to learn; in some lessons they burst with enthusiasm. Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle and they exercise regularly. The class and school councils provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to air their views and make decisions. Through these, they have improved the toilets and are working on a travel plan designed to encourage more pupils to walk or cycle to school. Pupils make adequate progress in

acquiring basic skills. This, together with their good personal skills, suitably prepares them for future work lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

While teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, in the lessons observed, teaching was variable. In the Nursery, the range of well-organised activities and good use of available resources ensure that children are happy and well motivated to learn. Teaching is inadequate in the Reception class because it does not fully engage children or challenge them to do their best. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and in most lessons, plan work that interests them. However, in some lessons, more able pupils are not stretched enough. In an outstanding lesson, pupils excelled in their learning as a result of the teacher's excellent subject knowledge and enthusiasm. A good feature in most lessons is the effective teamwork between teachers and well-qualified teaching assistants, which ensures that pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities participate fully and make expected progress. Teachers' marking is thorough and encouraging. It shows pupils how to reach the next steps in their learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Children in the Nursery benefit from an interesting range of activities that promotes their learning both indoor and outdoor. However, the curriculum planning in the Reception class is less well focused and the balance between activities that are teacher directed and the children's own choices, is inadequate. Curriculum in the main school meets pupils' needs and gives specific attention to developing their basic skills in literacy and mathematics through appropriate links to other subjects. However, the curriculum is not creative enough and only at an early stage of developing and promoting enjoyment and excitement in learning. Pupils acquire appropriate ICT skills and the use of these in other subjects is beginning to improve. The personal, social and health education programme pays appropriate attention to the development of safe and healthy living and pupils enjoy participating in clubs such as, football, dance and drama.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong emphasis on making sure that pupils are safe and secure, and the necessary checks are all in place. Child protection procedures are clearly understood by all staff. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and friendly, and show sensitivity to the needs of each individual pupil. The need to develop consistency in supporting the more able in all lessons has been recognised. Pupils say that they feel totally comfortable about sharing any worries or concerns with their teachers or helpers.

Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and clear targets are set for further learning. These are regularly reviewed to ensure success. Pupils receive good guidance about personal issues and the good marking of their work helps them to know how to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has overcome its staffing difficulties and begun to show considerable improvement in raising pupils' achievements. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities. One parent wrote, 'The headteacher is great, always going forward and improving for the better of the school'. The strong commitment from staff to improve their performance, and the developing role of governors are key elements in the headteacher's determination to help all pupils to achieve their best. Through training, the governors have become more active in the continuing process of school improvement. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory, as is the action plan to remedy weaknesses and move forward. For example, there are well considered plans to appoint a skilled manager to lead improvements in the Foundation Stage. The school is well supported by parents and benefits from working effectively with other local schools and organisations.

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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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	4
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	3
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	3
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>	2

<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

8 February 2007

Dear Children,

Upshire Primary Foundation School, Upshire Road, Upshire, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3PX

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. This is a satisfactory school and you are all making satisfactory progress. The headteacher, governors and all the staff are working well together to try and make it even better. Lessons are satisfactory. You are developing good skills to help you stay healthy, make friends and learn new things.

Here are the things that we think are best about your school:

- Your behaviour is good in lessons and all around the school.
- You enjoy learning because some teachers try to make it fun.
- Staff and governors take good care to ensure that you are safe at school.
- The headteacher and other senior teachers are keen to help you do your best.

These are the things that we think could be better:

- Teachers need to help you to make better progress in reading and mathematics.
- Your lessons need to be more challenging to make some of you work harder.
- The children in Reception class need better teaching and more interesting activities to help them improve.
- Learning in each subject needs to be more exciting and help you use your imagination even more.

I look forward to hearing more about your school's success.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours faithfully

Raminder Arora

Lead Inspector