

# Upwell Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120885
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK
<b>Inspection number</b>	291898
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Cheryl Thompson

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	163
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Lunn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Fiona Rickard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2002
<b>School address</b>	61 School Road Upwell Wisbech Norfolk PE14 9EW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01945773220
<b>Fax number</b>	01945774059

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is a smaller than average primary school which serves its local community and villages beyond. A high number of pupils join and leave the school during the school year. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, including the travelling community. There is an average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is around that typical for a school of this size. The school operates as part of a partnership with a nearby small school. The headteacher divides her time proportionally between the two schools. The school has recently been awarded Healthy School status.

## 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 leadership is correct in its judgement that it is an improving school which provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Parents are supportive of the school and have many good things to say about it. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although the leadership has identified that more needs to be done to raise standards for the older pupils, especially in science. The school provides sound value for money and has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The great majority of school improvement work is undertaken by the headteacher, although other senior staff are increasingly ready to take on more responsibility. Governors ensure that statutory responsibilities are met, and provide satisfactory governance. The strengths of the school stem from the headteacher's successful commitment to ensuring a welcoming and purposeful learning environment and to helping pupils develop into responsible young people. Children get off to a good start in Reception, where good teaching helps them make good progress in early reading, writing and mathematics skills. By the end of Reception, children are enthusiastic and confident learners. Pupils are known and cared for well. They are very positive that any adult will deal with any concerns they may have. Pupils from traveller communities are fully included in school life and enjoy returning to the school, where the teachers' links with the Traveller Support Service help them make sound progress. Pupils' personal development is good. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy being at school and demonstrate this by their good behaviour and a keenness to take on responsibility; for example, by looking after younger pupils or raising funds for charities. Most pupils have adequate basic skills when they leave, which, together with their good social skills and sense of responsibility prepare them satisfactorily for their future. Pupils have a good understanding of how to eat healthily and keep themselves fit and safe. Thus, the take-up rates for the 'healthy snack' trolley and for the good range of clubs and sporting activities are high.

Teaching, learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. Good links are made between subjects such as art and history and pupils are enthused by the good range of visits and visitors. However, there is more to do to make literacy lessons more relevant and interesting. Pupils say that 'one of the best things about school is the teachers'. Teachers manage their pupils well and relationships within classes are good. Lesson planning is detailed but does not always make clear what pupils are expected to learn in the lesson. Pupils receive adequate academic guidance. Their work is always marked but they are not always told exactly what they need to do to improve. The main reason that teaching is not better and leading to improved achievement is that it is not checked up on rigorously enough to make sure that points noted for improvement have been acted upon. Nor is the information from the school's system for monitoring pupils' progress used well enough. Teachers are unclear about the precise expectations for pupils' attainment and, as a result, are not always setting high enough expectations for pupils' progress through the year.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching to a consistently good level by making sure that teachers know what they have to do to improve and by checking rigorously to see that they do so.
- Raise standards and achievement by making sure that teachers set high expectations for their pupils' progress based on precise knowledge of their expected improvement over the year.

- Strengthen the role played by senior staff and governors in monitoring the quality of education.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory overall and good in Reception, where many children start with literacy and numeracy skills below those typical for their age. By the time they start in Year 1, standards are in line with those expected. From Year 1 to the end of Year 6 pupils make satisfactory progress overall but this has not been consistent due to a high turnover of staff. Pupils with learning difficulties have good support from proficient teaching assistants and make satisfactory progress. They have good self-esteem. Pupils from traveller communities are fully included in school life and return regularly. The good links between the Traveller Support Service and class teachers ensure that pupils pick up quickly on learning and make satisfactory progress.

Standards are within the average range at Year 2 and Year 6. In past years, standards have been below average at Year 6 but in 2006 they were average in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows a similar picture in 2007, although standards in science remain below average.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy school, especially lessons such as art and physical education. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Attendance is satisfactory. Despite the school's best efforts, family holidays are sometimes taken against the headteacher's advice. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and a good number enjoy participating in exercise. Behaviour is good. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and relate well to each other and to adults. School council members have an adequate understanding of their responsibilities.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and manage their pupils well through good relationships. Proficient teaching assistants are deployed profitably to help individuals or small groups. Lesson planning is detailed but teachers are not always making clear to pupils what they are expected to learn in the lesson. Consequently, pupils cannot always measure their own success. There are two main reasons why teaching is not better: first, teaching is not checked on with enough rigour to ensure improvement at a good rate and, second, teachers are not given precise information about the expectation for their pupils' attainment at the end of the year. As a result, teachers are not always setting their expectations high enough. Teaching is good for Reception children. The clear focus on developing independence and basic literacy and numeracy skills gives them a good start to Year 1.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory, with good enrichment through an interesting range of day visits and visitors, including a visit to Oxburgh Hall in support of work on the Tudors and a visit from a group of Muslim women who came to talk about their clothes and lifestyle. The good range of clubs is well attended. Increasing use is being made of drama to enliven the curriculum and Year 6 pupils look forward to presenting 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' this term. Whilst there are some interesting links between subjects such as mathematics, art and history, few links are made to literacy that would make it more relevant and engaging. As a result, literacy lessons can be dull and routine.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory overall. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet government requirements. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and behaviour are good. There are good arrangements for visits from the local playgroup, so that children are well prepared for starting school. Pupils joining the school mid-year are helped to settle in happily by the whole school community. The care taken to promote pupils' personal development is good but academic guidance is satisfactory rather than good. Pupils have insufficient guidance on how to improve, especially in basic skills, because, when teachers mark pupils' work, they do not routinely let pupils know what they need to do to improve their work further. Sharing pupils' individual targets with parents is a good feature and appreciated by parents. However, pupils are unclear about their targets because they are not regularly reminded of them in class.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Against the background of a high number of staff changes and illness, as well as significant building work, the headteacher has demonstrated a tenacious and successful commitment to improvement, especially to the school's learning environment and the provision for pupils' personal development. From being the 'most overcrowded primary school in West Norfolk' with unsatisfactory accommodation, the school is now a bright, spacious learning environment. As a result, attendance and behaviour have improved. The school's success in gaining the national Healthy Schools award shows that pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and keep themselves safe.

The great majority of school improvement work is undertaken by the headteacher, with the result that improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory rather than good. The local authority leadership programme has helped senior staff develop their roles so that they are now ready to take on more responsibilities. Satisfactory processes are now in place to monitor the quality of the education the school provides. Currently, though, these processes are not used with enough rigour to ensure improvement at a good rate. The system for tracking pupils' progress is adequate, but not used as advantageously as it might because it is not shared with teachers so that they can set appropriate expectations for progress. Many governors are new to their role and are undertaking training. They are developing their understanding of the

standards and achievement in the school so that they can hold the school more precisely to account for pupils' progress.





## Annex A

## 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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	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.

## Annex A

**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

20 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Upwell Community Primary School, Upwell, PE14 9EW

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. We enjoyed visiting your classrooms and talking to the school council and Year 2. It was good to see so many of you buying healthy snacks at playtime. You have learned a lot about the right sort of foods to eat and that exercise is important. I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school.

- You are making satisfactory progress as you move through the school and children in the Reception class make good progress in learning to read and write.
- You enjoy taking on responsibilities and behave well in school - Well done!
- You like your teachers and know that everyone takes good care of you.
- You think the alterations to the school and your new hall are fantastic.
- You like going on visits and enjoy it when visitors come to school.

Mrs Rickard is making sure you get a satisfactory education. I have asked her to do the following to make it even better.

- Making sure teachers make your lessons even better.
- Making sure teachers keep a close check on how well you are getting on so that you make good progress in learning.
- Involving the governors and other teachers more in checking how well things are going.

Thank you again for your help with the inspection. We hope that 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' was a great success for you.

All good wishes

Cheryl Thompson

Lead Inspector