



# Uphill Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 109095  
**Local Authority** North Somerset  
**Inspection number** 294535  
**Inspection dates** 28–29 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Susan Wheeler HMI

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>	Old Church Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Uphill Village
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Weston-super-Mare BS23 4XH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01934 626769
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	313	<b>Fax number</b>	01934 414011
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Stewart Castle
		<b>Headteacher</b>	David Edwards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 September 2005		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Uphill is a large primary school. The vast majority of pupils come from White British heritage and some of those from minority ethnic groups are learning English as an additional language. Children start school with broadly average skills and knowledge, with particular strengths in personal and social development. There are more pupils moving to and from the school between Reception and Year 6 than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is close to the national average. The number receiving free school meals is well below the national average. There have been significant changes of staff in the past two years, including a new deputy headteacher this term. The school has training status for initial training of teachers and a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Active Sports Mark and Investors in People. There is after-school care at the Fabulous Fun Club run by a private provider.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school which has made considerable strides since being given a Notice to Improve when inspected in September 2005. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Achievement is now good. The progress made since the last inspection is recognised by most parents and many commented on the improvements. As one parent summed it up, 'The culture of teaching and learning has changed for the better.'

The school has a fairly new senior leadership team who are committed to driving improvement forward and know what needs to be done. The team's work is supported extremely well by a strong governing body which plays an instrumental role in this progress. Partnerships with other agencies including schools, the local authority and work with trainee teachers have been used effectively to support school improvement.

The headteacher has worked single-mindedly with his team to improve pupils' education, particularly in raising the quality of teaching. This has made a very significant impact on the standards reached by pupils in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2006, which were above average. The school also collects good data on pupils' attainment, but these are not used as fully as they might to monitor pupils' progress over time. Most children in Reception make satisfactory progress and for some it is good. However, provision in Reception needs to be improved so that planning and assessment systems are more closely aligned with the rest of the school.

Teaching is good overall and pupils work hard to meet the high standards expected. Lessons are interesting and pupils are given appropriate guidance to encourage them to do their best. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well supported by very effective learning support assistants. The higher attaining pupils enjoy having greater challenges and readily discuss what they are aiming to achieve. There is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls or children from minority ethnic groups.

Uphill is a lively and productive place to be. The curriculum is good and enriched by a variety of additional activities. Pupils enjoy school and show great enthusiasm in lessons especially when asked to find solutions to problems or to assess their own learning. They work hard and are proud of their achievements. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to school life. This enthusiasm extends to their work on many fund raising projects for a number of causes. They are developing useful skills to help them as adults. They feel safe at school and behave well. They are very aware of how to be fit and healthy through exercise and what they eat.

Whilst the school recognises that there are still areas to improve upon, it should be proud of its achievements over the past year.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision in Reception so that planning and assessment systems are more closely aligned with rest of the school.
- Make better use of the good data collected throughout the school to monitor pupils' progress over time.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good between Years 1 and 6 and satisfactory in Reception. Over the last year, the school has focused sharply on improving teaching and setting ambitious targets for individual children, which are monitored regularly. These measures have been successful and standards have improved substantially. In the Year 6 national tests in 2006, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 rose markedly in English, mathematics and science. The school's data and inspection evidence indicates that these standards are likely to be sustained over the next two years. This shows the school is now providing well for the higher attaining pupils which is endorsed by the pupils themselves who say they are expected to work harder but that learning is fun. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and vulnerable children also make good progress. A relatively weaker area is in Reception where children achieve satisfactorily based on their standards when they start school. Last year, standards at the end of Reception exceeded the national expectation in some areas, including mathematics, but children made less secure progress in reading and writing, which are important skills for their future education and well-being. The school has already identified these as focus areas and is working successfully to address them.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' moral and cultural development is good and social development is outstanding although their spiritual development is less advanced. Behaviour is good and bullying is not an issue as there are good procedures in place to manage this. Pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups are very enthusiastic about their education; they enjoy school life and have very positive attitudes. This is demonstrated further by the good attendance figures. Pupils are very welcoming and open. They are confident when talking to visitors and eager to share their thoughts about their learning and are excellent ambassadors for the school. They play safely outside and move sensibly around school. They are well aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and are happy that the school insists on healthy snacks at breaks. There has been good take-up of school lunches. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through their involvement in village activities and the school council is extremely active. It holds its own budget and has made an impact on various aspects of school life including redecoration of the toilets following a survey

of pupils. Their good basic skills and experience of managing money, for example, are preparing them very effectively for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school has worked hard and successfully to improve the quality of teaching, which is now good. The headteacher has shown clear determination to raise the quality of teaching and has done this through judicious systematic monitoring and training. Many teachers use a good range of techniques and strategies to bring about good learning. They involve pupils in their own learning, for example, by asking them to consider ways that they learn best. Pupils are clear about what they are doing and why. Most teachers are very honest and constructive in their feedback to pupils. Any misconceptions are dealt with sensitively. They are confident to offer answers or demonstrate, and they are not frightened of getting things wrong. Pupils say they find teachers' marking very helpful. The majority of lessons are planned well. Pupils of different abilities are given the right level of work to help them reach their targets. In mathematics, for example, if pupils are capable of tackling work normally given to older children, teachers make sure this happens. Learning support assistants are well organised and clear about what they have to do. They make a strong contribution to learning. In Reception, staff form good relationships with children. The children enjoy a range of appropriate tasks, both inside and outside and are excited learners. However, lesson plans are insufficiently detailed. They are not explicit enough about the learning that is expected for the range of abilities in the class, and the next steps children need to take to make progress. As a result, learning is satisfactory rather than good.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. In Reception, it provides appropriately for the needs of young children. In the rest of the school the broad curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development, enjoyment of school and their good achievement. All subjects are covered effectively and serve all groups of pupils very well. The curriculum planning provides a clear progression. Provision for English and mathematics is well matched to the varying needs of pupils as is the deployment of learning support assistants to help children with specific needs. There are very good links between subjects which help pupils practise and develop their understanding, for example, mathematics taught through information and communication technology (ICT) and history through English. The curriculum is extended effectively and innovatively through specialist teaching of French, music and physical education in Key Stage 2. ICT is also enhanced through links with the local secondary school. The curriculum is further enriched through a range of visits and visitors as well as the annual camp, which make a significant impact on pupils' learning. The out of school clubs are a very popular and

include choir and stamp club as well as sports activities. The Fabulous Fun Club is appreciated by parents and comments reflect how much pupils enjoy the provision.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils are very well cared for. The school places good emphasis on their enjoyment and well-being. Arrangements for ensuring pupils are safe are robust. They feel secure in school and know who to approach if they are concerned. One pupil said, 'It's like being at home.' The school has worked hard to collate data on pupils' attainment and there is an efficient system in place. The headteacher monitors pupils' progress against their targets on a regular basis and this has been an important factor in raising standards. The data are used well by most teachers. Pupils are very clear and positive about their academic targets and how these are helping them to make progress. However, there are two weaker aspects. The information from reception assessments is not included in the electronic system and for some pupils targets are too low. This is because progress is not monitored over a longer timescale, to make sure each pupil builds upon the levels they have reached in previous years. Most parents feel well informed about their child's progress and welfare, which they appreciate. There are good procedures in place for identifying and supporting vulnerable children and the school has good links with outside agencies to support their welfare and success.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Extremely good progress has been made since the last inspection. This is due in no small part to the excellent work of the headteacher in improving the quality of teaching. His outstanding leadership has made sure that the shared vision for the school has been put into practice. Together with raising expectations of pupils' learning, this has made a distinct difference in attainment and achievement since last year. This was endorsed by one parent who said that the school could not be praised highly enough for its commitment to raising standards. However, a few parents expressed concerns about other issues, some of which were linked to communication, which the school is working on.

The relatively new senior leadership team is very committed to building on what is good and to improving the school further, but it is too early to measure their impact fully. They know where there are still gaps in pupils' learning and are working hard to ensure pupils continue to make good progress. Within the team, there is a clear understanding of what needs to be done next in the Reception classes. There are good systems in place for identifying vulnerable children and for providing appropriate individual education plans as well as good deployment of support staff.

The governing body is well led by an informed and experienced chair and vice-chair. They are rigorous in their monitoring of school improvement and provide good challenge. They work hard with the leadership team to ensure that financial planning

is carefully aligned to the school's priorities. Progress since the last inspection and clear plans for future improvements demonstrate that the school's capacity to improve further is good.



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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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### 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	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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 helping us feel so welcome in your school, for answering our questions and sharing what you do with us. As you know, the inspectors visited all your classes and we also saw you at break times. We talked to your teachers, your headteacher and governors as well as some of the pupils on the school council. I would like to tell you what we thought about your good school.

What we liked about your school:

- You have made good progress since last year.
- Your teachers work hard to help you to do as well as you can.
- Lessons are interesting and you are so eager to learn and to do your best.
- You behave sensibly and enjoy coming to school.
- You have fun at the after school clubs and enjoy the visits and visitors.
- You are very good at assessing how well you are learning.
- You get on well with each other and the adults in school.
- The staff look after you very carefully which makes you feel safe at school.
- Your headteacher is working hard with all the staff to make your school even better.
- Your school is doing very well and no longer has any major areas to improve.

What we have asked your school to do:

- To help children in the Reception classes do better by making the planning and assessment of their work similar to the way it is done in the rest of the school.
- To make better use of the good information teachers collect about your learning so they know how well you are doing as you move through each year.

We know how proud you are of Uphill School and we are sure that you will always try to do your best.