

Upwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110693
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	310391
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Karin Heap

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Fiona Hopkins
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Whitelaw
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2005
School address	Ramsey Road Upwood Huntingdon PE26 2QA
Telephone number	01487 813510
Fax number	01487 812019

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The overall effectiveness of the school and the following issues were investigated: arrangements for monitoring and improving pupils' progress towards targets, standards in mathematics and the qualities of the school's care, guidance and support for pupils.

Evidence was gathered from scrutiny of assessment data, checking school records and documents, analysis of parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire, observation of the school at work and discussion with governors, staff and pupils.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Upwood Primary is a small rural community school, with a single form in each year. Almost all pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average and a significant number of pupils leave and/or join school at different times of the year. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is below that found nationally. Overall children's attainment when they begin school is below that typical for their age group. A playgroup, separately run, is sited at the school. The school has achieved the Basics Skills Quality Mark and the Activemark for sports.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Upwood is a good school where pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development and well-being. This is because the school's highly inclusive ethos underpins the work of the very skilled and highly committed staff. Everyone works exceptionally hard to ensure that every pupil is very well cared for and guided. The overwhelming majority of parents are very supportive of the school describing it, for example, as: 'A school which has a very caring ethos where every child matters and where children are happy,' and 'My child has a role to play, she matters; we are delighted with every part of the school.'

Pupils' skills and abilities when they enter school are below those typical for their age. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage, which is sustained throughout school. When pupils leave school, they have reached standards that are broadly in line with the national average: their achievement is good.

The school uses a detailed tracking system to identify if pupils are falling behind. Focused intervention strategies ensure that pupils catch up and make at least the expected progress. However, due to the diverse ability range of pupils in school, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have not yet risen above what is nationally expected; in mathematics, standards are still just below average. The support for pupils who find learning difficult or have disabilities is strong, including detailed and accurate assessment and very good 'provision mapping' to ensure that their progress is at least good.

Pupils clearly enjoy school and particularly highlight that lessons are fun. Their attendance is good and they are exceptionally polite and very well behaved. They show good communication skills and are encouraged to express their views in many different ways. Pupils are proud of their exceptional work as a school council. They work closely with school leaders and contribute at many stages to initiatives such as refurbishment of the library, the new play and resources for lunchtime activities. Pupils feel very safe, extremely well cared for and have a very good understanding of how to live healthily. They compliment their teachers on their hard work and very strong support, which help them to learn well. Pupils say that they are pushed hard, to learn as well as they can. They have a very good social awareness and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very well developed. This is because the school has very strong links with the local and wider community as well as global links such as with a school in Nicaragua.

Pupils learn well because of the good teaching throughout the school. Lessons are interesting and teachers plan carefully to ensure that all children are engaged and enjoy learning. Pupils who need extra help or have disabilities are taught effectively because the detailed pupil tracking systems ensure that additional teaching resources are focused on those who need them most. Teachers know their pupils very well, set challenging targets for them and monitor their progress closely.

The school offers a wide range of interesting activities. The broad and balanced curriculum meets the needs of all learners well and prepares them for their futures. The school environment is stimulating and supports learning effectively. This includes a good range of outside play activities for all pupils. The school offers an exceptionally diverse range of enrichment activities, including residential trips for seven and eight year olds and, in geography and history, learning opportunities that are based in the local community. The school is rightly proud of its very

inclusive approach to learning. For example, the annual Christmas play includes every pupil and involves them fully in planning and production.

Pupils are cared for, guided and supported exceptionally well; this overarching strength underpins all the school's work. All staff, parents and governors are extremely supportive and share the school's exceptionally positive and inclusive ethos. Safeguarding and health and safety procedures are robust with detailed systems to identify pupils' needs. Good links with other agencies, for example, the mental health service, ensure pupils are supported very effectively at all levels. Academic guidance is well established and used consistently within the classroom. Pupils know and understand their learning targets and confirm that these help them to learn better. The school uses a very effective range of strategies to ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum and make good progress.

Leadership is good. The headteacher shares her vision of a caring, supporting and inclusive school effectively. Together with the leadership team and governors she has relentlessly pursued this vision and drive for improvement. As a result, everyone in school is committed to ensuring that all pupils enjoy learning and make good progress, taking careful consideration of each pupil's starting point and individual need. The systematic professional development of staff and their performance management is clearly focused on raising standards and school improvement.

The very strong governing body makes a very effective contribution and provides an exceptionally good balance of challenge and support. They share the enthusiasm and commitment of all staff, are very well informed and take a very active and constructive part in the life of the school.

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and provides good value for money. Based on its accurate self-evaluation and good pace of securing improvement the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision is good. Children are taught well by a committed and skilled team of staff who liaise closely with the playgroup based at the school. Children have a very positive start in the Foundation Stage because of effective induction arrangements. They are happily engaged in a good range of stimulating activities. The new outdoor play area and use of focused language and communication programmes contribute towards their good progress in personal, social and language development. Newly implemented tracking systems ensure that teaching is targeted to meet the needs of all children, thus laying a good foundation for further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enable pupils to make good and better progress in all areas and thereby raise standards above the national average, especially in mathematics.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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

7 May 2008

Dear pupils

Inspection of the Upwood Primary School, Cambridgeshire PE26 2QA

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I really enjoyed my time with you; it has been great to see how much you enjoy coming to school and to see how very well you behave. You are all very friendly, cheerful and polite and helped me feel at home in your school.

When I visited your school, I was impressed by all the good work that you are doing. I could see that you really enjoy your learning and that you are keen to help each other. One example is the work of your school council in helping to create more exciting activities for you at lunchtime. I am also impressed with the many interesting activities adults are planning for you and the fun you have.

I am very pleased to tell you that you go to such a good school. The headteacher, your teachers and all the other adults who work with you take great care of you and want you to do your best. You are doing well to learn new things and you are also doing very well in learning how to work together, helping each other and keeping healthy and safe.

So that your school becomes even better, I have asked Mrs Whitelaw and the teachers to make sure that you all progress as well as you can in all areas, and especially in mathematics. You can help by listening carefully and working hard.

I will take away many good memories about your school and have really enjoyed the time I have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Karin Heap

Lead inspector