

Upham Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116372
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312280
Inspection date	26 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Sean O'Toole

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Gwyn Halsall-Little
Headteacher	Mrs Pam Threlfall
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Upham Street Upham Southampton SO32 1JD
Telephone number	01489 860355
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated how well boys and girls of different abilities and backgrounds make progress. The inspector focused on how well pupils develop personal and independent learning skills. He also checked on how effectively leaders and governors keep a check on, and help to improve, the school's provision, especially teaching. Evidence was gathered from the analysis of the school's performance, scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of lessons, parents' questionnaires, and discussions with the headteacher, governors, parents and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but 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

This smaller than average school admits pupils from a wide area. Most have White British heritage. Two speak Polish as their first language. A small percentage have specific learning needs related to communication, behaviour or physical difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'The combination of excellent teaching, the breadth of the curriculum and extra curricular activities promotes confidence in the children. This in turn helps them to become rounded, happy and caring of each other,' wrote one delighted parent, summing up the views of many. This highly successful school seeks to provide the best for each child both academically and socially. As a result, pupils attain high standards and achieve outstandingly so that they are thoroughly prepared for the next stage of their education. The teachers have detailed knowledge of each pupil and, through robust assessment, keep track of their progress. They use this information to pinpoint the next steps in learning. They set challenging tasks that are pitched at the right level for the different ages and abilities in the classes.

Outstanding relationships and a climate of encouragement promote pupils' learning. Adults value the pupils' opinions and respond to their suggestions. The pupils say they are happy and feel secure. They are proud of their contribution to making the school a friendly place and say that rough play and unkindness are rare. They clearly like their teachers and are keen to please them. They work hard, maintain high levels of concentration and take pride and pleasure in their own and others' success. As one girl explained, 'We like everyone and want them to do well'. These positive personal qualities are also evident in the pupils' exemplary behaviour. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to keep themselves safe. They are keen to learn new skills and respond excitedly to the excellent opportunities to be creative and to develop good physical skills. They have contributed much to the school's Gold Artsmark, Activemark and Healthy Schools Award. They relish opportunities to take the lead in fund-raising for the school and charities.

The school's success is built around teamwork and a shared commitment to meeting the needs of all. The headteacher is challenging and supportive, and gets the best from her staff so that teaching is of a consistently high quality. The school's family atmosphere, much prized by parents, also means that no child is overlooked. There is extra support for those with communication, behaviour or physical difficulties that enables these pupils to achieve good success. Pupils say how much they like and respect their teachers so that they can go to them for help. The headteacher and governors work very well together and, through rigorous analysis of test results and regular monitoring, make sure that improvement is always on the agenda. Their excellent capacity to improve is exemplified by the consistently high standards and the improvements in writing this year. Leaders recognise the need to strengthen the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) so that pupils improve their skills in using computers, particularly for research.

Governors are supportive and skilled in reviewing the school's work. They hold the headteacher to account and are involved much in developing and monitoring the school's initiatives. The vast majority of parents feel that staff are approachable. Although a few parents would like more regular consultations, the inspector found that staff are good at listening to their views and make very good use of outside agencies to support pupils. The school provides a rich variety of opportunities to enhance and enrich the pupils' learning. Parents and their children spoke highly of the extra curricular activities and the older pupils were almost ecstatic when describing the recent residential visit. Pupils also say that learning is fun. They enjoy the ways that teachers make lessons interesting by combining the use of basic skills with challenging topic work. Activities, which include sport, creative arts and games, are well attended and valued by the pupils. Many learn instruments and practise hard to improve. Pupils say they enjoy homework.

Parents commented that the school's guidance on homework helps them to support their children in getting the most from it. Teachers give well-focused advice through accurate and helpful marking. They are up to date in their knowledge of safeguarding children and make every effort to ensure that each child feels safe and secure. It is clear that every child in this school matters. As one parent wrote, 'There is such a strong sense of respect between children and staff. The children are all happy and well behaved and enjoy their school and the learning within it'.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children make a successful start in the Foundation Stage and, by the time they leave the Reception class, most are working at levels that are in advance of those expected for their age. Many parents commented on how quickly their children settled to school life and one wrote, 'The Reception year is a particular strength providing a very positive, thoughtful experience for each child'. This success helps children to develop strong social skills and consequently they work and play happily together. The children are very successful in reading and writing and respond enthusiastically when learning new sounds and letters. The adults provide just the right balance between directing the children and giving them opportunities to make their own choices. This results in some high quality collaborative work such as designing and then making an aeroplane from boxes, almost unaided by the teacher. Staff conscientiously record the key points in each child's development and keep parents well informed of their child's progress. They also make very good use of the information to plan the next steps in learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning especially for research.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
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

02 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upham Church of England Aided Primary School, Southampton, SO32 1JD

Thank you for making me feel so welcome. I really enjoyed my day with you. Special thanks to the school council for giving up your lunchtime to talk to me. I was very pleased to hear how much you enjoy school.

Your school is a great place to learn and there are lots of excellent things about it.

- You work hard and are very successful at learning new things.
- I noticed how polite and well mannered you are and how you are keen to help everyone.
- You are good at sharing ideas and helping each other to learn.
- I enjoyed listening to you play musical instruments and was pleased to hear that you practise a lot.
- Your teachers plan interesting lessons and try to make sure that everyone gets the help they need to learn.
- Your mums and dads provide lots of extra funds to help the school.
- You are very good at reading, writing and mathematics.

Even in an outstanding school there are things to do and I have asked the staff to find ways to help you to get even better at using computers. Several of you told me that you would like more opportunities to use information and communication technology.

I hope that you continue to enjoy school and hope that you all stay as happy as you are now.

Sean O'Toole

Lead Inspector