

# Upton Snodsbury CofE First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116854
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312425
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Cox

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carole Wyles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Hardwick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2005
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Upton Snodsbury Worcester WR7 4NH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01905 381288
<b>Fax number</b>	01905 381288

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Upton Snodsbury CE First School is a smaller than average sized first school. All of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. When children start school in Reception, they have the skills and knowledge typical of four-year-olds. A new permanent headteacher took up post in January 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents are very pleased that their children attend this good school. Right from day one, a warm welcome is given to all children which helps them to settle to happy and successful learning. Pupils want to do well because they are well cared for and given good guidance and advice. They are also taught well, which means they build quickly on their starting points. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 4, standards are above average and they have achieved well. They develop good basic skills which prepare them well for later life.

The good quality of education is due to good leadership and management. School leaders, including governors, have high expectations and set challenging targets for the improvement of standards. Staff work well as a team, and systems to ensure the school runs smoothly are good. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further work. Standards continue to improve and there has been a significant improvement in most aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection. The new headteacher has gained the confidence of staff, pupils and parents and has a clear strategy for continuing the good work of her predecessor. There is a good capacity to take the next steps in improvement.

Pupils are very proud of their school and they work together in harmony and friendliness. Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and thoroughly enjoy their time at Upton Snodsbury. This is reflected in the above average rate of attendance. Because of the excellent relationships within the school, pupils happily talk to adults and other pupils about any problems they have and are confident that these will be dealt with sensitively. Pupils develop a good level of self-confidence and strong team working skills, which are shown by the initiative and involvement they demonstrate in classroom and other activities. Pupils express their opinions politely but with a determination to be heard, while listening to others, and so contribute effectively to decision-making within the school, for example through representation on the 'Travel Plan' committee. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures from around the world but are less familiar with the cultural diversity of Britain.

Good quality teaching, together with an interesting curriculum, ensures pupils are keen to do their best. They are made aware of what constitutes an effective learner and as a result some can talk about what such learners do and give examples of these in practice. Standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are strengthened because opportunities to use them across the curriculum are identified and used. Pupils in Year 3 do not always make as rapid progress as pupils in other year groups because work is sometimes insufficiently matched to their needs.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. Good induction procedures ensure that they settle quickly and happily into school routines. Children make good progress because of the good teaching they receive. By the end of Reception, standards are above average. The attractive learning environment, both indoors and outside, and the varied range of practical activities really engage their interest. Staff plan stimulating activities that generate children's curiosity and enable them to explore new skills for themselves, gaining an interest in the world around them. ICT is used effectively to support learning, although there are missed opportunities, for example in the role play area, to develop children's imaginative language. Leadership and

management are good and significant improvements have been made in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide pupils in Year 3 with work that is more closely matched to their needs in order to improve their progress.
- Extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of Britain.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The academic achievements of pupils are good and continue to improve. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, standards overall are above those expected nationally. Pupils work hard and their enthusiasm is infectious. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities try hard to keep up with others and so their progress is good. Children make good progress across the areas of learning in Reception. Whilst, in most years, pupils continue to make good progress, in Year 2, their progress is outstanding because of outstanding teaching. However, the progress of pupils in Year 3 is less rapid than Year 4 pupils in the same class as activities are not always as closely matched to their needs.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning, especially when actively involved in practical activities, and are keen to do well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although their understanding of the cultural diversity of today's society is limited. Pupils are friendly and welcoming and show good levels of care for each other. Pupils behave impeccably. Playground buddies look after younger pupils and play leaders ensure that the 'huff and puff' activities involve as many pupils as possible at lunchtimes. Pupils speak very knowledgably about how to stay healthy. Healthy eating choices are monitored at breaktimes. The school council and 'ECO action group' are regularly involved in decision-making and take their responsibilities very seriously. Many 'environmentally friendly' activities such as recycling, composting, saving energy and planting have been introduced and the school grounds are used very well to support pupils' learning. Pupils develop a good knowledge of the wider world through their strong links with the church, visits out of school and fundraising for charity. Pupils leave the school as mature, confident individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are taught well and there are some examples of outstanding teaching. For example, in a Year 2 class, ICT was used very effectively to provide a range of tasks that matched the needs of the different ability groups represented. Key concepts of phonemes were illustrated using ICT, and good fun was had when the cartoon shark ate the words and produced a corresponding sound. Generally, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and they plan interesting activities to capture their imaginations. Lessons go at a brisk pace. Pupils work hard and understand what and why they are learning. Staff are well trained to meet the needs of pupils

with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants provide valuable support to make sure their pupils are successful in their work. Effective questioning skills that include all pupils and clear explanations by teachers support the pupils' learning well. Occasionally, activities do not extend all pupils in the class, particularly in mixed age classes.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is rich and inviting. Pupils are keen to find out about new things and often show good skills of independent research. This is due to the practical nature of a lot of the work and the strong links between the different subjects. Working across subjects is emphasised and enhanced through termly 'curriculum weeks' such as the 'around the world' project. The curriculum is extended well. Pupils enrich their learning through an extensive programme of visits, art days, music workshops and theatre performances. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning are promoted through a comprehensive programme of personal and social education activities. The outside space is inviting and, since its refurbishment, the school is finding new ways to promote children's awareness of environmental issues. The curriculum is generally well planned but not enough is done to emphasise the difference between the Year 3 and Year 4 curriculum.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good because it is firmly focused on children's development in their six areas of learning. A number of parent helpers and community volunteers work with Reception children. As a result, children benefit from one-to-one and small group activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well cared for in a safe and supportive learning environment, and the vast majority of parents and carers agree. This comment from one parent typifies the thoughts of many: 'I am very pleased with my child's progress and happiness at this school – what more could you ask?' All procedures to safeguard pupils' health, safety and well-being are in place and meet current requirements. Relationships are very good and pupils say that they feel confident in being able to approach adults with any worries or concerns. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by a skilled teaching assistant and outside specialist help when needed. This ensures that these pupils are fully included in all activities and make good progress. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and individual learning targets are set, but not all pupils are fully aware of these. This leads to some pupils not always knowing how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Since the last inspection, newly-appointed staff have become established and their roles have developed well. There is now a common and shared desire to raise standards and achievement, reflected in a revised vision statement and the school development plan, to which all staff contribute. Parents have high expectations and the school has a good reputation within the local community. Leaders and managers at all levels are working successfully to meet the challenging targets the school is setting in order to raise standards. The school makes an

accurate assessment of its performance, which it uses to set sensible priorities for further improvement. Systems to check and evaluate the quality of education and pupils' achievements are improving well. However, systems are not rigorous enough to ensure pupils in all year groups make the same rapid progress as those in Year 2. The new headteacher has already identified the significant strengths of the school and what actions are needed to bring about further improvement. Governors have a good understanding of the school's needs and provide good support. They challenge and evaluate initiatives very effectively through the rigorous monitoring systems.

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## 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 <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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2
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?	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.

## Annex A

**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 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	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

29 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Upton Snodsbury CE First School, Worcester, WR7 4NH

Thank you all very much for making us feel so welcome in your school when we visited recently. We were impressed with you all and the way you were very happy to tell us about your school. You and your parents are rightly proud of Upton Snodsbury. Like you, we think your school is good. There are so many good things to report about your school. Here are the main ones.

Your headteacher and staff want the best for you and are determined that you make as much progress as you can in lessons. Because you really enjoy school, attend well and work hard, you reach above average standards. You have lots of exciting opportunities through visits and projects such as the 'around the world' week. It is very clear that you go to a caring school. The school helps you to gain confidence in yourselves and you all have excellent attitudes to learning. We know this because we saw you all working very hard in school and enjoying your activities. Your behaviour is excellent and you are polite to visitors. You show an exceedingly good awareness of how to stay healthy and enjoy the many sporting activities that are available to you. You show consideration for others and are friendly and helpful to each other. We liked the way the school council works to improve your school. You have a good knowledge and understanding of cultures from around the world but are less familiar with the different cultures represented in Britain.

Almost all of you make good progress with your work. Younger children get off to a flying start in Reception and generally this good progress continues throughout your time at Upton Snodsbury. Those of you who need extra help make the same good progress because the staff give you lots of attention to help you learn. There are lots of good things that happen in your classrooms. You have lovely relationships with all the staff. Teachers know you well and generally ask you to do quite demanding work. Occasionally, however, those of you in Year 3 don't make the same good progress as other pupils.

To make your school even better, we have asked your teachers to do two things. First, to set work that more closely matches the needs of pupils in Year 3 so that you can really do your best. Second, to give you more opportunities to find out about the different cultures that exist in Britain.

Thank you again for making me feel so welcome.

David Cox Lead inspector

**Annex B**

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Lead inspector