

The Uffington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120541
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313661
Inspection dates	22–23 October 2008
Reporting inspector	John Francis

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	82
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	8
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Colin Harrison
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Simms
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Uffington Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 4SU

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	22–23 October 2008
Inspection number	313661

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small village school serving the parishes of Uffington and Tallington. It also draws pupils from other towns and villages beyond the parishes who come because of parental choice. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and most live in owner-occupied housing. Very few pupils qualify for a free school meal. Most children come into the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with attainment that is broadly in line with that expected for children of this age. Few pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This school provides its children with an outstanding education, in both their academic achievements and their personal development. The school's strong Christian philosophies and principals, embraced by staff and children, underpin much of this and are the basis of the outstanding care, guidance and support for all pupils. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and direction to the work of the school and, with her skills as an excellent practitioner, sets a very high standard for everyone else. Nevertheless, all teachers rise to this challenge and consistently outstanding teaching ensures that all children make exceptionally good progress.

Despite the current limitations of the accommodation, children in the EYFS get a super start to their education. The particularly good progress they make during their first year sets the foundations for all their future achievements. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve standards that are consistently well above average and often exceptionally high. Using the excellent subject knowledge of the teachers in Key Stage 1 and 2 to provide specialist teaching in English and mathematics, pupils make outstanding progress. An example of this is the high quality learning seen in mathematics lessons in particular. Pupils are carried along at a great pace by exceptionally skilful teaching and the continuous assessment that comes through probing questions that consistently challenge their thinking. As one pupil commented, 'maths lessons are awesome'.

Pupils' attitudes are also key to the school's success. Their outstanding commitment to learning and their own personal development creates a school where everyone feels valued and successful. They show great enjoyment in all aspects of their learning. They have an excellent understanding of what they must do to stay fit and healthy and the care they show for each other means that all pupils feel safe and secure at all times. Their commitment to the school and their understanding of the needs of the wider community is exemplary. As a small rural school, their involvement in the wider world beyond their everyday life is outstanding. The school's leadership has a very genuine commitment to developing community cohesion in its widest sense.

Exceptional leadership has enabled the school to make excellent progress since its last inspection and give an outstanding capacity for continued improvement. Governors have a good understanding of the school's work and keep a close eye on the use of the school budget. However, while they have a good knowledge of the school, much of this is through the high quality information they receive from the headteacher and other staff. They are not sufficiently active in evaluating for themselves what goes on in school, for example, through regular visits or detailed monitoring of the progress of key aspects of the school's development plan.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Since the last inspection, the school has worked tirelessly to improve the facilities for children in the EYFS. This is now coming to fruition with the imminent construction of new, larger accommodation: something much welcomed by parents. Nevertheless, the limitations of the current building and outdoor area have not had any significant impact on the quality of education for these children. The meticulously planned curriculum addresses all the areas of learning. Thorough, on-going assessments are used exceptionally well in planning the next steps in children's learning and ensure they move forward at a brisk pace. From broadly average starting levels, children achieve very well and make particularly good progress in their literacy skills,

especially their understanding of the link between sounds and letters. They also make exceptional gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The many planned and unplanned opportunities for children to take part in independent play, as well as the more formal activities supported by adults, cater well for children's creative development. These enable them to show initiative and develop confidence, and support their excellent behaviour and attitudes. Currently, the limited facilities for physical development and free access to the outdoors reduce the options available for further developing these areas of learning. However, the EYFS teacher has worked hard to overcome these and the improved facilities will further enhance these opportunities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the governing body has a more direct role in monitoring the quality of education and on-going developments, including the progress of the school development plan.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Teachers in Key Stage 1 and 2 build well on the good achievements of the children at the end of the Reception year. Standards by the end of Year 6 have, over many years, been consistently very high and often demonstrate exceptional performance. The most recent, national test results, although unvalidated, show this continues to be the case. Standards are exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics; particularly so in writing. Standards in science are consistently high, and have been over many years. In Year 2, the most recent assessments show excellent progress with pupils reaching well above average standards in writing and mathematics, and exceptionally high standards in reading. With the excellent support and encouragement they receive, along with consistently high expectations, all groups of pupils perform equally well. The very high proportion who achieve Level 5 by the end of Year 6, illustrates the level of challenge and expectations for the more able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reflects the high level of trust and respect between pupils and adults. This shows in the excellent behaviour and relationships found throughout the school and pupils' ability to work and play together, cooperating in lessons and in the playground. This enjoyment is reflected in the good levels of attendance, only limited by the number of days missed through family holidays taken in term-time. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is exceptionally good. The extensive links with the church and pupils' understanding of the beliefs and cultures of many different groups through visits and visitors, take them well beyond their local environment. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community and the school council enables them to take an active part in school development. All of this leads to excellent community cohesion. With the exceptional social skills and outstanding achievements, pupils have an excellent preparation for the future and life beyond school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and application are implicit in every lesson. Certainly, pupils recognise this. With excellent planning and skilful classroom management, children throughout the school are achieving exceptionally well. Across the school, teachers base their lesson planning firmly in their understanding of pupils' needs. This is the result of detailed marking and assessment, which targets the most important things pupils need to do to improve. Teachers supplement this knowledge by continuously assessing pupils during lessons through high quality questioning. Using this information, teachers adjust the lessons as they progress to move pupils learning on at a brisk pace, confident in the knowledge they understand the content. No time is wasted. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for those pupils who need additional help and are very much part of the 'school team'. Teachers share clear learning intentions for the lesson with the pupils and match these accurately to the needs of different ages or groups in the class. Using these as reference points, pupils and teachers have a clear picture of how successful they have been.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The standards achieved not only come through the exceptionally high quality teaching but also through outstanding curriculum enrichment. Teachers carefully weave links between subjects and the skills pupils need into their lesson planning, often making this a seamless process. Extra-curricular opportunities are many and varied, especially those for competitive sports, and have a high rate of participation. The use of the village hall and the facilities of a school in the nearby town provide space for physical activities that overcome the limitations of the school building. Additionally, children in Reception and Key Stage 1 have regular swimming sessions. All of these contribute well to pupils' understanding of healthy living. Those pupils who have particular gifts and talents are not ignored. Mathematics and science 'challenges', in cooperation with other local schools, provide high quality opportunities for pupils to show their skills and work with others outside of their normal school environment. The school works well to broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world through links with, and visits to, nearby towns and cities to experience different cultures and religions first hand. Added to this are the opportunities pupils have to experience different approaches to learning through well-planned residential visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The impact of this quality of care is seen throughout the school in children's excellent attitudes and relationships with each other. The school, rightly, prides itself on the care it provides, much of which comes through its strong Christian ethos. Parents recognise and appreciate this. All the necessary safeguards are in place to ensure children are safe from harm and enable them to have secure and trusting relationships with the adults in school. From their smooth introduction to school in Reception, through to their well-managed transition to secondary education, the school provides exceptional academic and pastoral support for all pupils. Tracking pupils' progress is thorough and detailed, and ensures that not only the teachers but also the

pupils know exactly what they are aiming for. Detailed, constructive marking and guidance supports pupils' learning and accurately targets areas for further improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and direction to the work of the school. She sets extremely high standards and leads by example. Through accurate and detailed evaluation, school leaders have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, their grading of their own performance is overly modest in some areas. The governing body is knowledgeable, committed to the school and determined to see continuous improvement. Much of its focus has been on improving the facilities for the children in the EYFS, something highlighted at the last inspection. This has taken a large proportion of governors' time and effort over recent years but is now reaching a conclusion. Where the board has been less effective is in its systems to gather first-hand information about the work of the school. At present, governors have limited involvement in directly monitoring and evaluating school improvement for themselves.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

24 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of The Uffington Church of England Primary School, Uffington, Lincolnshire, PE9 4SU

Many of you will remember our visit to school a little while ago. Thank you for making us so welcome. It was lovely meeting and talking with so many of you. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

You go to an excellent school and we agree with you about all of the great things that go on. We can see through these, and your hard work, how you reach exceptional standards in all you do. All of the adults take excellent care of you and work hard to make your school an interesting place to come to. All of you make an outstanding contribution to your school. You work very hard to help others and improve your school, and do everything asked of you extremely well. You told us how much you enjoy school, and how you work hard and try your best and we can see this in the quality of your work. We agree with you that your teachers make your lessons interesting. The speed and accuracy of your work in the mathematics lessons I saw was particularly impressive. You also told us that everyone in school gets on well and we can see this in the way you work and play together. We were very impressed by how all the children in school look after one another, working and playing together so well.

There is little we can suggest to your teachers that will make your school even better. The extra space for the Reception children will be a real bonus for them and allow them to do even more things than they do now. We have though, asked the school governors to involve themselves more in what goes on during the school day so they can celebrate your successes even more with you.

We wish you well for the future and hope you continue to work hard and get even better.

John Francis

Lead inspector