

# Upton Infants' School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 113671           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Dorset           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 325857           |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 15 October 2008  |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Michael Burghart |

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.

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| <b>Type of school</b>  | Infant                                   |
| <b>School category</b>   | Community                                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>   | 3–7                                      |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>  | Mixed                                    |
| <b>Number on roll</b>  |  |
| School (total)   | 238                                      |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 80                                       |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years                                     | 0  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>   | The governing body                       |
| <b>Chair</b>   | Jane French                              |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Nicola Pendlebury                        |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 3 October 2005                           |
| <b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>                              | Not previously inspected                 |
| <b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>   | Not previously inspected                 |
| <b>School address</b>  | Guest Road<br>Upton<br>Poole<br>BH16 5LQ |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 01202 622367                             |
| <b>Fax number</b>  | 01202 622367                             |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and, in doing so, investigated the following issues:

standards in writing and how effective the school is in raising them

the quality of provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

how well assessment information is used to promote pupils' progress

the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation.

Discussions took place with the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own views, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average size infant school. It draws pupils from a wide urban and semi-rural area. Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage and all have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Children start school part-time in Reception, which constitutes the final year of Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

## 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. It has a variety of excellent features, not least of which are in the quality of care, guidance and support which results in pupils' outstanding personal development. Relationships are excellent and underpin extremely positive attitudes to learning from pupils and staff. Morale is high and everyone enjoys school. Parents are overwhelming supportive of the school. Comments like, 'A wonderful atmosphere!' 'Friendly caring staff!' and, 'I have nothing but praise for the school,' are typical. Pupils on the school council found it extremely difficult to come up with anything but positive comments. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school as a community. They say they feel safe because they know that staff can be trusted. They respond with outstanding behaviour and by working hard.

Across the school, pupils build on the good start they get in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They make good progress from starting points which are below what is expected in communication, language, literacy, and mathematical calculation, but broadly as expected in other areas of learning. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics to reach standards that are above average at the end of Year 2, and are well prepared for future study. Numeracy skills are strong and give pupils a good basis for problem solving. A relative weakness is that pupils do not do quite so well in writing as in other subjects. Sentence construction and the use of descriptive vocabulary, particularly by the more able pupils, restrict their progress to higher than average levels. Nevertheless, the school is successful in helping pupils to express their opinions and feelings, and in encouraging them to listen as well as to speak.

Teaching is good across the school. It ensures that pupils' learning is secure. There is a good balance of experience and expertise on the staff, and teachers benefit from mutual support and excellent monitoring. There are good opportunities for professional development. Teachers make very good use of assessment information to highlight areas for development. They are good at showing pupils what they can do to improve their work. Support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning, especially helping to guarantee that all pupils are sensitively included in all activities.

The curriculum was not inspected in detail, but the quality of school planning and the impact provision has on pupils' achievement are good. Work is planned for different ability levels and the well-established thematic approach makes work interesting as well as relevant. There is excellent consideration of pupils' welfare, with all required safeguards in place. An increase in the amount of time devoted to physical education, and a well-developed programme for personal, social and health education, effectively show pupils how to keep fit and stay healthy whilst having fun.

Leadership and management are judged good overall rather than outstanding because a variety of staff are, as yet, untried in their roles, and the leadership of the EYFS is in a state of change. However, the leadership and management of the headteacher are outstanding. She champions the school's educational direction. She has fashioned the views of staff, governors, pupils and parents into a vision which is rooted in what the pupils are capable of achieving in personal and academic terms. Governors support the school enthusiastically. Their governance is good and they are quite prepared to challenge in a constructive way.

There is a strong sense of teamwork, with senior staff and governors managing the school well. Responsibilities are clearly defined, and evaluating the impact of decisions made is the order of the day. Finance, resources and staff are well deployed. Although they have yet to be

capitalised upon in the EYFS, very good improvements to accommodation are having positive effects on learning and are excellent examples of the school's track record. With incisive self-evaluation and strong strategic and academic planning, the school's capacity to improve is outstanding. One member of staff summed up the views of her colleagues by saying, 'We know what we have to do. We know how to do it and we'll know when we get there!' The school is particularly well set for the future.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children get off to a good start in the EYFS because they are extremely well cared for, and well taught and supported. They join the school with skills and experience which are generally expected of this age in all areas except communication, language and literacy, and in the calculation aspects of numeracy. Children make good progress overall and start Year1 having reached most of the goals of the EYFS curriculum. Progress in personal development is outstanding. Children make choices, show independence, share and take turns. This very successful profile forms an excellent basis for the outstanding ethos which extends across the whole school. Children really enjoy school. Their behaviour is excellent because they are fully engaged in an exciting range of activities. It is no wonder parents are so pleased with what is on offer. Staff plan carefully and ensure that there are lots of interesting, practical opportunities inside and outdoors for children to learn through play. Teachers keep detailed records of children's progress and make good use of this information to identify the next steps in learning.

New equipment and the recently much-enhanced accommodation are beginning to be used effectively. However, some activities, although great fun, do not provide children with enough opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills fully. Putting this right already forms part of forward planning and is a very good example of how well the EYFS is led and managed, even though its new leader does not start until next term.

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

- Raise standards in writing, particularly ensuring that more able pupils consistently achieve above average levels.
- Make the most of the new facilities and resources to improve the communication, language and literacy skills of children in the EYFS.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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 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?              | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve?   | 2 |
| 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?                     | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?                          | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?                                 | 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/or disabilities make progress                           | 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.

## Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                          | 1 |
| 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   | 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                                    | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

## The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 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 |

## 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  | 1   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 2   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 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  |



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

16 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Upton Infant School, Poole, BH16 5LQ

Some of you may find this letter a bit hard to read, but I am sure your teachers will help you!

It was a pleasure to visit your school. We want to say thank you to everyone for being so welcoming. The school council was especially helpful and councillors were very keen to say how much you all enjoy school. Upton Infants is a good school and is well on the way to being even better. There is much to be proud of.

Here are some of the highlights.

- You get off to a good start in Reception and carry on this good progress in Years 1 and 2 to reach standards which are above those found in most other infant schools.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you get on very well together.
- The staff take extremely good care of you and help you to be sensible and considerate.
- Teachers are very good at showing you how you can improve your work. Their teaching is good. We were pleased you could tell us that your teachers make work interesting.

The school is well run. The headteacher, staff and governors make an excellent team. We have asked them to make sure you do as well in writing you do in reading and maths,(especially those of you in the top groups) and to make the best of all the exciting things those of you in Reception have to do to improve what adults call your 'communication skills'.

Keep up the good work and keep having fun! Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Burghart Lead inspector