

Uplands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115890
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326286
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Beryl Richmond

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	310
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	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jackie Miller
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Ramshaw
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Morshead Crescent Fareham PO16 7QP
Telephone number	01329 232878
Fax number	01329 318777

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Uplands Primary is a large oversubscribed school. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average, although that of pupils with statements of educational needs is below. Pupils' needs include moderate and severe learning difficulties; behavioural, emotional and social needs; speech, language and communication difficulties; and physical disability. From Years 1 to 6, pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. A new leadership team has been in place since September 2007 and there have been a number of changes in staffing. The school has the enhanced Healthy School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Uplands Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory and improving education. Through the good leadership and management of the headteacher, the school is emerging in good heart after a period of uncertainty and turbulence caused by changes in key staff. The situation is now more stable. Staff have gelled into a cohesive team who are working together well, because the headteacher has established a good shared vision. The school is aware that it could improve upon the quality of education it offers and is working effectively to bring about improvement.

Parents are very interested in their children's education and a very large majority are positive about the school's work. The school has good links with a wide range of organisations which support pupils' welfare and learning. For example, links with the local community are strong. Pupils enjoy visiting the old people's luncheon club and the local church. On a daily basis, the school is supportive of pupils and their families through its 'open door' policy.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, because of the very good care that is provided and a very strong focus on personal development within the curriculum. Excellent relationships help pupils to develop into self-confident, polite individuals who work and play together very well. This is because the school provides them with a wide range of opportunities to take responsibility and to work cooperatively and collaboratively. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their own and the wider community by, for example, taking on roles in school as school councillors and as buddies. Behaviour, and pupils' understanding of how to stay healthy and safe, are excellent. Pupils say that they enjoy school, and parents are supportive of the school by ensuring their children attend regularly; consequently, the rate of attendance is above average.

Leaders are aware that standards need to be higher. Standards are improving following a period in which they dipped. In 2008, at the end of Year 2, while standards in reading and mathematics were average, those in writing were below average. Some pupils, particularly the more able, did not make the progress they should have from their starting points in Year 1. The school is closely monitoring their current progress in Year 3 to ensure that they receive the support that they need in order to help them achieve their potential. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science were just above the national average, and pupils made satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 3. Writing standards were below those of reading, mathematics and science and remain a priority for improvement. Pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties achieve well, as do those with behavioural, emotional and social needs, and those with speech, language and communication difficulties or physical disabilities.

Achievement is satisfactory because teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good teaching is apparent, but is not yet consistent across the school. In satisfactory lessons, some pupils, particularly the more-able pupils, are insufficiently challenged, and the pace of learning is consequently too slow. Achievement is being boosted by improved setting arrangements and a better curriculum in English and mathematics, and the targeting of pupils who still need to make up lost ground.

Systems for tracking pupils' progress are good. The school has an accurate view of pupils' performance and progress. Pupils appreciate the feedback they receive from teachers to help them improve. They take responsibility well for judging how well they are progressing by using different checking systems according to their age, which they themselves have been involved

in devising. However, the targets that pupils are set vary in their quality, and overall many do not provide a good enough spur to learning or pinpoint exactly where they need to improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, although there are clear signs of leaders and managers at all levels having a good impact in many areas of work. For example, self-evaluation is good and responsibility for school improvement is widely shared. Middle managers take full responsibility for checking on pupils' progress by analysing data and checking on progress in books. They also support planning and team-teach with colleagues in lessons. However, they are not as involved as they might be in the formal monitoring of teaching and learning, and consequently they have a limited impact on helping to improve teaching further. The school's recent track record in improving achievement and progress, the quality of teaching, and the accuracy of assessment, indicate a good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's starting points are generally in line with those expected for their ages. Parents are very appreciative of the good start that their children make to school life. Children settle happily because of good links with their parents and a strong nurturing environment. Staff know the children very well. Children's progress is good because the quality of teaching and learning is good, and the curriculum is stimulating, practical and interesting. Staff keep good and detailed records of children's progress from observing children learning. Leadership and management are good, with clear priorities set for improvement. For example, the school has identified that the outdoor area needs to be improved so that children benefit from a better-resourced outdoor environment and a covered area, so that they can play and work outside whatever the weather. This is in hand. Teamwork is strong generally, with the result that children benefit from consistent routines and high expectations of behaviour and achievement. There is a good mix of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, so that children can develop skills progressively and can explore their own interests. As a result of all these factors, standards were above those expected by the end of the year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement, particularly in writing, by having higher expectations of what pupils, especially the more-able pupils, can achieve, and by setting pupils more challenging personal targets.
- Improve the pace in learning by involving all leaders and managers in the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In 2008, standards at the end of Year 6 were just above average, and pupils' progress was satisfactory. Writing standards were not as good as reading standards, and remain a priority for improvement. By the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics was below average, and pupils did not make satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 1 in writing, in mathematics, or overall. Most pupils

are on track and are making at least satisfactory progress towards their targets, with the particular exception of Year 3, where some pupils still need to catch up, especially in writing. Targets set for pupils in lessons are still not consistently challenging enough, particularly for the more-able, and there is not enough good teaching to ensure that all pupils make good progress. Pupils with learning and emotional and behavioural needs make good progress because of the well targeted support they receive, reaching standards which are in line with national averages by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' moral and social development is excellent, and their spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils accept and respect each other, valuing the diversity of life. Positive relationships are enhanced through 'personal achievement time', when pupils work with others from different classes and age groups. They have an outstanding commitment to health through energetic play and eating sensibly, which is reflected in the enhanced Healthy School Award. As one pupil said, 'We eat fruit because it is healthy. It helps us to think better.' Pupils have an excellent awareness of the need to keep themselves and others safe, for example by being playground buddies and peer pals. Their contribution to the school community is excellent. Years 5 and 6 take part in the Citizen Award Scheme for community involvement, and the school council is rightly proud of their contribution to school life, for example their input into the sensory garden and the quiet area in the playground. Although pupils' achievement is only satisfactory, they are well prepared for later life overall, because they have very good attitudes to learning and their personal development is excellent.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

More stable staffing, and good monitoring by senior leaders, is leading to improved quality in teaching. Lesson planning formats are good, and teachers made clear to pupils what they are expected to learn in lessons. Pupils particularly enjoy practical lessons such as the investigations in science. Classrooms are harmonious places of work, and pupils engage very well with their learning. Specific focused support is offered by learning support staff, who are usually deployed well. However, teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' attainment well enough to plan activities that match their differing needs, and this slows down pupils' progress, especially that of the more able. Marking is satisfactory. There are examples of good practice, where teachers comment on both what pupils have learnt and what they need to do to improve, but this is not consistent across all classes. Good use is made of the various symbols, such as steps, which were devised by the pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory and improving curriculum has some good elements. For example, all pupils from Year 1 upwards learn Spanish, and there are residential visits and visitors. The school has evaluated its curriculum well and has introduced opportunities for developing pupils' enthusiasm and interest in writing through other subjects with the correct level of challenge, and for making the learning of letters and sounds more systematic. The improved mathematics curriculum is

giving pupils more opportunities to problem-solve, and for them to record their calculations. The learning of vocabulary has been prioritised well. It is identified on planning and displayed in classrooms. The curriculum is organised well over a two-year period to ensure that pupils do not repeat topics. A good range of out-of-school activities and clubs, some of which are organised by the pupils themselves, are popular with both boys and girls.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is extremely good and this is much appreciated by parents. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are thorough and meet requirements. The early identification of needs, and good partnerships with outside agencies, successfully help pupils with learning, emotional and social difficulties to make good progress against their targets. The Emotional Literacy Support Assistant gives very good support for pupils with emotional and social difficulties, which ensures that they are fully included in school life. Individual education plans involve pupils well in setting personal targets, but targets written by teachers are not always specific enough. Pupils' progress is tracked regularly, so that planning and pupils' targets can be adjusted. Pupils recognise the value of having personal targets, but their targets are not always challenging enough to ensure that they make consistently good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

There is strong leadership by the headteacher, and she has quickly established an effective working partnership with the deputy headteacher, who has a clear understanding of data and how it informs planning for all groups of pupils. The positive impact of this work was previously seen mainly in Key Stage 2, and can now be clearly seen in Key Stage 1. Subject coordinators and phase leaders are striving for improvement, but have not had the opportunity to formally monitor teaching and learning to ensure that a larger proportion of pupils benefit from good teaching. Provision for community cohesion has been satisfactorily evaluated and the school is seeking to improve on the good local links that are in place by, in particular, using the pupils' skills in Spanish to link with other Spanish communities in Britain and abroad. Governors are well informed and bring a range of useful skills to the school.

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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?	3
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	2

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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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	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	2
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 learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Uplands Primary School, Fareham, PO16 7QP

Thank you very much for helping us during the inspection, particularly by talking to us about your school. We were impressed by your friendliness and politeness. Your school is satisfactory and improving. Here are some of the best things at your school.

- Your headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff are working together well as a team to do their best to continue to improve your school.
- Your behaviour is excellent. This means that your classrooms are pleasant places to learn in and that you have excellent relationships with adults in school. You enjoy playtime.
- Some teaching is good, and you are making satisfactory progress or better.
- Your school has some good links with organisations, like the church and other schools, which provide interesting opportunities for you to learn.
- Your attendance is good and most of you come to school regularly and on time.
- Your parents are very interested in your learning. A large number of them completed the questionnaires and wrote comments about your school.
- Adults take good care of you and ensure that if you need help or are worried about anything, you know who to talk to.
- You are developing extremely well personally, and understand very well about staying healthy and keeping safe. You contribute very well to your school community, for example as members of the school council and by being buddies.

We have asked your school to help you to improve your achievement and standards, particularly in writing, by asking you to do harder work, and by giving you more challenging personal targets for improvement. We would like all teachers with responsibilities to improve standards and achievement to be fully involved in checking up on the quality of teaching and learning in your lessons, so that all of you benefit from good lessons where you are expected to learn more during the lesson.

I would like to send you my best wishes for your future success in whatever you choose to do.

Yours faithfully

Beryl Richmond

Lead Inspector