

Upton Cross Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111956
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337791
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Goodchild

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Coleman
Headteacher	Mark Clutsom
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons observing three teachers, an assembly the Early Years Unit and After School Club (Fun Club). They looked at pupils' work, including the quality of marking and target setting, and the progress pupils are currently making compared with their starting points. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, staff, the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Documents looked at included the strategic improvement plan, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, and minutes of governing body meetings. Twenty-five parents and carers questionnaires responses were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' performance in the 2009 national tests
- the progress of pupils, particularly in Year 6
- the quality of the monitoring of teaching and learning and the use of pupil-progress data
- the effectiveness of the school's leaders in monitoring the work of the school and setting an agenda for improvement.

Information about the school

Upton Cross is a smaller-than-average primary school serving a rural area. A below average number of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average and the proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. Pupil mobility is higher than average. There are three mixed-age classes; Reception and Year 1, Years 2 to 4 and Years 5 and 6.

Since the previous inspection the school has taken over the management of an Early Years Unit that caters for children from four years old until they start in the Reception class, and the Breakfast Club and After School Club known as the Fun Club. The school hosts a public library for the community. A parent and toddler group meets in the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the quality of teaching and learning and raising pupils' standards and achievement.

Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress during their time in the Early Years Unit and Reception, and the majority start Year 1 with levels of attainment at least in line with the national average. Careful interpretation of the 2009 national assessment results for the small Year 2 cohort indicates that attainment was below national averages. Since 2007 the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils at the end of Year 6 has been significantly below national expectations.

Pupils' achievement is hampered by the quality of teaching which varies but is unsatisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage: the weakest teaching is for the older pupils. In the least effective lessons assessment information is not used well to plan work which matches pupils' learning needs effectively. The setting of challenging targets to stretch pupils, especially the more able, to attain as highly as they can is a recent development. Opportunities are missed to involve pupils in monitoring their progress in their work. Marking of work is variable in quality: comments to help pupils understand the level they are working at and how to progress to the next level are infrequent. Senior leaders do not track pupils' progress with sufficient rigour to identify underachievement promptly. In addition, the good range of enrichment opportunities is not always used to best effect to help pupils consolidate and apply their skills. More needs to be done to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multi-cultural nature of British society.

The key strength of this school lies in the personal development of its pupils, who say they enjoy coming to school, feel safe, and take an active role in running the school community. They say that 'teachers are nice' and that they are consulted about the school rules. Their behaviour is good. Pupils particularly like the enrichment activities offered through visits, projects with other schools and after-school activities, particularly the Early Years Unit. Parents hold the school in high regard and value the good quality care and support given to their child. Links with other schools and colleges are good and widen the range of learning and social experiences for pupils in a small rural school.

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The headteacher and governing body have a clear understanding of the issues facing the school and are working in partnership with the local authority to address the most pressing of these. Currently pupils in Year 6 are making good progress and are on target to reach their predicted outcomes. Progress on the key issues from the previous inspection is, in the main, satisfactory. The school's capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' learning and progress by:
 - improving the quality of teaching, including marking, to match the best practice in the school
 - making better use of assessment information to plan lessons and set appropriate learning outcomes for all pupils
 - setting more challenging targets to enable more able pupils to attain higher levels
 - rigorous tracking of pupils' progress by senior leaders to identify underachievement
 - ensuring that enrichment activities have clear learning objectives to consolidate and apply key skills.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion by extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diverse nature of British society.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 and 4. Pupils currently in Year 6 are now making good progress and are likely to meet their predicted target grades at the end of the year. Weaknesses in literacy and numeracy skills and a lack of involvement in monitoring and improving their work do not help to prepare the pupils, as well as they could be, for their future lives.

Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. They willingly accept responsibilities and play an active role in the school community. For example, the eco-club monitors the energy produced by the wind turbine and calculates how much money the school saves on electricity. The local gardening club supports the school and pupils grow produce that they are then able to sell. Pupils act as play leaders at break and lunch times and the school council is effective in bringing about improvements such as better playground equipment. There are good, supportive relationships between pupils. They take the needs of others less fortunate than themselves seriously and each year organise a concert to raise funds for Children in Need and during the inspection held a 'pyjama day' to raise funds for earthquake victims in Haiti. Pupils are well aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and take part in 'Wake and Shake' sessions before the start of school.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is variable across the school but is most effective in Years 3 and 4. Where teaching is of a high quality, the pace of learning is rapid and activities are planned using assessment information to set appropriately challenging targets. Enrichment activities are used well to consolidate and extend learning and there is a good emphasis on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. Work is regularly marked with helpful comments for pupils on how to improve. However, these features are not evident in all lessons. The use of assessment information to inform planning of pupils' work is especially limited. There are good enrichment opportunities that extend the range of pupils' learning experiences and enhance the curriculum such as a residential visit to London. However, the benefits of these occasions are not always realised fully since links to the development of pupils' basic skills are limited. Children in Reception share a class with Year 1. Though the classroom is small and there is no direct access to the outside play area, the accommodation is used satisfactorily to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Partnerships with local schools and colleges increase

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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the range of sports and other activities and give pupils the opportunity to mix with a wider group of children.

The school cares well for its pupils and ensures there are appropriate procedures to keep them safe. The Early Years Unit is next door to the Reception class and children become familiar with the school and its routines by attending assemblies and on occasions sharing activities with the Reception class. Transition arrangements for pupils moving into secondary education are good. The provision to meet the needs of a minority of pupils with challenging behaviour is good and staff are trained to handle incidents in an effective and non-confrontational manner. The school provides appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are good links with external support agencies and families. The Breakfast and After School Clubs are well attended. Pupils particularly enjoy the range of craft activities provided for them after school. They were especially proud of their art work being used for cards and calendars that have been sold to the general public.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is no doubt about the commitment of the headteacher and the governing body to raising attainment and the achievement of pupils. The governing body knows the school well and there is a good working partnership with the local authority to resolve the difficulties facing the school. More decisive action was taken in 2009 after the latest national test and assessment results showed no improvement, despite interventions to improve teaching and learning. Inspection evidence shows this latest action has been effective and the current progress and attainment of Year 6 pupils indicate they are likely to meet their predicted outcomes.

The school is clear about its priorities and has put in place a strategic plan that addresses its weaknesses. Progress in most of the areas for improvement at the last inspection is satisfactory. Raising standards and achievement remains an issue, however. Variations in outcomes for different groups of pupils have been identified and recently more challenging targets have been set, particularly for more able pupils. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. Parents and carers who completed the questionnaire were very supportive of the school and are generally happy with the education their child receives. Links with other schools and agencies are good and support pupils' learning and well-being well. Satisfactory steps have been taken to

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promote pupils' understanding of their local and wider global communities, but their awareness of the diversity of cultures in Britain remains underdeveloped.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Unit, although managed by the school, is run independently from the Reception class, with some interaction between them. Children attend on a sessional basis before they start full-time education in the Reception class. Activities are planned to give children the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding and progress is tracked against the early learning goals. Children learn and play well together and gain in self-confidence through the opportunities given to them. They are encouraged to make choices from a range of activities and quickly gain a degree of independence. Children clearly enjoy their time in the Early Years Unit, and are kept safe and encouraged to develop an awareness of hygiene. The accommodation is small and, while it restricts the range of activities offered, best use is made of the space and facilities. Most children move into the Reception class with the skills and experience expected for their age.

Because of the close links with the Early Years Unit most children settle quickly into the Reception class where they are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. Relationships are good and they quickly learn the daily school routines. The classroom is too small for children to move freely between activities indoors and outside. Access to the outside play area is through the Early Years Unit. Despite these difficulties children make satisfactory progress from their individual starting points towards meeting their early learning goals. Teaching is satisfactory.

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The headteacher has overall responsibility for managing both Early Years provisions. The day-to-day running, delegated to the staff in charge, is smooth. Links with parents are good.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents are very happy with what the school provides and the education their child receives. They said their children thought the school was 'great' and really enjoyed the activities provided for them. A small number of parents expressed concern about the progress their child was making, incidents of poor behaviour and the fact that the headteacher is now responsible for two schools as an executive head. Inspectors found that the behaviour of pupils overall is good and that incidents of challenging behaviour are effectively dealt with. Appropriate arrangements are in place to cover for the absence of the headteacher. Inspectors agreed that children's progress is variable.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upton Cross Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	14	56	11	44	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	76	5	20	1	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	40	14	56	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	32	15	60	2	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	36	15	60	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	36	12	48	2	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	60	10	40	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	13	52	9	36	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	56	7	28	2	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	52	8	32	1	4	2	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	40	13	52	2	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	48	11	44	2	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	68	8	32	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upton Cross Primary School, Liskeard PL14 5AX

I would like to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently and talking to us about your school and work.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school and like the extra activities that are provided after school, particularly the Early Years Unit. We found that you are courteous to visitors and each other and your behaviour is good. You are willing to take on responsibilities and organise fund-raising events to benefit others less fortunate than yourselves. The care that you receive is good and the partnership with other schools gives you opportunities to experience a wider range of activities and meet many other children. Given the opportunity, you work hard in lessons but over your time in school you are not reaching the standards you are capable of.

We have identified some areas of the school's work that need improvement and we have given the school a notice to improve. This means that the school will have another visit from an inspector within the next eight months to check progress against areas identified for improvement. These have already been recognised by your headteacher and governing body and a start has been made on tackling them. These are the things we have asked the school to do:

- make sure that the progress you are making, particularly in Years 5 and 6, is closely monitored
- use the information about your progress to plan your next steps in learning
- make sure that all of you receive consistently high quality teaching and are given challenging targets to meet
- help you to understand more about the different societies and cultures in Britain to prepare you more effectively for when you leave school.

You are already playing your part by behaving well and working hard in lessons. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Goodchild

Lead inspector

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