

# Upton Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113681
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	338218
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Diane Wilkinson

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jon Adair
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Howieson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	St Martin's Road Upton Poole BH16 5NQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. A small number of parents bringing their children to school were also spoken to. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, governors and staff meeting records, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures including those associated with safeguarding, curriculum planning documents and a small sample of pupils' work. Evidence was also collected from both the Ofsted and the school's own parent, pupil and staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following: the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress in English and how effectively the school is working to improve this, especially for the higher attaining pupils how effectively the school promotes equality of opportunity and prevents discrimination the school's policies and procedures for promoting community cohesion.

## Information about the school

Upton Junior is a large school with three classes in each year group. The vast majority of pupils are of White British background and none is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The school holds the Healthy School Award and local authority awards for self-evaluation and financial management. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average and well above in some year groups. Pupils' difficulties and disabilities cover: specific and moderate learning speech, language and communication needs emotional, social and behavioural needs physical needs hearing impairment the autistic spectrum.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Upton Junior is a good school. Provision has improved well over the last few years, exceptionally so in some areas. Parents clearly recognise this, one typically writing, 'The school is 100 per cent better and I am much happier with the teaching and care.' As a result pupils love coming to school, with one pupil commenting, 'My school is great' everyone feels good here.' Consequently, pupils work hard and make good progress in both their academic and personal development. Attainment is above the national average as considerably more pupils now reach the levels expected in national tests, and also the higher levels in mathematics and science. The proportion of more able pupils reaching the higher levels has also risen in reading but currently fewer pupils are reaching higher levels in writing. Well-targeted support and challenge ensure that the needs of all pupils are met well including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the higher attainers. Pupils are very polite and helpful, getting on very well together, so incidents of unkind behaviour are rare and always dealt with well by staff. By the time pupils leave, they develop into mature and thoughtful young people, well prepared for their futures. The key to the school's success is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and the excellent support he receives from the senior leadership team. They have created a range of comprehensive procedures which are exceptionally well focused on driving forward improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate, clearly pinpointing specific areas where improvement is needed, with plans being quickly put in place to successfully address them. Teamwork among staff and governors is excellent and they share a common vision of a school that provides the very best for its pupils, with all working effectively towards achieving this. Together with excellent arrangements for monitoring and developing the quality of teaching, this means weaknesses seen in some lessons at the last inspection have been eradicated.

Consequently, teaching is at least good and on a few occasions outstanding in all year groups. The school is now working to raise all teaching to the level of the best to ensure that pupils consistently make the very best progress they can. Governors are increasingly involved in planning and monitoring improvement strategies and make excellent use of their individual expertise to support the school's work. These strengths, together with the school's past success, give confidence that it is well placed to improve further. The curriculum has also improved, with more effective planning supporting pupils' good progress, particularly in developing key literacy, numeracy and scientific skills. However, the school recognises that more could be done to link subjects together, especially to give pupils more opportunities for developing their writing skills. Links with other schools and institutions in the local and wider communities, including overseas, help pupils develop effective citizenship skills. However, programmes of work lack a

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common approach to ensuring pupils develop the skills of living in a cohesive community. The good level of care, guidance and support has some exceptional features, most notably the arrangements for safeguarding pupils which are outstanding. Parents and pupils are overwhelming in their praise of this aspect of the school's work. Pupils are confident that they are exceptionally safe and secure at all times and are well aware of how to guard their own safety. Those pupils most vulnerable to risk are especially well supported, including by the governing body. The arrangements for pupils transferring from the infant school are very effective with the school aspiring to achieve the same quality of transfer for pupils leaving Year 6.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Further improve pupils' progress, especially of the more able pupils in writing, by: targeting questions more closely to the level at which individual pupils are working providing more challenging activities that encourage pupils to review and extend what they are aiming for as they progress developing effective links between subjects in order to plan more opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills. Increase pupils' understanding of and respect for people from different backgrounds, race or religion by devising a common approach to promoting community cohesion.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils are very enthusiastic about school life and keen to attend. Behaviour in lessons is often exemplary and pupils work very thoughtfully, taking great pride in their work. For example, Year 5 pupils proudly showed the very effective poetry they had written to inspectors. Although levels of attainment on entry to Year 3 have declined and are broadly average, standards by the end of Year 6 continue to rise and are above average. An increasing number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities now reach average levels. Standards in mathematics and science have risen exceptionally well and in these subjects much teaching is characterised by highly challenging activities. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were very competently calculating with negative numbers. The new reading scheme has raised standards well in this aspect. Standards in writing have been slower to move, but there are clear signs of improvement with pupils becoming increasingly competent at writing in a range of different formats. For example, Year 4 pupils wrote newspaper style reports which effectively engaged and held the reader's attention. Pupils work cooperatively and support others well. There are many instances of paired discussion and pupils' willingly contribute ideas to help classmates. These features enhance learning. Pupils' effective contribution to school and community life is evident in the work of the school council and their knowledge that all of their concerns are taken seriously. For example, one class wrote to the headteacher asking if the loud end-of-session bell could be replaced by a warning light so their learning was not interrupted. The wealth of opportunities for praising and rewarding success ensures all

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pupils feel valued and are willing to try new things. Moments for reflection in assemblies and lessons support pupils' good spiritual development. Art and music activities and links with schools in different countries raise pupils' cultural awareness well although their knowledge of differences between their own lives and those from other cultural or religious backgrounds is less well developed. However, the school's work towards 'Rights Respecting Status' ensures that pupils are well aware of how they should act towards others. Behaviour is rarely less than good although pupils are sometimes over boisterous at playtimes. Pupils are knowledgeable about the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise and very much enjoy the many opportunities to take part in sport. The girls are very proud of their success as Dorset's primary school cricket champions.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

The curriculum has been adapted well to enhance pupils' progress, especially for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The common lesson planning format ensures all pupils are provided with tasks that encourage good progress from the level at which they are working. However, in practice, some staff are more skilled than others

<sup>1</sup> 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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in questioning pupils to extend their thinking and in encouraging them to develop their tasks to make even more progress. Excellent management of pupils' behaviour ensures that lessons proceed at a good pace, with teachers explaining and demonstrating new things clearly. Assessment is regular and rigorous so that a careful check is kept on pupils' progress allowing staff to intervene when this slows or to adjust activities for pupils who are learning quickly. Through their sensitive support, classroom assistants are especially effective in helping those pupils who find learning difficult to make good progress. Activities are carefully linked to pupils' interests and are relevant and meaningful. For example in an excellent mathematics lesson on data collection, the teacher very effectively referred to the data being collected by the inspector. As a result, pupils become adept at applying their skills, with one pupil explaining how data could support her history topic. However, the lack of planned links between different subjects means that opportunities for applying literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are sometimes missed. Learning is good across a range of subjects and is supported well through specialist teaching in music and sport. Pupils greatly enjoy after-school activities, with the sports teams achieving success and the gardening club winning several awards for its work. The policies and procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and free from harm at all times are outstanding and there is a high level of expertise, including on the governing body, to ensure that these are implemented rigorously. The role of the personal support assistant has greatly enhanced the work of the school in supporting and guiding pupils, especially vulnerable pupils. Pupils' academic progress is carefully tracked, identifying where the school can provide extra help for those whose progress has slowed, which especially benefits pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Tracking information is also used effectively to set challenging targets which encourage pupils to do their best. The very good transition arrangements for pupils joining the school ensured that by the second week of the autumn term, all had settled in very well.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher is expert in getting the very best out of his staff. Both those who have been at the school for a number of years and staff who are new to the profession are enabled and supported to make a very positive contribution to driving forward improvement. A large majority of parents and pupils praised his work, one parent

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typically commenting, 'He is a great headteacher, has a great relationship with the children, puts their needs foremost and is very approachable.' High quality management structures and very effective links between whole-school performance management targets and improvement priorities have also been instrumental in the school's success. In particular, the role of the 'learning leader' has been particularly successful in improving the quality of teaching. The very careful check on how well the school is doing ensures development planning is continuously adapted and refined to meet changing priorities. The school provides effectively for equality of opportunity by meeting the needs of all pupils, whatever their talents or difficulties, well. Governors are very involved in all aspects of school life and are keen to develop their monitoring role even further. Their expertise supports financial management exceptionally well and makes an outstanding contribution to the excellent safeguarding arrangements. Parents and carers are well informed, including by the excellent regular newsletters. Effective partnerships with other schools and agencies support pupils' education and welfare well, exceptionally so for those pupils most at risk. The school pays due regard to the requirements to promote community cohesion. However, current planning does not sufficiently link the different strands of this aspect, making it more difficult for the school to monitor the success of its work.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Views of parents and carers**

Most parents who returned the questionnaire or who were spoken to had positive views about the school. Virtually all parents who responded agreed that the school keeps their



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children safe. Many wrote or spoke in praise of the school, typically praising the quality of leadership and especially that of the headteacher. Most parents also acknowledge the welcoming, friendly and supportive environment of the school, one typically commenting, 'There is always time found should we as parents need it, with its ever open door policy.' A small number of parents expressed individual concerns, although there is no trend to these. For example, most parents are happy with the progress made by their children although a very small minority expressed concerns about this aspect. Inspectors considered this and judged pupils are well supported to make good progress although they agree with the school that progress could be boosted even further through raising the quality of all teaching to the level of the best seen in the school.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upton Junior 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 12 statements about the school. The inspection team received 129 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 320 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	90	71	35	28	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	84	66	42	33	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	77	63	40	32	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	69	57	41	34	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	80	65	39	31	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	68	55	49	39	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	54	55	45	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)	79	64	42	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	67	55	46	38	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	52	52	43	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	47	53	43	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	96	77	27	22	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	75	27	21	3	2	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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



18 September 2009 Dear Pupils Inspection of Upton Junior School, Upton, Poole, BH16 5NQ Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. We think your school is good and are delighted that you and your parents agree. Here are some of the things we found out were especially good about the school. n The way that staff and governors ensure you are safeguarded is outstanding and you told us you feel very safe in school. They are particularly good at helping Year 3 pupils to settle in and supporting those of you who have special problems. n Your headteacher and senior leaders are especially good at helping your school to improve and all the staff and governors support them well. We are delighted that you and your parents recognise this too. n Because of their hard work, you now make good progress and attain above average standards. n Staff plan lots of interesting things for you to do; they teach you well and help you to reach your targets. n You are friendly, helpful and thoughtful young people and are well prepared for your future. Here are some of the things we have asked the school to improve. n Help all of you to make the very best progress you can, especially in writing, by giving you more opportunities to use your writing skills and providing questions and activities which continually extend your learning. n Make sure that you get better opportunities to learn about people from different backgrounds, races and religions so that you can respect and get on as well with them as you all do with the pupils in your school. Yours faithfully D Wilkinson Lead inspector

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