

Upton St Leonards Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115658
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338632
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2010
Reporting inspector	John Eadie

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	405
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Beth Gill
Headteacher	Ms Cottia Howard
Date of previous school inspection	6 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent more than 13 hours observing learning and visited 33 lessons, taken by 17 teachers. They held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a number of policies and other documentation, including those related to safeguarding and health and safety. They analysed tracking data showing the progress that pupils make, questionnaires completed by a sample of children in Years 3 to 6, questionnaires completed by staff and 119 questionnaires returned by parents.

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

- the reasons for the drop in standards in the assessments in Year 2 in 2009
- the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6, particularly of middle to lower achieving boys
- the reasons for lower standards in the national tests in mathematics than in English
- the progress of children in the reception classes as this is judged to be good by the school, though data might suggest otherwise.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average and a very large majority of pupils is White British. The others represent a range of other cultures though most of these are from other White backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. Most of these have speech, language and communication, hearing or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made in two reception classes. The school has suffered from disruption to staffing over the last year as there have been a number of staff absences.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

- The school has worked through the staffing difficulties of the last year well, though these have delayed progress on a number of fronts as senior managers were among those affected. Stability has now resumed and forward momentum is picking up. For instance, the drop in standards in Year 2 last year, largely caused by staff absence, has been reversed.
- Children receive a good start in the reception classes as a result of good provision for them. They start school with broadly expected levels of skills and knowledge and make good progress and reach above-average standards when they join Year 1.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress through the rest of the school and reach above-average standards by the time they leave from Year 6. The school identified the underachievement of middle to lower achieving boys last year and has put in place effective strategies that are addressing this. These boys now make the same progress as their classmates.
- Attainment in mathematics is not as good as that in English as teachers do not consistently match work to the range of abilities of pupils in their classes in this subject. The school has correctly analysed that the introductions to lessons are not always used effectively, with some pupils understanding readily and having to sit and listen while the work is explained further. There are occasions when these explanations given are too complex for those who find understanding difficult so their learning slows.
- The quality of teaching and learning is variable but satisfactory overall. Although many lessons are typified by enthusiastic learning, too often teachers have not based their objectives for learning on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding and so do not set tasks at an appropriate level. Objectives for lessons are therefore insufficiently precise and teachers do not always show pupils how to improve their work when they mark it.
- Levels of pastoral care are good and pupils develop into sensible, polite, well-behaved and responsible young people. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and their spiritual and cultural awareness is particularly strong. Pupils feel very safe at school, saying things like, 'I like school because it is safe and healthy and feels like home.'
- Pupils know how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, though they do not always carry this through into their daily lives, with crisps and unhealthy snacks finding their way into lunch boxes. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community, the very good choirs performing regularly, for example.

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- The school has made good improvements to the curriculum in order to make it more interesting and relevant for the pupils. These improvements are relatively recent and have not had an impact on pupils' progress. Very good use is made of specialist teaching in subjects such as French and music. Pupils benefit enormously from this expertise. The specialist teaching in French is an example of the good partnerships that support pupils' learning.
- There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity, exemplified well in the seamless assimilation of several children with hearing impairment.
- Staff were almost unanimous in their view that they feel involved in the school's process of self-evaluation, and this self-evaluation has correctly identified areas for development, such as the need to raise standards in mathematics.
- Despite the relatively lower attainment in mathematics, good work has been done to ensure that more able pupils are suitably challenged in this subject and the proportion gaining the higher Level 5 in the national tests has increased. This was identified as an issue in the last inspection. This indicates that, with continued stability in leadership, the school is satisfactorily placed to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning by ensuring that
 - teachers use pupils' success in previous learning when planning their lessons
 - teachers identify, in their lesson planning and in the targets they set for pupils, precise and attainable next steps in learning for all groups of pupils
 - when they mark work, teachers consistently give clear indication of how pupils can improve.
- Raise standards in mathematics by ensuring that
 - teachers set work that is closely matched to the abilities of all pupils
 - time is used well so that pupils do not have to sit listening to explanations when they have already understood or when they are struggling to understand.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' learning in lessons is variable. For instance, there are times when enthusiasm and endeavour are the order of the day, such as in a music lesson where pupils in Year 6 were creating an extra verse for the recycling song. In other lessons, learning slows as pupils lose interest because they find the work too easy, as in a mathematics lesson observed where the pupils had already understood the concept being covered. In other lessons, particularly in mathematics, groups do not all make progress at the same rate as there is an insufficient range of tasks set. Learning is not as effective as it might be because some pupils find their tasks too easy while others struggle with work that is too difficult. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as their classmates as they have good plans made for their learning and they are supported well.

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Pupils' personal qualities develop well. They have a good knowledge of how to stay safe, while using the internet for instance. Pupils appreciate the good systems to help them prepare for their next year group or for secondary education. They appreciate their involvement in decision making, creating their anti-bullying leaflet for example.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	3
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Managers carry out good analysis of assessment data and this is used well to identify pupils in danger of falling behind and to put in place effective strategies to help them catch up. However, day-to-day assessment information is not used consistently by teachers to plan next steps in learning for their pupils. The recently introduced topic-based approach to the curriculum is helping to address this as pupils are taking a role in deciding their own learning.

Systems to ensure pupils' care, health and safety are good and pupils appreciate this care taken of them, almost all saying that there is an adult in school with whom they can discuss any concerns. The school takes very good care of each pupil as an individual and can point to instances where they have enabled pupils to overcome significant

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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barriers to their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The absences by members of the senior management team over the last year have slowed progress. However, now all are back in post, staff are almost unanimous in their view that they have a clear sense of the direction the school is going and they feel involved in the process. Governors are very supportive, but many are new to their roles and they have planned further training to enable them to fully challenge leaders and managers.

Safeguarding procedures were thorough at the time of the inspection. The school's commitment to equal opportunity is exemplified in the careful analysis of the progress of different groups to ensure that none is disadvantaged. The school is a cohesive community and much work has been done to widen pupils' awareness of a range of cultures. However, the plan of action to promote community cohesion is in its early stages of development.

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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the two reception classes, particularly in the development of their communication, language and literacy, and problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. For instance, children were keenly involved in putting two letter sounds together to make sound blends. Children have good relationships with adults and are motivated and interested in the broad range of activities provided for them. All adults have good knowledge of the learning development and welfare requirements of this age group and they make good use of the well-equipped and welcoming environment to promote learning. In one session observed, the teacher had videoed the children during a physical activity and the children enjoyed discussing their use of space as they moved about in the hall. However, there is little opportunity for children to choose to move between the indoor and outdoor learning areas.

Assessment opportunities are used well and clear next steps in learning are identified for the children. This is an example of the good leadership, which has resulted in a strong common sense of purpose between all adults.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire and those spoken to are positive about their children's experiences at school. A very small minority expressed concerns over the way the school deals with bullying. However, inspectors judge that the school systems are very effective and are used well. Children spoken to expressed no concerns and were happy that bullying is dealt with well. A similarly small number of parents were concerned at the support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors judge that these children are supported well and enabled to make the same progress as their classmates.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upton St Leonards Church of England 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 119 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 405 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	47	55	46	6	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	55	47	39	2	2	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	20	78	66	12	10	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	24	77	65	13	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	36	72	61	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	33	65	55	11	9	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	38	67	56	4	3	2	2
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)	32	27	67	56	10	8	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	25	67	56	16	13	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	19	72	61	13	11	7	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	18	69	58	14	12	5	4
The school is led and managed effectively	34	29	69	58	11	9	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	40	56	47	12	10	1	1

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.



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14 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upton St Leonards Church of England Primary School, Gloucester GL4 8ED

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your school when we visited recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking with very many of you and watching you work. At present, your school is giving you a satisfactory education.

These are some of the things we found about your school

- Those of you in the reception classes make good progress as good plans are made for your learning.
- You make satisfactory progress through the rest of the school as you are taught satisfactorily and you reach above-average standards by the time you leave.
- You are developing well into responsible young people who behave well. You know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe and play your part in helping to run the school.
- Your teachers have worked hard to make your lessons more interesting by basing more work around topics. You benefit from specialist teaching, for instance in music and French.
- All adults look after you very well and you told us that you feel you have someone you can go to if you have concerns.
- Although some of the adults who run your school have been away during the last year, which has slowed progress, they now have good plans to make your school even better.

We have suggested that two things should be improved

- Teachers do not always take into account what you already know when they plan their lessons and so do not set clear objectives that you can reach in a lesson. Teachers' marking does not always help you to improve your work either.
- You are not doing as well in mathematics as in English because you are not always given work that is matched well to your abilities and you sometimes sit listening when you could be getting on.

Thank you once again and I know you will want to help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

John D Eadie

Lead inspector

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