

Upton Junior School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 118489 |
| Local Authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 339226 |
| Inspection dates | 30 June –1 July 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Margaret Coussins |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 501 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mark Webb |
| Headteacher | Paul Clarricoates |
| Date of previous school inspection | 24 May 2007 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 21 lessons and 19 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities, pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation including monitoring records, the school's self-evaluation form, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 130 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- how successfully the curriculum is being developed and its impact on pupils' learning, enjoyment and achievement
- how well the school is working to narrow the gap between boys' and girls' performance in English
- the effectiveness of the school's work on engaging parents and building relationships and the impact on pupils' learning and achievement
- how well pupils understand the diversity of cultures, faiths and backgrounds in this country.

Information about the school

Upton is a very large junior school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average and most of these have moderate learning difficulties. The school has Healthy Schools status and the Football Association Charter Mark and Activemark awards. The headteacher was appointed shortly after the last inspection.

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 is a good school. Inspectors and parents agree with the pupil who said that it is 'a very safe place to be'. Pupils demonstrate their excellent awareness of how to stay safe in lessons and through their good behaviour, care, consideration and respect for others and their environment. They understand and appreciate the school's work to promote e-safety, which is championed exceptionally well by a team of pupils.

From starting points that are average, pupils make good progress and achieve well, reaching above average attainment by the time they leave. Teaching is mostly good. There are some very good examples of marking and feedback that give pupils a clear idea of how they can improve their work, although this is inconsistent across the school. There is a lack of a clear marking policy and pupils are not always clear about the goals for their learning or how to achieve them.

The good curriculum is enriched exceptionally well to provide an excellent range of extra activities to broaden pupils' experiences and skills, particularly in sports and the arts. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Leaders have developed the school as a very cohesive community with strong links within the local community. However, although pupils learn about other faiths and cultures through the curriculum, their understanding of the United Kingdom as a culturally diverse society is relatively weaker. They have limited direct experience of the multicultural aspects of their own society as opportunities for pupils to have direct contact with pupils from different cultures and backgrounds in this country are not yet developed. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given, feel their views are valued and know that they have a voice in the school.

Upton is a thriving, busy place to be. One parent commented, 'The school always informs you of activities and achievements and there is always something to get involved with.' The school has a good capacity to improve further. It has improved from its satisfactory position at the last inspection, driven by the ambition and effective leadership of the headteacher. Attainment, teaching and learning have all improved. Senior leaders work together effectively to evaluate the work of the school, which they do accurately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' knowledge of how to improve their work by:
 - implementing a whole-school marking policy to ensure a consistent approach to marking and providing feedback
 - ensure pupils are set clear targets for their learning, and that they know what

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they are and how to achieve them.

- Enhance pupils' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society by giving them more opportunities to experience such diversity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The strong sporting tradition in the school contributes significantly to pupils' good awareness of how to stay fit and healthy. They learn about healthy food, for example, through growing vegetables in the school vegetable garden, and make healthy choices at lunchtimes. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously. The older pupils value their roles as house captains, play leaders, librarians and mediators and are good role models for others. Pupils feel secure in school and confident in all the adults around them. They say they can always talk to an adult if there is anything they are worried about. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Singing and other music activities positively enhance their spiritual development.

Pupils' good behaviour and enthusiasm in lessons contribute well to their enjoyment and good learning and progress. Working collaboratively and learning through problem-solving and investigative activities also contribute to their good progress. For example, as part of their Green Day activities, pupils in Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed working in teams to create model animals from recycled material they had brought from home. They were able to use good skills of discussion, negotiation and decision making and also learned to compromise as well as developing their design and technology skills. Pupils in Year 3 worked well in small groups on a sorting activity to consider aspects of the environment and how to look after it and used their speaking and listening skills very effectively using persuasive language to put forward their opinions. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to others because their needs are identified at an early stage and effective support is provided, particularly in small groups or on a one-to-one basis. Attainment rose significantly in 2009 in English, mathematics and science and the school's tracking data and pupils' work indicate that the school is on track to sustain improved attainment at above average levels.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 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 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| 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?

The school provides a rich and varied curriculum. Its strengths lie in a wide range of enrichment opportunities, especially through the recognised excellence in sporting activities and music provision. The good range of clubs, visitors to school and trips are very much appreciated by pupils and their parents and carers, and contribute well to pupils' personal and academic development. One parent wrote, 'They are expected to work hard but also have interesting other activities. The school offers a wide range of after-school clubs giving children great opportunities.' The creative curriculum is reflected around the school in many interesting displays of work and pupils proudly paraded their T-shirt and beach bag designs in a 'fashion show' that was very well attended by parents and carers of pupils in Year 4. Links across subjects make learning more meaningful for pupils and increase their enjoyment and understanding. For example, pupils discovered the importance of using standard measurements during Green Day when they were required to measure the girth of a tree. The school has correctly identified that it needs to develop further links across subjects.

Teachers plan and prepare lessons thoroughly and work hard to make them interesting and exciting for pupils, asking good questions to extend learning and making good use of the school grounds and facilities. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance learning in many subjects. There is a good pace to learning in most lessons and teachers imaginatively bring subjects alive to motivate and engage pupils. In these lessons, pupils make good progress because learning is challenging and memorable for them. The same level of learning is not evident in all lessons and, as a result, there are occasions when pupils do not make the progress of which they are

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capable. This is because sometimes teachers do not always make the best use of assessment information to inform the guidance they give to pupils through marking and feedback and pupils are not always clear about how they can further improve their work. Parents and carers and pupils agree that the school looks after its pupils well. The needs of vulnerable pupils are met effectively and enhanced by good links with other agencies to provide well-targeted support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| 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 inclusive ethos of the school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and develop as well-rounded individuals without fear of discrimination. It ensures that all pupils have every chance to take part in all of its activities and to achieve well. The school works well with parents and carers. Good efforts are made to help them support their children's learning. One parent wrote, 'Homework is good and often involves all the family getting involved in a project.' Communication with parents has been improved and there is now a 'texting' system to ensure a flow of information between home and school. One parent commented, 'The communication between home and school is very good and has been getting better over the last two years.' Safeguarding procedures are well developed, known by all staff and applied across all aspects of the school's work. This means that pupils have an excellent awareness of how to stay safe.

The headteacher's drive to work with families to provide the best possible learning experiences for pupils, as well as maintaining their enjoyment in the developing curriculum, has been a significant factor in the improvement in pupils' attainment to above average over the past two years. Strategic decisions, for example expanding the middle management team to include year group leaders to focus on the curriculum, have had a considerable impact. Monitoring and self-evaluation by all leaders and managers are effective and lead to a clear identification of what needs to be improved and the provision of well-targeted support. For example, increased opportunities to engage in practical activities and well-chosen resources have helped to engage boys more effectively and reduce the gap between boys' and girls' attainment in English. Good partnerships with local schools are well established. They enrich the curriculum for pupils at Upton, particularly for gifted and talented pupils, and also for pupils in the partnership schools, who benefit from, for example, the music and sports facilities. The

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governing body knows the school well and the school benefits from the expertise of its members. Governors support and challenge the school and analyse data to inform their questions and have correctly identified the need to develop the national and international aspects of community cohesion through an audit of the impact of its work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| 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 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the school's work and agreed that their children enjoy coming to school. Almost all agreed that the school keeps their children safe. The main concerns from a very small minority were related to their children making enough progress and how well the school helps them to support their children's learning. The inspection found that overall, progress is good although there are some lessons where some pupils do not always make the progress they could. Inspectors also found that the school engages well with parents and carers and has improved the opportunities to help them to support their children. The inspectors fully support parents' and carers' positive views about 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 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 501 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 64 | 49 | 58 | 45 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 73 | 56 | 53 | 41 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 36 | 28 | 83 | 64 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 47 | 36 | 63 | 48 | 14 | 11 | 4 | 3 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 49 | 38 | 71 | 55 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 44 | 34 | 63 | 48 | 18 | 14 | 2 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 52 | 40 | 70 | 54 | 7 | 5 | 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) | 59 | 45 | 61 | 47 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 50 | 38 | 62 | 48 | 11 | 8 | 4 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 45 | 35 | 67 | 52 | 11 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 36 | 28 | 71 | 55 | 10 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 52 | 40 | 63 | 48 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 68 | 52 | 52 | 40 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 2 |

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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 51 | 45 | 0 | 4 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 41 | 42 | 10 |
| Secondary schools | 8 | 34 | 44 | 14 |
| Sixth forms | 10 | 37 | 50 | 3 |
| Special schools | 32 | 38 | 25 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 12 | 43 | 31 | 14 |
| All schools | 9 | 40 | 40 | 10 |

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



2 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upton Junior School, Broadstairs, CT10 2AH

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. You were very polite and friendly. You are right to enjoy coming to Upton because it is a good school.

We agree with you and your parents and carers that your school is a very caring and safe place to be and this, with your good behaviour and enthusiasm to learn, helps you make good progress. We were very impressed with your understanding and awareness of e-safety. Everyone in your school works very hard to make your school even better. You work hard too, and by the time you go to your next school your attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average. We were very impressed with all the things you do for the school and the wider community and particularly by how hard you are working to make the school and the community a 'greener' place to be. All of you make good progress because you are taught well and teachers plan interesting and exciting things for you to do. Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

There are two things that will help the school do even better. We have asked your teachers to:

- make sure they mark your work in a similar way to give you helpful pointers to improve and make sure you know your targets for learning and how to achieve them
- help you to understand more about the world around you by giving you more opportunities to meet pupils from different backgrounds to your own.

We were lucky enough to see your 'Fashion Show', hear your great singing and watch you learn how to look after your environment. We really enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and keeping your enthusiasm for learning.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector

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