

Upwell Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120885
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	339805
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Steven Hill

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	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Anne Godfrey
Headteacher	Mrs Lyn Chatwin
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors, groups of pupils and a representative of the Traveller Education Service. They observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of school documentation, particularly that concerning the tracking of pupils' progress and keeping them safe. Questionnaires from staff and pupils were scrutinised and 52 completed questionnaires from parents were analysed.

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

- Is teaching consistent enough to ensure that pupils are making enough progress in lessons?
- Is attendance improving?
- Has pupils' good personal development been maintained since the last inspection?
- Do governors and subject leaders have a clear enough view of what is happening in school?

Information about the school

This is an average sized school in a large village. It draws its pupils from the village and surrounding rural areas. Most pupils are from a White British background. A few are of Traveller heritage, and a tiny proportion from other ethnic groups. All speak English as their mother tongue. More pupils are entitled to free school meals than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is broadly average. The school is in a partnership with a much smaller village school, with which it shares a headteacher. The current headteacher took up post in January 2009, after a period in which there was no substantive headteacher in place.

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 is improving considerably after a time when pupils' progress was far too inconsistent. The new headteacher quickly established an accurate overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Under her clear leadership, staff have worked together well and taken effective steps to address the most important issues. Progress is better because teaching is improving, although both still have inconsistencies. For example, progress is generally better in mathematics and reading than in writing. A key to the upturn is the establishment of better systems to track how well pupils are doing. The accuracy of teachers' assessments, while improving, is still not consistent. Nonetheless, the system gives managers a much clearer overview of how well the school is doing and they take effective action to address issues that arise. Subject leaders are now much more involved in this process than at the last inspection and are contributing positively to better provision and outcomes.

There are more good lessons taught, and unsatisfactory teaching has been virtually eliminated. Progress is now at least satisfactory in lessons but, particularly in writing, is not yet good enough to make up the ground that was lost by some pupils in the past. Teaching has a number of strengths, particularly in the management of classes. Teachers give good explanations to pupils, although they seldom make use of the interactive whiteboards to clarify things or to generate interest. Teachers consistently try to match work to pupils' particular needs, by giving different groups different tasks. In the better lessons, this is successful and leads to good progress. However, there are still occasions when some pupils have work that is either too hard or too easy for them. In some lessons, a range of strategies, such as getting pupils to discuss their work in pairs, helps them to be fully involved and improves concentration. However, such opportunities are missed in other lessons and pupils are too passive and lose concentration. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously but comments rarely show pupils how they can improve in the future.

Pupils' good personal development has been maintained since the last inspection because many aspects of pastoral care are generally good. Pupils' behaviour continues to be good, both in class and around the school. They are polite, friendly and work hard. Pupils' relationships with each other and with staff are good. Their social and moral development is good. However, there are gaps in their cultural development because, despite some positive features, planning to teach pupils about the wide range of cultures in the world is not systematic enough. The school has greatly improved the curriculum in the last year which has led to pupils' greater enjoyment of their work. Good links between different subjects make work more meaningful and relevant to pupils, and boost their progress and enthusiasm. Despite pupils' enjoyment of school,

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overall attendance is low. Although many pupils attend well and attendance has improved this term, high absence levels persist and this impairs their progress.

Improvements have also been made to the curriculum and indoor accommodation in the Reception class. Children enjoy their start to school, and do well in their personal development. However, the outdoor provision is very poor, with limited equipment. This prevents the proper planning and use of work and play outdoors to develop children's learning in all areas of learning. There are also shortcomings in how children's early mathematical development is supported.

The many improvements made this year promise well for the future, but are not yet sufficiently embedded for the school's capacity for further improvement to be better than satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress, especially in writing, by increasing the quality and consistency of teaching. In particular, teachers should:
 - improve the accuracy of assessments and make more consistent use of the improved data to match work to pupils' needs
 - make sure that pupils are consistently involved in lessons, and do not spend too long watching and listening
 - ensure that marking more often gives pupils clear pointers about how they can improve their work
 - make more use of the interactive whiteboards to enthuse pupils and clarify explanations.
- Improve provision in the Reception class by:
 - providing better equipment in the outside area, and ensuring that it can be used, regardless of weather, to support children's development in all areas of learning
 - planning better opportunities for children to develop their early mathematical understanding, and making better use of incidental opportunities that arise for them to consolidate their understanding.
- Raise the attendance of those pupils whose absence is particularly high.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Attainment on entry to the school is similar to that found nationally, and pupils' progress, including that of Traveller pupils, is satisfactory, although it varies too much from year to year and between subjects. For example, progress in mathematics has

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been weak in younger classes, but is a strength at Key Stage 2. The school has correctly identified that overall progress in writing is weaker than in other subjects and has focused on improving this in the last few months. The school's records show that this has been successful. Progress in writing is better but is not yet good enough to make up for weak progress in previous years. As a result of the extra help they get and, increasingly, work that is matched to their particular needs, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates. For example, in a lesson on telling the time, pupils who found this work difficult had easier tasks to do, and were helped by skilful support from a teaching assistant. Conversely, the most able pupils in this class spent too long sitting through an explanation of work they could already do, before tackling harder work that was at the right level of challenge. In a good lesson in the same class, all pupils made good progress because they were fully involved in a variety of activities related to presenting a shadow-puppet play. Good use was made of computers for pupils to draft and refine scripts, while others evaluated each other's work during rehearsals.

Consistently good behaviour in lessons and pupils' enjoyment of learning contribute to a positive working ethos. Pupils have good collaborative skills, for example when devising dance routines during a good lesson in Year 5. Around the school, pupils' good relationships, care and concern for each other, contribute to the harmonious and relaxed atmosphere. Younger pupils say that older ones are good at helping to look after them, with the Year 5 'buddies' playing a significant role in this. Pupils say they feel safe in school, follow rules sensibly and are aware of how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and contribute enthusiastically to charitable events. Pupils know how to keep fit and healthy, and take part enthusiastically in a variety of sports and exercise. They are particularly keen on swimming. The school council plays a secure part in the life of the school and pupils feel that their views are valued and acted upon. Pupils' preparation for the future is enhanced by their positive attitudes and skills in teamwork, although their basic skills are only average, and the attendance of too many is poor.

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	3
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

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 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	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is improving as teachers become more secure in using assessment in their planning. Pupils are increasingly enthusiastic about the varied and stimulating curriculum. French and German are taught at Key Stage 2 and all pupils in Year 4 have the opportunities to learn a musical instrument. Some exciting cross-curricular themes, such as the work on dance and geography related to the Indian village of Chembakoli, enhance learning. However, such examples of learning about different cultures around the world are too few and are not planned for with sufficient consistency. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology, partly from lack of equipment. There is a good range of clubs that pupils enjoy, and they particularly value visits, such as the trip to Macbeth by Years 5 and 6 during the inspection. The staff have worked hard to match work more closely to pupils' needs and interests but there is still room for improvement.

Staff have a good understanding of pupils' personal needs and try hard to meet them. They work effectively with individual families to overcome barriers to education. Good use is made of the Traveller Education support from the local authority to ensure these pupils are fully included in school life. Pupils are given good moral and social guidance, although work to develop them spiritually and culturally is patchy. They are very vague about different religions, for example and there are few opportunities to work with people from different cultures. A start has been made on improving pupils' attendance, but not enough has been done to raise figures to more closely match the national average.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

Staff have become an increasingly effective team in the last year. They are raising achievement and improving provision under the strong guidance of the headteacher. Many improvements have been made in teaching, but these are not sufficiently embedded to make teaching and learning consistently good. The governing body has a better understanding of the school's needs than at the last inspection, and is suitably equipped to offer support and challenge to the staff. The school is working effectively to involve parents more in their children's education and more information is provided both formally and informally about school life. For example, the use of information and communication technology to involve parents more in homework. However, the school has not succeeded in involving all parents as fully as they would like in their children's education. Good partnerships are in place with services in the local authority to promote pupils' well-being. Equal opportunities are promoted satisfactorily, and good systems ensure that Traveller pupils are integrated into the school and make satisfactory progress. The school's long-standing partnership with another primary school is only just being extended beyond sharing a headteacher. Staff are starting to share expertise and joint subject leaders for the two schools have been established. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this. Staff work hard to ensure pupils are kept safe in their day-to-day lives in school. Recent training for staff and governors has put procedures on a more secure footing. The paperwork to back this up meets requirements, and recent improvements to how it is organised make it easier to follow. Community cohesion is promoted well within the school and the school plays a significant part in the life of the village and surrounding area. A link with a school in Ghana, which had lapsed, has been revived. However, little has been done to give pupils a real appreciation of the variety and complexity of the different cultures within the United Kingdom.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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

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

3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle happily into the Reception class and make satisfactory progress overall. They enjoy the activities provided, behave well and soon learn to follow routines conscientiously. Personal, social and emotional development is a strength, and they do relatively well in communication, language and literacy skills. However, their development in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is weak. Planning for this area is not as strong as in other elements of learning, and adults sometimes miss incidental opportunities that occur to enhance children's understanding of simple mathematical ideas. Staff have good relationships with children. Activities indoors are planned to enthuse and interest children and they enjoy their time at school. Staff use observations of children's progress to plan satisfactorily for future indoor activities that build upon their progress to date. The outdoor area has a number of weaknesses. . There is no soft play surface, no climbing equipment or wheeled toys, and no shelter from bad weather. Staff make the best use possible of what is available. However, it is difficult for outdoor provision to be planned to complement indoor learning if the weather is poor. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The weaknesses in the outdoor area and the shortcomings in planning for numeracy have been accurately identified and plans are in place to address them. Good relationships with parents and various pre-school providers ease children's settling into the school.

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

A very large majority of parents are happy with the school. In particular, they value their children's safety and happiness, and the teaching. A number of parents rightly express concerns about children's progress, and how children's particular needs are met. These have been a priority for the school this year, and progress has improved, including for those children with particular needs, although inconsistencies remain. A few parents had concerns about how the school dealt with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection team saw consistently good behaviour in class and around the school, and pupils told inspectors that when children do misbehave, the adults deal with it well. A few parents

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expressed concerns about too many changes of teacher in one class. This was for reasons beyond the school's control, and has been dealt with well to maximise stability and learning for the class.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upwell Community 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 153 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	56	19	37	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	28	54	21	40	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	38	22	42	5	10	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	40	23	44	6	12	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	19	37	27	52	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	44	21	40	4	8	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	44	22	42	3	6	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)	20	38	21	40	3	6	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	40	24	46	4	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	33	25	48	5	10	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	38	24	46	1	2	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	26	50	19	37	2	4	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	54	18	35	2	4	2	4

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



25 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upwell Community Primary School, Wisbech PE14 9EW

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for your help and for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were pleased to see that you all get on well together and that your behaviour is good. You work hard in lessons and usually reach the standards expected, although you do better in reading and mathematics than in writing. Your progress is satisfactory and is improving.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Your teachers make sure you always make satisfactory progress, and in some lessons you learn a lot. We have agreed that they are going to try to help you make good progress all the time. They are going to make sure that you always get work that is just right for you; to use the interactive whiteboards more to make lessons more exciting; to make sure everybody is more involved in what is happening; and to show you more often how to make your work better.

The children in the Reception class enjoy themselves learning indoors, and they do just as well in their outdoor area when it is fine. However, this area would benefit from some more equipment, and some shelter for when the weather is bad.. We have agreed with the adults that they will improve this as soon as they can.

Your teachers have worked hard this year to give you more interesting things to do, and to provide exciting visits for you. You told us that you enjoy school, but despite this some of you are absent too often, so you don't learn as much as you should. We have agreed with your headteacher that the school will work with you and your parents to improve attendance. You can help by always coming to school unless you are ill.

We hope that you carry on enjoying learning, working hard and behaving well.

Yours sincerely

Steven Hill

Lead inspector

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