

Upland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134118
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	341431
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Baker
Headteacher	Gillian Rabey
Date of previous school inspection	4 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons and 16 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher and other teachers with leadership responsibilities. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation including the school improvement plan, monitoring records, the school's self-evaluation document, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires were received and analysed from 186 parents and carers.

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

- how well teaching and the curriculum support boys' learning and progress, particularly in English
- how effectively senior leaders and middle managers monitor and evaluate the work of the school
- how well children progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well the work of the school is accelerating pupils' progress in mathematics.

Information about the school

Upland is a large primary school. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with small numbers of pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and their needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties as well as pupils with dyslexia. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes and a Nursery class where children attend on a part-time basis. The school has a Healthy Schools award. There is a breakfast club on the school premises that is managed by a private provider and not included in this 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Upland is a satisfactory school. Children get off to a good start to their schooling in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school provides good care, guidance and support. Pupils behave well. They feel safe and enjoy school because they know how to take care of themselves and that any incidents of inconsiderate behaviour will be dealt with effectively. One parent wrote, 'My child is happy to attend school and feels she belongs. The teachers are always friendly and easy to talk to.' Pupils' good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy is recognised by the Healthy Schools award. The curriculum is good and recent developments to make learning more meaningful and relevant to pupils by linking learning across subjects is an important factor in sustaining high attainment and improving progress across the school. This is enlivening learning for all and particularly for boys. Pupils are particularly appreciative of the special event weeks such as the mathematics week and the multicultural week. Many pupils commented on these in their questionnaires and wrote about them as fun events that really motivated and inspired them.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory although it varies across the school. Much is good and sometimes better and successful support from senior leaders has increased the proportion of good quality teaching. Nevertheless, there are still inconsistencies across the school where time is not always used well enough to maximise learning, pupils are not sufficiently challenged to make good progress and are unclear about what they should be learning. This means that although attainment is high by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, and many pupils make good progress from starting points which are below expectations for their ages, progress is uneven across the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. In the 2009 Year 6 tests, girls did better than boys in all subjects and the gap was more marked in English. Progress was better in English where teachers have shared consistent expectations, than in mathematics or science.

Senior leaders have identified this inconsistency through their rigorous self-evaluation, monitoring and tracking procedures, which give an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and those areas where further improvement is needed. Where there has been a significant school focus, for example in writing and the attainment of more able pupils, improvement has been considerable. Expectations have been raised and school data and pupils' current work show that progress is beginning to be more consistent and the gap between boys and girls is starting to narrow. These factors indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Ensure that teaching is consistently good across the school by:
 - pacing lessons well so that pupils have enough time for independent learning
 - making sure that tasks consistently tap into the learning needs of boys so that their progress more closely matches that of girls, especially in English
 - making sure that all pupils know exactly what they are learning in lessons, know if they have been successful and what the next steps are to improve.
- Accelerate progress in mathematics and science to more closely match that in English by:
 - ensuring that all pupils, but particularly boys, are challenged in their learning
 - making sure that there are shared and consistent expectations for pupils' achievement.

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

Pupils enjoy their lessons when they can get on with their work quickly and say they learn best when they get involved in practical, problem-solving activities that are 'fun and not boring'. Their good personal skills such as their ability to work effectively together and their good behaviour have a positive impact on their learning. For example, pupils were very supportive of each other as they looked for words in a dictionary and were happy to ask for and give help to each other without being directed to by the teacher. Pupils work hard. On occasions they lose interest when they have to listen to the teacher for too long and this tends to slow the progress of boys more than any other group. Consequently, pupils' achievement is satisfactory despite the real interest and enthusiasm seen in many lessons by all groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified at an early stage and effective support is given. Attendance has improved and is average; however, there are still a small number of families whose children do not come to school regularly, which means they miss out on important learning. Pupils are proud of their school and promote its caring and inclusive ethos as reflected in their good spiritual, moral and social development. The school has correctly identified that cultural understanding and awareness is an area to develop and is making good headway with this, for example in the recent multicultural week. Pupils enthusiastically take on a range of responsibilities such as play leaders and monitors. The school forum is influential and proud of its work, for example in drawing up an anti-bullying code for the school. Pupils are keen fundraisers and raise substantial amounts for many charities and through this develop an understanding of people who are less fortunate than them.

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

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

How effective is the provision?

All adults work successfully to include pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities so they are able to fully participate in learning and make good progress. Support is targeted well and there is close collaboration between the school, parent support adviser and external agencies to build relationships with pupils and their families. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage their classes very well. Introductions to lessons often include pupils in discussion with opportunities to share and articulate their thinking with a 'talk partner'. This is often extended by teachers' good questioning skills, but sometimes at the expense of taking learning forward quickly. In some lessons pupils listen to teachers for too long before getting on with independent learning. Also in some lessons, pupils are not clear about what it is they are going to learn and sometimes the work is too easy for them which means that they do not learn as rapidly as they could. For example, boys in a mathematics lesson said that the work was too easy and did not present them with any challenges. Marking often provides pupils with useful pointers about how to improve but pupils are not always clear about their targets for learning or how and when they have achieved them. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal skills especially their understanding of issues connected with their health and safety. Enrichment activities through special events weeks, visits and visitors are strengths, which enhance pupils' learning experiences.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is ambitious for the school and has high expectations for pupils and staff, which are driving improvement. Staff are accountable for evaluating and monitoring pupils' progress as they move through the school. Senior leaders, middle managers and governors share the vision of the headteacher and make a good contribution to school improvement. There are systematic checks on the quality of teaching and learning and good support from senior leaders to bring about improvement.

Leaders promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination satisfactorily. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met effectively; however, meeting the needs of other groups, including boys, has been correctly identified for development. The school meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding and has clear, well-established policies and procedures that are well known by all staff. Parents confirm that the school takes good care of their children and that they feel safe. The school has satisfactory procedures to promote community cohesion and works well to engage parents and carers in the community. Multicultural aspects of the curriculum contribute to a wider understanding of culture, faith and social diversity and help everyone to have a broader view of the wider world. The headteacher and governors have identified that national and international links are to be developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress from their starting points which are generally below the expected levels for their ages when they start school. There are positive and trusting relationships with the team of adults and as a result, children are confident, behave well, settle happily into the routines of the day and are well cared for. Children understand the need to keep themselves safe and healthy and know why they need to wash their hands before eating or after going to the toilet. Parents and carers appreciate the support given for a smooth transition into school. One parent wrote, 'My child seems to be learning so much, loves the teachers and the school environment and can't wait to get to school each day.'

As a result of good leadership and teaching, children develop independence and quickly learn to organise themselves and become willing learners. Teachers have a good knowledge of the learning and development needs of the children and have high expectations. They provide exciting activities inside and outside that tap into the interests of the children. Lessons are well prepared and planned and good use is made of resources to motivate learning. Children enjoy the opportunities to choose their own activities throughout the day and there is a good balance between these and activities directed by adults. There is a consistent and effective approach to teaching letters and sounds (phonics) and a good emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills, which is having a positive impact and helping children to exceed the goals for their learning in communication, language and literacy skills. The school has correctly identified, however, that boys have not done as well as girls particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. As a result, there is an increased focus on providing many opportunities for writing in contexts which appeal to boys, for example writing their thoughts in speech bubbles when developing the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears and using role play to help them to develop their ideas through talk.

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

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Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agreed that they were happy with their children's experience at school and that their children enjoy coming to school. Most of the concerns expressed were about how effectively the school deals with behaviour. The inspection found that behaviour is good and that the school manages any inappropriate behaviour well. A few do not feel that their children are making enough progress and, although the inspection found that progress is satisfactory, inspectors agree that some pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in their work because expectations are not always high enough.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upland 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	118	63	61	33	4	2	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	109	59	72	39	4	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	37	105	56	10	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	79	42	95	51	9	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	81	44	93	50	7	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	38	101	54	10	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	42	96	52	8	4	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)	51	27	99	53	7	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	74	40	100	54	6	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	32	98	53	16	9	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	54	29	102	55	8	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	82	44	83	45	8	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	104	56	73	39	4	2	2	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.



18 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upland Primary School, Bexleyheath, DA7 4DG

You may remember that I visited your school recently with three other inspectors. I am writing to thank you for being so friendly and polite and telling us what you think about your school. We agree with you and your parents that Upland is a caring and safe place to be where everyone looks after you well. Your school is satisfactory overall. This means that some things are particularly good and some things need to be better. Your headteacher and all the teachers and other adults work really hard to make the school an interesting, fun place to be. Well done to you all for working so hard to improve your writing. I enjoyed reading lots of your work in your books and around the school. I know that some of you wrote that you were anxious about behaviour in school, but we were impressed with your good behaviour in lessons and around the school and very pleased to hear that you enjoy coming to school. Well done for understanding how to stay fit and healthy.

We have asked everyone in your school to do the following important things.

- We want all your lessons to be as good as the best ones. To make sure this happens we have asked the teachers to give you enough time to work independently and to plan work for you that is always interesting so that you want to learn new things in different ways. This will especially help the boys. We also want you to be clear about exactly what it is you are learning, whether you are successful and what the next steps are to do even better.
- Your attainment is high by the time you leave school which is great and means you are well prepared to move on to your next schools. You make best progress in English as you come through the school and we would like you to make the same progress in mathematics and science. To do this we want teachers to make sure that work is just right for each of you and not too easy, and for all teachers to expect the very best from you.

Thank you again for being so helpful and interesting to talk to.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector

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