

# INSPECTION REPORT

**UPLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**STROUD**

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115543

Headteacher: Mr R. M. Higgs

Reporting inspector: Mr David Owen - 1957

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 224638

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Thompson Road  
Uplands  
Stroud  
Gloucestershire

Postcode: GL5 1TE

Telephone number: 01453 762409

Fax number: 01453 762409

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Stephen Locke

Date of previous inspection: 13/01/97 - 16/01/97

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mr David Owen	Registered inspector
Mrs. Rhiannon Boardman	Lay inspector
Mrs. Gabrielle Wilkinson	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

NES Education Services Ltd  
Linden House,  
Woodland Way,  
Gosfield,  
Essex  
CO9 1TH

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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The teaching is consistently good throughout the school. This encourages and inspires the pupils to learn. Some aspects of teaching, including knowledge of subjects, are very good.

As a result of the good teaching and the good relationships between adults and children the pupils have very positive attitudes to school and they are very well behaved.

The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. As a result there is a strong sense of teamwork, with the staff working well together sharing good practice in order to raise standards. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, the teachers, the non-teaching staff and the governors.

The parents have a very high regard for Uplands Primary School and this contributes well to the pupils' achievement and positive attitudes to school.

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

With 108 pupils on roll, Uplands is below average in size compared with primary schools nationally. Pupils live in a mixture of privately owned and rented properties and they come from a diversity of home backgrounds, socially, economically and educationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, 34%, is well above the national average of 21%. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is broadly average. Although the range of ability is very wide, the overall attainment is below average on entry. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, 7 per cent, is below the national average. All of the pupils have English as their first language and none are from ethnic minority families. Including the headteacher, each teacher is responsible for 20 pupils on average, which is below the national ratio. However, since the headteacher does not teach full-time, each class has an average of 27 pupils.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Uplands is a good school which is very well led and managed. There have been important improvements since the last inspection in January 1997. Teaching is good throughout the school, and as a result the pupils are very well behaved, they learn well and they make good progress in lessons. They also enjoy their work and become very interested in it. The arrangements for the pupils' welfare are effective and the school has established a very good partnership with parents and carers. Attendance is very good. The headteacher, governors and staff show a very strong commitment to improvement. This, together with the quality of the teaching, ensures that the pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 was above the national average. During the inspection lesson observations confirmed this above average attainment. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Almost all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards in English, mathematics and science which are above those expected for them.
- The teaching is consistently good throughout the school. This encourages and inspires the pupils to learn. Some aspects of teaching, including knowledge of subjects, are very good.
- As a result of the good teaching and the good relationships between adults and children, the pupils have very positive attitudes to school and they are very well behaved.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. As a result there is a strong sense of teamwork, with the staff working well together sharing good practice in order to raise standards. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, the teachers, the non-teaching staff and the governors.
- The parents have a very high regard for Uplands Primary School and this contributes well to the pupils' achievement and positive attitudes to school.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards of attainment in information and communication technology.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Most notably the quality of teaching has improved to such an extent that all of the lessons seen were judged to be good or better. As a consequence, the pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science has risen. One of the main reasons for these improvements is the enhanced quality of leadership provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the teaching staff, and the very good support provided by the non-teaching staff. Careful pacing of developments has led to good solid progress in relation to the key issues identified in the previous report. All of these have now been successfully tackled with the exception of improving the provision for information technology. Work in this subject is currently in hand and is progressing well.

The results achieved by seven-year olds and eleven-year olds in the national tests have risen in line with the national trend. However, this masks a more important feature, namely the school's increasing success in ensuring that pupils of all abilities achieve their best.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	E	C	D
Mathematics	D	E	B	B
Science	B	D	A	A

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

In 1999, compared with all schools nationally, the results were average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. When compared with similar schools the results were below average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Similar schools are defined in two ways: those having approximately the same proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and those schools which had broadly similar results in 1995 at the end of Key Stage 1. The results in all three subject are improving at the same rate as schools nationally. However, two particular features at Uplands indicate that the pupils' performance is better than that indicated in the table and that the achievements of most pupils is beyond that which might reasonably be expected. Firstly, 34 per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register compared with the national figure of 21 per cent; secondly, almost all of the pupils reach standards beyond those predicted by the verbal reasoning tests used by the Local Education Authority. The school achieved the targets in English and mathematics which it set itself for 2000. Appropriate targets have been set to raise attainment in both subjects in the Year 2001.

The results in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 were above average in writing, average in reading and average in mathematics when compared to schools nationally. In science the pupils achieved average results according to the teachers' assessments.

The evidence from the inspection confirms the good levels of achievement indicated by the tests. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' work in English is in line with what is expected nationally but it is above expectations in mathematics and science. By the end of Key Stage 2, it is above expectations in English, mathematics and science. However, throughout the school the pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is not good enough.

Standards of achievement have improved since the previous inspection when the proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register was considerably less.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to learning. They are very interested in lessons and other school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils are very well behaved in lessons, and as they move about the school and the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and the pupils show initiative and personal responsibility. They get on well with pupils of different ages as well as members of their own class.
Attendance	Very good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and as a result the pupils learn well. All of the teaching seen was good or better with 20 per cent of it very good. The teachers manage pupils very well and, as a consequence, behaviour is very good and the pupils work hard, learn readily and develop independence. The teachers have very good subject knowledge especially in English, mathematics and science and, therefore, basic skills in literacy and numeracy are very well taught. They also have very high expectations and very good relationships with pupils and this ensures that the latter make good progress. Regularly set, interesting homework is enjoyed by the pupils and some of the marking at Key Stage 2 is exceptionally good. Good teaching methods are used and the teachers skilfully meet the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, interesting and relevant. The school has made effective use of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy to provide a good curriculum in English and mathematics. Although there are gaps in the provision for information and communication technology, good progress is being made in improving the curriculum for this subject.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Thoughtful, sensitive and intelligent provision for pupils with special educational needs. This includes making good provision for pupils whose attainment is particularly high as well as catering for pupils who are having some difficulties.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with collective worship making a particularly good contribution to spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school ensures that pupils are safe and that high standards of behaviour are maintained. The arrangements for child protection are good.

The school provides a warm, caring environment where pupils are successfully encouraged to do their best and to help and support others.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school very effectively and he is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and the co-ordinators for subjects and other aspects of school life. Good team work has had a very positive influence on the quality of teaching and thus pupils' achievements. The headteacher and the teachers are very well supported by the non-teaching staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are thoroughly involved in the work of the school and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities which they fulfil well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school identifies its strengths and weaknesses well and has been successful in improving standards in English, mathematics and science. The governors and staff use national test results effectively to monitor the work of the school and to set targets for improvement. The school is planning to develop and improve the monitoring of teaching, an aspect of school life which is already successful.
The strategic use of resources	The school has developed a most appropriate set of educational priorities which are well supported through good financial planning.

The headteacher, staff and governors have created a very good family atmosphere in the school which recognises the contributions made by all those associated with it. Two factors ensure that this is not too cosy. One is the clear educational direction provided by the headteacher and the other is the fact that all staff and governors are committed to raising standards and improving all aspects of school life. The school effectively applies the principles of best value to all aspects of its decision making.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature, responsible and well behaved.</li> <li>• The staff are approachable if there is a problem.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The implementation of the homework policy <b>[criticised by a very small number of parents]</b>.</li> <li>• Playground supervision at lunchtime <b>[criticised by a very small number of parents]</b>.</li> <li>• The pupils' skills in information and communication technology.</li> </ul>

The inspectors' judgements support the parents' positive views. Apart from unsatisfactory standards in information and communication technology, no evidence was found to substantiate the concerns which had been expressed by parents. There is a clear structure to homework. Interviews with pupils from all year groups indicated that homework is set regularly, they find it interesting and it links well with the work they do in lessons. There is careful supervision of pupils at all times, including lunchtimes.

In a meeting prior to the inspection the parents noted in particular the caring attitude found in the school. They also said that some parents who had pupils with special educational needs were attracted to Uplands, partly because of the care shown and partly because these pupils make such good progress in the school. The inspectors agree with these views.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Almost all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards in English, mathematics and science which are above those expected for them.**

1. The school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils work hard and do their best. Although the range of ability is very wide, the overall attainment of the pupils is below average when they are admitted to the school. 34 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs - a proportion well above the national average of 21 per cent. However, analyses carried out by the school show that individual pupils almost invariably score higher in National Curriculum tests than Local Education Authority tests of verbal reasoning would predict. Consequently, in 1999 the Year 6 pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieved results in the national tests which were average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Good levels of achievement were confirmed during the inspection when it was found that the pupils in the current Year 6 were reaching above average standards in all three subjects. Achievement, as judged during the inspection and as judged by tests, has improved since the previous inspection when the proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register was considerably less at 25 per cent.

2. In the main, the pupils achieve well because they are well taught and because the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators provide very good leadership. However, other factors also make a useful contribution. The school has assessed the effects of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy and in particular how these initiatives affect the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Sensible adaptations to the teaching of both English and mathematics have resulted in improved progress for these pupils. The teachers have also examined the achievement of boys and girls in the National Curriculum tests and compared test results with other information about the pupils' performance.

3. In response to the good teaching the children in the reception class make good progress in all aspects of learning, particularly in their ability to communicate and in their understanding of mathematics. At the time of the inspection they had been in school for only two weeks. They listened well as the teacher read to them and they understood that writing conveys meaning. They knew the sounds that the letters 'b' and 'l' make and they helped the teacher to sort objects which had either of these initial sounds. When working with shapes they confidently identified triangles, squares and rectangles.

4. Good progress continues in Key Stage 1. The standard of reading is sound overall and the pupils write well. The staff are aware of the need for the pupils to improve standards of presentation. The pupils' skills in English are used well in other subjects. For example, in one history lesson the pupils considered old and new toys, discussing similarities and differences and listened carefully to one another. Subsequently they wrote about their findings well.

5. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in Key Stage 1 and higher attaining pupils read and write to a good standard. Good support from teachers and learning support workers ensures that the pupils with special educational needs also achieve well. This was observed, for example, in lessons in mathematics and science. By the end of the key stage overall attainment in these subjects is above that expected nationally. Although it was early in the school year at the time of the inspection the

Year 2 pupils were already demonstrating good levels of skill and confidence as they calculated in their heads. Similarly, in science these pupils are able to make sensible suggestions about how information might be collected and they record their observations well. They understand that there are various categories of food which meet different nutritional needs.

6. The pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 so that by the end of Year 6 they achieve above average standards in English. Inspectors listened to pupils read, examined their written work and observed literacy lessons. This confirmed that pupils achieve well and that the more able pupils are reaching particularly high standards. All of the pupils can write in a variety of styles and for a variety of purposes. The majority spell accurately and punctuate their work appropriately. Ideas are sustained and developed well and the pupils choose words skilfully to obtain the effect they desire. Handwriting is generally fluent and legible. Pupils with special educational needs and consequently below average skills in English achieve well. At times their written work is most creative; for example when one pupil wrote '*A snowflake is like a cold, dead dove falling out of the sky*'. All pupils use their English skills well in other subjects. Year 3 pupils discussed a pentagon and made good responses: '*It has five sides*', '*It has five corners*', '*It's a pentagon*', '*It's symmetrical*' and '*It's not a quadrilateral*'.

7. The pupils also achieve well in mathematics and by the end of the key stage standards are above the national expectation. In Year 6 the pupils show a good understanding of multiples and they can develop their own test as to whether a particular number [such as 756] can be divided exactly by 4. They also have a good understanding of the links between fractions, decimals, percentages, multiples and factors. Teachers, learning support workers and voluntary helpers give very good support to the pupils with special educational needs to ensure that they achieve as well as possible.

8. In Key Stage 2 the pupils become increasingly skilled at observing and investigating in science. For example, in one lesson the pupils in Year 3 and 4 skilfully considered what materials particular objects were made from and why that material had been used. They made very good use of scientific words such as '*absorbent*,' '*elastic*,' '*rigid*' and '*flexible*'. They could successfully identify which materials are good conductors of heat, which are porous and which vibrate.

**The teaching is consistently good throughout the school. This encourages and inspires the pupils to learn. Some aspects of teaching, including knowledge of subjects, are very good.**

9. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. It was very good in 20 per cent of lessons observed and it was good in all of the rest. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when the teaching in 50 per cent of the lessons was judged to be sound and it was good or better in most of the remainder. This improvement is evident to parents who recorded their general appreciation of the quality of the teaching in responses to the parents' questionnaire. Pupils' learning in lessons is good overall and is closely related to the quality of teaching.

10. Some aspects of teaching are very good throughout the school and these include the very good subject knowledge of the teachers, especially in English, mathematics and science. As a result basic skills in literacy and numeracy are very well taught and the pupils make good progress. In one lesson, in Years 1 and 2, the teacher used his very good knowledge of music and mathematics effectively to help the pupils to develop their understanding of counting in 1s, 2s and 10s through the vehicle of '*Ten Green Bottles*'. Throughout the school the teaching of mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection. In particular, pupils are now given appropriate opportunities to use and apply their knowledge of the subject.

11. The teachers manage the pupils very well. They also have very high expectations and very good relationships with pupils. As a result, interest and concentration are high, and pupils work hard. This was seen in the reception class as children learned rapidly and readily as a result of the teacher's very effective management, her very good planning and effective classroom organisation.

12. Teaching is well matched to the age and needs of pupils. Careful attention is paid to the grouping of pupils in classrooms, in order that work can be targeted or support offered in an efficient and effective way. These factors ensure that pupils of all abilities, including the higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress. The school has a very good, and well-deserved, reputation for teaching pupils with special educational needs. Although information technology is under used, other resources are used well to stimulate interest and to support pupils' learning.

13. Planning is good and is particularly strong in literacy and numeracy where thorough attention is paid to raising standards in basic skills. As a consequence, the pupils acquire new knowledge very effectively and increase their understanding. The planning also ensures that the pace of lessons is appropriate so that, not only do pupils not drift away from the activity and become bored, but they also have sufficient time to think and learn for themselves. Good consideration is given to ensuring that time and resources are used well and that the pupils are well prepared for lessons. For example, in an information technology lesson at Key Stage 1, the pupils were taught skills in preparation for a science lesson which was to take place that afternoon.

14. Teachers employ a wide variety of teaching methods throughout the curriculum. Introductions and explanations are always appropriate, and they are often lively and engaging. Questioning is used in different ways throughout lessons and most notably, it is used well to encourage pupils to think and to help the teachers assess their knowledge and understanding. The teachers use this assessment information well to push learning forward. In mathematics lessons, pupils are often encouraged to think for themselves and to explain the methods they are using, for example, when carrying out mental calculations. Questions such as '*How do you know?*' are used regularly to help the teachers get an insight into how the pupils are thinking. This was observed in a lesson for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils as the teacher asked questions such as this to encourage the pupils to think about their work with multiples and fractions. The quality of marking is more variable but some of that seen in English in Key Stage 2 was exceptionally good. In particular this high quality marking made it clear to pupils how well they had done and what steps they needed to take to improve their work.

**As a result of the good teaching and the good relationships between adults and children the pupils have very positive attitudes to school and they are very well behaved.**

15. As a consequence of the good teaching, effective class management and the quality of learning, the pupils behave very well in lessons, develop very positive attitudes to school and work enthusiastically. They are responsible and they frequently show initiative. In a lesson for Year 4 pupils the teacher had organised interesting activities which included sorting two dimensional shapes into four categories on the basis of whether they were triangles or quadrilaterals and whether or not they were regular. The pupils responded with great interest and were very involved in the activities. At the same time their Year 3 classmates worked with another teacher. The pupils were keen and eager to work on an activity which required them to describe to the rest of the class the characteristics of, say, a quadrilateral.

16. At times lessons are specifically, and usefully, focused on the pupils' personal development. For instance a session known as 'circle time' was observed in the reception class. This activity provides all the pupils in the class with the opportunity to speak, to co-operate and to listen to the other children. It achieved its aim of fostering self-esteem and it was clear that most children were becoming more confident to speak in front of others.

17. The pupils get on well with one another. Levels of co-operation are high in lessons, and at break and lunchtime pupils of different ages mix together well. There are very good relationships between adults and pupils and the beneficial effects of this were noted in many lessons including a literacy lesson in Key Stage 1. The teacher was very sensitive to the needs of the pupils and, for example, he rephrased questions in order to support the pupils' thinking. As well as supporting good progress this approach ensured that the pupils were well behaved and keen to learn. In a history lesson for Year 6, the good relationships between teacher and taught also fostered positive attitudes and good behaviour, as well as making sure that the pupils improved their knowledge of Sparta and Athens.

18. The high levels of attendance and punctuality, and the keen involvement of pupils in extra-curricular activities and the school council, provide further evidence of the pupils' positive attitudes to school.

**The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. As a result there is a strong sense of teamwork, with the staff working well together sharing good practice in order to raise standards. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, the teachers, the non-teaching staff and the governors.**

19. The headteacher has strong qualities of leadership and he provides a very clear educational direction. He has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He has managed developments very well so that many aspects of school life have improved considerably since the previous inspection. As a result the reputation of the school has grown.

20. The Governing Body is committed to raising standards and improving the school, and governors provide good, well informed and considered strategic management. A high proportion of them are parents and they work closely with the staff. For example, three governors work in the classrooms, supporting the teachers and the pupils. Furthermore, in the cause of efficiency, continuity and to foster trust and co-operation, staff and governors often work on policies together.

21. When the headteacher was appointed five years ago the school already had staff of good quality. Further good appointments have been made and responsibilities have been delegated well. The headteacher has shown a high level of skill in valuing and motivating these people and managing change. This has resulted in a happy, committed and hard-working team which extends beyond the teachers to include the learning support workers, cleaning and catering staff, mid-day supervisory assistants and the very capable school administration officer. All of these people support the headteacher and the teachers well, ensuring that the latter can devote their time as fully as possible to teaching.

22. Apart from a recently appointed teacher, each member of the teaching staff has responsibility for a number of subjects or other aspects of school life. They provide very effective support for colleagues. For example, the literacy co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the school's

strengths and weaknesses in English. She monitors the quality of teaching, teachers' planning and

the attainment of the pupils. She has led the staff in implementing the National Literacy Strategy and adapting it to meet the needs of pupils at Uplands. However, her high quality leadership would not be possible without the good relationships between teachers and the atmosphere of trust engendered by the headteacher.

23. The headteacher has been successful in introducing procedures to monitor the quality of teaching. Initially members of staff were worried about observing colleagues. When the school introduced the National Literacy Strategy the headteacher suggested that all the teachers should observe one another teaching the literacy hour. Since this was an innovation new to everyone it presented a very good opportunity to learn from one another and to share good practice. As a consequence of this effective groundwork there is now good provision for the monitoring of teaching and there are good plans for developing and improving the procedures.

24. The school plans well for the future. The teachers and the governors are thoroughly involved in school development planning and in monitoring changes which have taken place as a result of this planning. The school sets appropriate targets for attainment in English and mathematics which are based on a thoughtful analysis of previous results and the current attainment of the pupils who will be taking the tests at the end of Key Stage 2.

25. The headteacher ensures that careful attention is paid to training and this is a significant factor in maintaining and enhancing the school's existing good standards. Training extends beyond that provided for the teaching and non-teaching staff, to include provision for governors, most of which is conducted by the school. This is generally very practical and meets the needs of governors well. In a good example, the headteacher asked governors to complete one of the Ofsted pre-inspection forms which relates specifically to the ways in which the school meets statutory requirements. This was a good exercise and the document was subsequently submitted to the inspection team. This was an appropriate decision and illustrates high levels of co-operation, trust and teamwork.

26. This good leadership has underpinned the considerable improvements which have taken place since the last inspection. Teaching has improved and standards of attainment have risen. Effective teamwork and careful pacing of developments have led to good progress in dealing with the key issues specified by the previous inspection team. These factors have also made a major contribution to maximising the achievement of pupils of all abilities.

**The parents have a very high regard for Uplands Primary School and this contributes well to the pupils' achievement and positive attitudes to school.**

27. The parents think very highly of the school and relationships between them and the staff are very good. A questionnaire was sent to parents before the inspection to enable them to express their views on various aspects of school life. 20 per cent agreed with the statement 'my child likes school' and 80 per cent strongly agreed with it. The pupils' enthusiasm for school was confirmed at a meeting which the Registered Inspector held for parents, and by the observations of the inspection team. The questionnaire and the parents' meeting also indicated that pupils are well behaved, although a very small minority of parents were concerned that arrangements for supervision were inadequate at lunchtime and consequently behaviour suffered. The inspectors investigated this matter thoroughly and found that the pupils were very well behaved throughout the school day, including lunchtime. The teachers and the non-teaching staff ensure that pupils are safe at all times.

28. In their responses to other questionnaire items the parents stated that their children make good progress and the school helps them to become mature and responsible. They also indicated that teaching is good; parents are kept well informed; the school works closely with parents; members of

staff are approachable; the children are expected to work hard; and the school is well led and managed. These very positive views were confirmed at the parents' meeting. They are indicative of the school's good reputation in the locality which leads to a considerable demand for places.

29. The questionnaire and the meeting revealed that a very small minority of parents feel that the school's good homework policy is not fully implemented by all of the teachers. This matter was investigated during the inspection and it was found that work is set regularly and it makes a good contribution to the progress which pupils make. Most parents support their children well by listening to them read or, where appropriate, helping them with the work set. The pupils know when homework is set and when it has to be completed. They enjoy the work which they take home. It is usually linked well to lessons and some of the activities are particularly interesting. These include the making of models of scarab beetles in Years 3 and 4 and the opportunity to undertake mathematical investigations into multiples in Year 5 and 6. Many parents also make a good contribution to school life by working in the classrooms, supporting the teachers and the pupils, and a number become deeply involved with the school by becoming a governor or helping to raise money as members of The Friends of Uplands School. These factors make important contributions to the links between school and home and have a beneficial effect on pupils' progress, their achievements and their positive attitudes to school.

30. At the meeting for parents it was clear that those present strongly approved of the caring attitude in the school. They noted in particular how older pupils are encouraged to help younger ones. The parents said that the school communicated with them well and commended the newsletters, reports and the consultation evenings. They also pointed out that the school responds very well to suggestions and complaints. For example, two parents noted that when they reported to the school that their children had been bullied it was dealt with very swiftly. Furthermore, they noted the skill of the staff in ensuring that both the child bullied and the bully were helped to learn from the experience. It is hardly surprising that both the parents and the pupils have positive views of the school when this sort of thing happens. At the end of the meeting two final comments were made and both received unanimous support from the rest of the parents. They were '*The children are very happy at the school*' and '*The school is great!*'.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Standards of attainment in information and communication technology.**

31. At the time of the previous inspection standards of attainment in music and information technology at the end of both key stages were low. Therefore the inspection team specified that one of the key issues for action should be to 'improve standards by expanding and improving the provision for information technology and music'. The school has improved standards in music as well as dealing successfully with all the other key issues. However, work in information and communication technology has not yet been completed and the standards reached by the pupils are still below those expected nationally. This has come about because of the school's sensible pacing of developments.

32. The work carried out so far to raise standards in information and communication technology is of good quality. The headteacher co-ordinates the subject, a great deal of equipment has been purchased and there has been extensive training. A good start has been made in implementing the school's planning in the classrooms. For example, it is the intention of the school that information and communication technology should be effectively used to support learning in other subjects and this was seen when Year 1 and Year 2 pupils used a data handling program in science and Year 5 and Year 6 pupils used a CD-Rom to carry out research in history. However, lesson observations and discussions with the staff, governors, parents and pupils indicate that there is still a considerable amount of work to do in order to raise standards of attainment to an appropriate level. Currently the pupils at both key stages have an adequate understanding of how to use information technology to communicate and handle information. Most use tape recorders, the older pupils regularly use an overhead projector and some of them have had experience of using CD-Rom and digital cameras. However, there are large gaps in their knowledge, which are well known to the staff. For example, they know little about the ways that computer programs can be used to control devices. They also have very little understanding, apart from computer games, of common, real-world applications of information technology.

33. Since the school now has new computers, the teachers and pupils are still somewhat unfamiliar with them. Consequently, during the inspection, there were one or two hiccups in using the hardware and the software.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

34. In order to improve standards of attainment in information technology the governors, headteacher and staff should ensure that:

- all the school's equipment for information technology is in classrooms and is in good working order.
- all computer software is properly loaded and operable.
- all aspects of the information technology curriculum are taught.
- information technology is used effectively to enhance learning in other subjects.  
(paras. 31 and 32)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	20	80	0	0	0	0

*The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	108
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	8

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	35

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000			16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	14	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (90)	88(95)	81 (90)
	National	Not Available (79)	Not Available (83)	Not Available (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (90)	81 (90)	88 (90)
	National	Not Available (84)	Not Available (86)	Not Available (87)

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000			17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	12	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (69)	70 (69)	82 (92)
	National	Not Available (70)	Not Available (69)	Not Available (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils	School	77 (62)	77 (69)	76 (77)

at NC level 4 or above	National	Not Available (67)	Not Available (69)	Not Available (75)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Gaps indicate less than 10 boys and less than 10 girls in the year.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	93
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	76

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	230729
Total expenditure	219377
Expenditure per pupil	2348
Balance brought forward from previous year	17444
Balance carried forward to next year	11352

Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
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Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	109
Number of questionnaires returned	27

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	19	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	35	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	54	8	4	0
The teaching is good.	77	23	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	38	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	12	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	19	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	62	38	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	23	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	85	15	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	50	8	0	0