

Uplands Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115543
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	326219
Inspection date	4 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	103
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Locke
Headteacher	Carol Baron
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Thompson Road Uplands Stroud GL5 1TE

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	4 February 2009
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Telephone number
Fax number

01453 762409
01453 762409

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has increased since the last inspection and is now well above average. There have been several changes to the teaching staff during the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has a friendly and inclusive ethos and provides a good education for pupils, preparing them well for the next stage of their education. The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher is a dedicated leader who provides very clear vision and direction for the school. She works well with staff and governors to ensure the school regularly analyses and accurately evaluates its performance in order to implement improvements where needed. This has been a key factor in ensuring the school has made good progress since the previous inspection and is reflected in rising standards and the consistently good achievement of pupils. It is also a clear indication of the school's good capacity to improve in the future. Parents are proud of their school. 'I would not hesitate to recommend Uplands School to anyone,' is typical of the many positive comments in parents' questionnaire replies.

The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and this enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress in all year groups. By Year 6, standards are above average overall. However, standards in writing are not as high as standards in other subjects. Children often enter the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with writing skills below those expected for their age. Even though pupils make good progress in developing these skills as they progress through the school, pupils often find it difficult to construct sentences accurately when writing longer pieces of work. As a result, standards in writing are lower than standards pupils attain in reading, mathematics and science in Year 6.

Personal development and well-being are good and this is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour, outstanding regard for the safety and welfare of others and excellent understanding of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils try hard to do well and take very seriously the responsibilities they are given. They say they really enjoy school. However, even though the school has tried to promote good attendance, rates of attendance are satisfactory. Good progress in developing skills in numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) and literacy, together with a good understanding of individual and collective responsibility, means pupils are prepared well for the future. A variety of visitors to the school and visits to places of interest build up pupils' knowledge of the wider world. However, while pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, pupils have too limited an understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society, and this affects one aspect of their appreciation of the importance of community cohesion.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and designed to make learning interesting and enjoyable for pupils. Pastoral care and support is recognised as a strength of the school by parents and contributes effectively to pupils' well-being. Academic guidance and support are good. Assessment is used well to enhance learning and teachers' marking is helpful in guiding pupils in how to improve their work in literacy. It is less effective in consistently showing pupils how to improve their work in other subjects, particularly mathematics.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the Reception class with skill levels typical for their age, with the exception of their writing skills, which are often less well developed. Leadership and management are good. Staff ensure the classroom is always a colourful and vibrant place which provides children with a secure and safe learning environment. The quality of teaching is good and caters well for the

needs of all children, regardless of their ages or abilities. Lessons make good use of role play in order to capture children's imaginations and so add to their enjoyment of learning. They effectively blend opportunities for children to work independently as well as with adult direction. Staff work well together to ensure there is always an emphasis on children's welfare. Progress in children's personal development and well-being is good and parents appreciate the care and support their children receive. Children happily share and take turns and join in lesson activities enthusiastically. Recording of progress is thorough and used effectively to plan future work. As a result, children achieve well and attain or exceed the expected goals in nearly all areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. However, standards in writing, are not as well developed as the standards children attain in other areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing across the school by improving pupils' ability to construct sentences accurately when writing at length.
- Ensure that teachers' marking in subjects other than English consistently provides pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well because consistently good teaching helps them to build effectively on previous learning. This ensures pupils make good progress throughout the school and that standards are above average overall, with pupils on course to meet, and even exceed, the challenging targets set for them in the national tests in Year 6. Even so, standards in writing lag behind standards in other subjects in all year groups. The school is aware of the need to develop pupils' ability to complete longer pieces of writing successfully if standards are to match those that pupils attain in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy school and describe it as a friendly place where everyone gets on well together, regardless of their backgrounds or ages. Pupils of all ages play well together and display a good level of concern for the safety and well-being of others. They say they feel extremely safe and know adults will deal with any very rare incidents of misbehaviour by others fairly and firmly. Pupils say they know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. They feel part of a wider community and say the school forum gives them an effective voice in school affairs. Pupils are keen to learn, and comment that teachers usually try to make lessons interesting. As they grow up, they acquire a wide range of relevant skills that equip them well for the future. The quality of their moral and social development is strong and this is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and concern for the welfare of others. However, pupils' appreciation of the multicultural nature of modern British society is not as well developed as other aspects of their cultural education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in all year groups because class teachers work well with their teaching colleagues and their teaching assistants to ensure all pupils receive the help they require in order to make good progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and this has ensured pupils have very good attitudes towards learning. Lessons are well organised and teachers deploy a variety of methods, for example using interactive whiteboards effectively, to make learning interesting for pupils. In turn, the pupils say they enjoy lessons, especially when they involve practical activities. However, teachers' marking does not consistently provide pupils with clear ideas about how to improve their work in subjects other than literacy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum links subjects together well and pupils say they like this approach to learning and the opportunities they have to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. The school provides a diverse programme of enrichment activities, including very well-attended after-school clubs. The good standard of work on display provides clear evidence of a broad and balanced curriculum and shows that pupils' achievement is not just restricted to test results. Good planning and provision for personal, social and health education ensures pupils are well aware of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures in the wider world. However, although the school has worked well to gain the Healthy School Award, the Artsmark Bronze Award, the Activemark Award and the Foundation International Award, pupils have not had enough regular opportunities to develop their understanding and appreciation of the diversity of cultures within modern British society. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, as is provision for gifted and talented pupils, and helps both these groups to make good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a high level of pastoral care and support for pupils and this is the basis for their good personal development. Parents appreciate the caring way the school looks after their children. They are confident that there is always someone for their child to approach if he or she has a problem. Very good induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines. Child protection procedures are stringent and meet current government requirements, and health and safety routines and risk assessments are fully in place. The school has developed and implemented very good procedures to assess and track pupils' progress and uses these well to set individual pupils challenging targets for improvement. Marking is consistently helpful in guiding pupils in how to improve their work in literacy. However, it varies in quality in other subjects, especially mathematics, and does not always provide pupils with suggestions of how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good quality of leadership and management is reflected in the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. The headteacher and staff have been thorough in implementing improvements since the last inspection. They have been well supported by the governing body, which offers a good level of challenge and support and takes its duties very seriously. Resources are good and used well to aid learning. Links with external agencies are good and support pupils' learning and well-being effectively, particularly for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has been successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and has built up effective links with the local community which it uses well to develop pupils' awareness of their responsibilities as good citizens. However, pupils' appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in modern British society is not as well developed as their understanding of the range of cultures in other countries and the school is aware that this is an area in need of improvement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 February 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Uplands Community Primary School, Stroud GL5 1TE

Thank you for making us feel welcome during our visit to your school. You were very friendly and we soon realised why you like your school so much. We enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you working hard in lessons. Your parents believe this is a good school and we agree with them.

Here are some of the things we particularly like about your school.

- Yours is a good school which prepares you well for the future.
- Your teachers succeed in making lessons interesting and this helps you to make good progress and reach above average standards.
- You really enjoy everything about school.
- Your personal development is good. Your behaviour is excellent and you are very friendly, caring and polite.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead and manage the school well.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- help you to reach the same standards in writing as you do in other subjects by improving your ability to write sentences correctly when writing longer pieces of work
- ensure teachers' marking always shows you how to improve your work, especially in mathematics
- help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different backgrounds to your own.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and remember you can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours faithfully

Michael Barron

Lead Inspector