

Upper Horfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108970
Local Authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	337188
Inspection dates	13–14 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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

The registered childcare provision, 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	0–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Damsell
Headteacher	Katherine Wong
Date of previous school inspection	14 July 2010
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Age group	0–11
Inspection dates	13–14 July 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision****Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons and observed seven teachers. They held meetings with governors, a representative of the local authority, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, minutes of governors' meetings, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 12 parents and carers and 42 pupils.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress, particularly of those pupils eligible for free school meals and all pupils' writing at Key Stage 2
- the support and nurture the school gives to those who arrive mid-way through the school year, those new to learning English and those with particularly low levels of prior attainment
- the effectiveness of the curriculum at motivating and inspiring all pupils and providing challenge and interest for all pupils
- the effectiveness of middle leaders and governors in checking attainment, progress and teaching and contributing to the school's improvement.

Information about the school

This school is smaller in size than most other primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are of a wide range of heritages, the largest groups being pupils of Black or Black British African, Asian or Asian British Pakistani and Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi descent. There are very high numbers of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly moderate learning difficulties, is similar to that typically found but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Large numbers of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times. There is a Children's Centre attached to the school, managed by the governing body, which provides a range of services for parents and their children from birth until they enter the Reception class aged four. The present headteacher was appointed in 2009 following a two-year period in which the school was led by an associate headteacher after being placed in special measures in May 2007. It was removed from special measures in July 2008.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and consistently improving school. Pupils are right to be proud of Upper Horfield and relish all it has to offer. One pupil summed up the views of many when saying, 'I love it here ... the school gives me the courage to learn.' The school serves its community well, particularly through the increasing influence of the Children's Centre, which is doing much to support the many families which are new to the area and to the country.

The school has gone through a difficult few years. Building on the foundations laid by the associate headteacher, the present headteacher has ensured that standards have continued to rise, that teaching has improved and good progress has been made on addressing the key issues from the last inspection. She provides exceptionally strong and clear-sighted leadership and, with excellent support from her deputy headteacher, is tackling the school's weaknesses with energy and passion.

Pupils join the school with a level of skills that are just below that expected for their age, but in the recent past their attainment on entry to Reception has been well below average. Attainment has risen considerably over the last four years and is now broadly average by Year 6. This represents good progress and achievement for all groups of pupils from their starting points and nearly all meet, or exceed, their challenging targets. Improvements in pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and reading has been particularly good, but their writing skills are still lagging behind. Adults work together extremely well to ensure that all pupils, whatever their difficulties or disabilities, are able to take full advantage of everything the school has to offer. Pupils' personal skills are good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe and lead healthy lives. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school and relationships are exceptionally strong. Consequently, pupils have a high regard for both their classmates and for the adults who work with them. Staff have created a school in which all pupils from a very wide range of cultures and backgrounds get on well together. The school has worked tirelessly to ensure pupils attend school regularly. The attendance rate, although still below the national average, is higher than it was three years ago.

Lessons are typified by pupils' enthusiasm, enjoyment, engagement and good behaviour. Consequently, pupils are well motivated, come to school ready to learn and are eager to contribute to lessons. Teachers and support staff work effectively to meet pupils' specific needs, especially for those pupils new to learning English. Teachers mark books carefully and regularly, but the advice they give to pupils as to how to improve their work is of inconsistent quality. The curriculum ensures that learning is meaningful and fun. It usually matches pupils' needs well. Links between subjects have yet to be

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fully exploited to provide even more opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills as well as those of research and enquiry to develop the ability to learn independently. Occasionally, the work planned does not provide maximum opportunities for higher attaining pupils to attain the grades of which they are capable.

There is a strong and growing sense of teamwork and pride in what has been achieved in a short period of time. School self-evaluation is accurate and, most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey of improvement. This, together with the successful action leaders have taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection, means the capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by July 2011 by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise extended writing on a wide range of topics
 - making sure that teachers' marking consistently gives pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve further
- Improve the curriculum by July 2011 by:
 - strengthening the links between subjects, in particular, to further enhance pupils' writing, number skills and those of independent learning through research and enquiry
 - making sure that teachers' long-term plans fully support the needs of high attaining learners.
- Work more closely with parents to ensure that, by July 2011, pupils' overall rate of attendance is 94% or better, in order to improve the progress of pupils who miss too many lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of good and improving progress because teachers explain complicated ideas well and have rightly focused on developing pupils' curiosity, reading and problem-solving skills. In an outstanding numeracy lesson in Year 6, pupils were learning at a blistering pace because of the teacher's exceptionally high expectations of what he wanted them to learn and the challenging and fun tasks he set for them. Progress is relatively slower in writing because of the limited opportunities pupils have to write lengthy pieces of work and the difficulty many pupils have in explaining their ideas when they have read a text, which in turn inhibits their ability to write well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good, and often very good, progress. The high numbers of pupils that are new to learning English, and those who join the school mid-way during the school year, are supported well and make similar progress to their peers, as do those entitled to free school meals.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and an appreciation and

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enjoyment of the wonders of life around them. Pupils eagerly take advantage of the opportunities to participate in the community and are well informed about other peoples' needs. They relish responsibility and this is shown through the mature attitude of the school council, the use of playground buddies and the pupils' eager participation in imaginative and thought-provoking assemblies. Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively. However, their broadly average standards in the key skills in English and mathematics and below average, yet improving, attendance mean that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development through effective personal, social, and health education, and there is a good focus on using visits to widen pupils' life experiences. In particular, the arts and music are well promoted. However, the school recognises the need to plan carefully to ensure there are stronger links between subjects and to make sure that the long-term planning to meet the needs of those with

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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different abilities, especially the more able, is consistently sharp. Good attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Pupils are known to staff as individuals. Their learning, personal development and well-being are monitored rigorously and their needs are met by very well targeted support. Starting in the Children's Centre, the school works closely with families, children and a range of agencies to sustain the academic and personal development of pupils facing challenging circumstances. As a result, behaviour and attendance have improved substantially and vulnerable pupils progress as well as their peers.

The very large majority of teaching is good and secures good progress and learning. In these lessons, assessment information is used well to match teaching styles, questions and activities to the range of pupils' needs. Pupils are given opportunities to apply and extend their knowledge and skills independently and in groups, and thus to progress well at their own pace. Regular feedback from the teacher and peer and self-assessment challenge them to improve further. In the few outstanding lessons, all pupils are challenged to make rapid progress. In the small minority of lessons where progress is satisfactory rather than good, all pupils work at the same pace as directed by the teacher and this leads to insufficient challenge for more able pupils. In all lessons, pupils know their target levels or grades. However, they do not always know specifically what skills they have to master to reach their targets and this is not supported well in teachers' marking of their work.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly effective headteacher works tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities and communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff. With strong support from her governing body, senior and middle leaders, she has set a precise path for improvement based on accurate self-evaluation and by embedding initiatives which have begun to make a positive difference to pupils' achievements. Leaders are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils and are alert to situations where both staff and pupils need more advice and guidance. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating. There is no hint of complacency and there is a determination from staff at all levels to sustain and build upon the many recent gains. In this way, the school promotes equality for all pupils and makes sure there is no discrimination on any grounds.

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Subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities well. They are growing well into their roles and are actively involved in checking pupils' attainment and progress in their respective areas. The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff with all safeguarding arrangements found to be effective at the time of the inspection. Governors have not shirked from taking difficult decisions in the recent past when the school's performance has dipped.

In this inclusive school, every child matters and individual needs are considered very specifically. The school works well in partnership with external agencies to secure extra support for those pupils who need it. Community cohesion is good. Leaders have worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the views of others and that a set of common values is embedded in every child. There is strong and growing involvement with the local community as well as other schools abroad and the school has plans to forge links with other schools in socially and culturally different areas of Great Britain.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The vibrant Children's Centre fully complies with its requirements for registration. Very thorough planning in the Children's Centre means that the very wide range of needs of children and their families are effectively met. A very extensive range of links is building up, including parenting classes and fathers' groups. Staff provide very well for children's welfare. The centre's effective leader ensures that careful and thoughtful planning meets the needs of each age group is well. The centre is building up extensive links with parents and carers, but recognises that there is more to do to ensure that they become

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more fully involved in all it offers. Very effective liaison between the school and the Children's Centre ensures that children settle in to the Reception class quickly, are keen to learn, play together well and are well behaved. In class, children have access to a varied and stimulating range of activities which support their personal development as well as their communication, language and literacy skills, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff make very good use of these and the outdoor facilities. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. The learning of letters and sounds are taught daily. All adults make observations of children and carefully assess their learning. However, this information is not always used rigorously enough to ensure that next steps in learning are sharply focused on children's differing needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader provides good leadership to her team. She has a very secure understanding of the early years curriculum and constantly reviews her practice to ensure that all children receive high quality care and support.

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

Views of parents and carers

The number of questionnaires received by the team was much lower than is typically received and represents a very small proportion of the number of pupils at the school. However, many parents and carers spoke to inspectors at the beginning and the end of the day and voiced overwhelmingly positive comments about the school. They particularly praised the support they receive in the Children's Centre and the big improvements seen in pupils' behaviour and their progress. Inspectors fully endorse these views and found both behaviour and progress to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Upper Horfield 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 12 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 140 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	75	9	25	3	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	67	8	17	2	8	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	42	5	42	5	17	2	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	67	8	25	3	0	0	8
The teaching is good at this school	12	58	7	33	4	8	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	42	5	50	6	8	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	67	8	25	3	8	1	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)	12	42	5	33	4	8	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	58	7	33	4	0	0	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	42	5	17	2	25	3	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	33	4	58	7	0	0	8
The school is led and managed effectively	12	67	8	25	3	0	0	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	58	7	33	4	0	0	8

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

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

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

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

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upper Horfield Primary School, Bristol BS7 0PU

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Upper Horfield is a good school which is improving quickly. It has many good features and you are right to be proud of your school, although there are some things that it can still do better.

Your personal development is good. You behave well around the school and in your classes and you look after each other so well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult. You make good progress as you move through the school. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, your attainment is similar to that in most other schools. Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work. Your headteacher and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to get even better.

To help them to do this, we have asked your school to do the following:

- ensure that more of you make faster progress, especially in writing, so that you reach higher levels in the Year 6 tests by giving you more practice at longer pieces of writing
- ensure teachers give you clearer advice as to how you can reach your targets
- make clear links between the subjects that you study and make sure work that is planned for you is not too easy or too hard, but always just at the right level of challenge
- make sure that more of you attend school regularly and take fewer days off school.

I am sure that you will help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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