

Inspection of Upshire Primary Foundation School

Upshire Road, Upshire, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3PX

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 March 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are keen to share their thoughts and opinions, enjoying open and honest discussions. They happily talk about the many things that they like about their school. These include having extra responsibilities, which helps them feel part of the community and boosts their self-esteem. Pupils feel safe because staff are attentive to their needs.

Generally, pupils behave well, including children in Reception class. Staff have raised expectations, but these need to be higher for a few pupils because they display negative behaviour in lessons. Occasionally, this slows down learning. However, pupils now enjoy playtime much more and play happily. This improvement is due to the well-chosen play equipment and the support provided to those who need it.

Most pupils achieve well in reading and mathematics. Well-considered teaching approaches have also improved pupils' writing skills. However, in some other subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and do not achieve as well as they should. The school has changed the curriculum to address this, but this is yet to have a full impact.

Pupils try hard to show respect and tolerance towards others. They recognise differences and understand they should celebrate them. Pupils learn about how to stay safe online and in the community.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has been through a period of change. The school has prioritised actions to improve pupils' education. These actions include the introduction of new curriculums and initial guidance for teachers on how to teach them effectively. As a result, pupils' understanding has strengthened. However, in the subjects with new curriculums, the school has not checked the gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that teachers do not have the necessary information to provide learning activities that closely match what pupils know and can do. When this is the case, pupils' learning does not develop securely.

Many of the learning opportunities in the early years stem from children's interests. For example, children learn about dinosaurs, which helps them understand the past. This also means children are interested and want to learn more, which develops their knowledge through the curriculum well. However, the school has not identified the important knowledge and skills that children need to learn in Reception to be prepared to learn some subjects in Year 1. This means pupils in Year 1 do not learn as well as they could in these subjects.

Pupils achieve well in reading. In Reception class, children share and read stories and learn rhymes and songs. They also develop their language skills, which prepares them well for the next stage. Additionally, effective daily phonics sessions also help them develop strong reading skills. This continues into Year 1 and Year 2. All pupils who are not yet fluent readers read books that match their phonics knowledge, allowing them to practise their developing reading skills. Older pupils who need help with reading receive

effective targeted support to help them catch up with their peers. Generally, pupils learn to love reading. Being able to choose interesting class books that teachers read to them greatly helps with this.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified effectively. Parents and carers and the school then work together to plan effective targeted support that meets pupils' needs. Staff provide a bespoke curriculum for those pupils with SEND who require their learning to be more personalised. This often includes learning to communicate well, which builds essential skills. However, in some subjects, teachers do not devise learning activities that effectively develop skills and knowledge from what pupils already know and can do. Sometimes, the work is too complicated, which slows pupils' progress through the curriculum.

The school ensures that pupils' breaktimes are fun and activities enable free play. This means that when lessons start, most pupils are ready to learn. In lessons, many pupils behave well. However, a small minority display more negative behaviour. The school has not checked or challenged this behaviour effectively and this continues to slow these pupils' progress through the curriculum as they are not ready to learn. By working closely with parents, leaders ensure pupils' attendance improves, which is essential for academic success.

Through the school's well-developed personal development teaching, pupils learn to be confident and upbeat. They learn empathy and learn that they should listen to others to help them understand different perspectives. Pupils learn how to be responsible citizens and how to respect and appreciate others.

Staff and leaders at all levels work together to secure the further improvements the school needs. This includes developing curriculum subjects and making behaviour approaches more consistent. Staff are generally positive about their workload and the support provided for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not rigorously checked gaps in pupils' knowledge so that teachers know what pupils already know and can do. This means that some learning activities are too challenging for some pupils, including pupils with SEND, due to their lack of previous understanding. Some pupils are overly reliant on adult support. This slows pupils' progress through the curriculum. The school needs to ensure that checks on pupils' previous knowledge are used effectively so that teachers can provide sequences of lessons that build on pupils' previous learning.

- In some areas of learning, the school has not carefully mapped the knowledge and skills that children in the early years must learn to be ready for learning some subjects in Year 1. As a result, some children do not develop a secure understanding of the important knowledge needed to learn some subjects, other than English and mathematics, in Year 1. The school must determine the important subject knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in all subjects from the early years upwards.
- A few pupils display more persistent negative behaviour, which sometimes disrupts their learning and that of others. At times, therefore, this slows pupils' progress through the curriculum because they are not able to learn. The school needs to ensure that all pupils receive effective support to improve their behaviour.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	115310
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10378458
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Godden
Headteacher	Ross Jones
Website	www.upshireprimaryschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The leadership of the school has changed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and staff. The lead inspector also met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors, and met a representative from the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jessie Linsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Fykin

Ofsted Inspector

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