

Inspection of Uplands Infant School

Melbourne Road, Highfields, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 0DR

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 October 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents and carers, staff and pupils speak warmly about the school. Parents say that teachers are 'always ready to listen' and 'greet us with a smile'. The school lives up to its aim of providing a 'happy, warm and caring environment'.

Pupils say that they feel happy and safe at school. They feel confident that staff will step in quickly if any problems, such as bullying, occur. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe online, saying; 'Don't share your name and passwords with people you don't know.'

Pupils often join the school able to speak little or no English. They receive prompt, skilled support to develop their language skills. The school also offers language workshops for parents, to help families settle quickly into the community.

Pupils behave well, in lessons and around school. They listen attentively to staff and show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are kind and caring to each other. They cooperate well at lunchtimes and playtimes.

The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities to cater for a variety of interests. For example, pupils can take part in sports, ballet, reading, singing, art and Bollywood dancing. These activities are available to all pupils to foster their broader development.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that has knowledge and skills at its heart. They have mapped out what pupils should know, and be able to do, in all subjects. Leaders and staff have thought carefully about how to broaden pupils' understanding of the world beyond their local community. Through the curriculum, leaders aim to encourage pupils to develop as well-rounded individuals, who are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

In mathematics, leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils to succeed. Teachers quickly identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. They provide extra practice sessions on the same day, to ensure that pupils stay on track. Teachers also adapt the curriculum to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included. For example, teachers used special resources to help pupils with SEND join in with a counting-back activity.

Leaders say that language and reading are the 'golden threads' that run through the school. They recognise reading as a core life skill for all pupils to gain. Until recently, outcomes in early reading had declined. Leaders have revised the early reading curriculum to ensure that there is a greater focus on pupils learning letters and sounds through phonics. Children begin to learn to read as soon as they start school, in the Nursery and Reception classes. Leaders have ensured that all staff

have received up-to-date training. There are early signs that this is helping pupils to become more fluent, confident readers.

The school's provision for pupils with SEND is particularly strong. Leaders and staff know the pupils very well. This means that they quickly identify when a pupil has additional needs. Staff are skilled in using a variety of teaching methods to support pupils with SEND. They liaise regularly with parents and carers and external agencies, to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve as highly as possible.

Children in the early years settle quickly and respond well to school routines. Leaders and staff understand very well how young children learn. They rightly prioritise spoken language, along with early reading and mathematics. In the indoor areas, staff plan purposeful activities that support children's development well, across all areas of learning. Leaders have not ensured that the outdoor provision is used equally well to develop children's knowledge and skills. They recognise that this is an area for development.

Leaders promote pupils' wider personal development well. Pupils understand the importance of treating everyone equally. They say that it is 'okay to be different'. They also learn about important values, such as democracy, by voting for the 'student governors'. Through the 'curriculum drivers' of 'possibilities, environment, diversity', leaders encourage pupils to be ambitious and aim high. There is a strong focus on learning about, and respecting, cultural differences. Leaders and staff share a common goal to help pupils develop as thoughtful young citizens.

Members of the governing body and the multi-academy trust provide strong support and challenge. They share leaders' ambition to provide a good quality education for all pupils. Leaders recognise the importance of having a well-trained staff team. Staff say that they value leaders' regard for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders place the highest priority on safeguarding. They clearly state; 'It's in everything we do'. Leaders provide regular training sessions, updates and informal quizzes for all staff and governors. Everyone knows the pupils very well. They are alert to any concerns that may arise. Staff know that they must report any concerns straight away. Leaders work in partnership with a range of external support agencies to ensure that pupils are safe.

Pupils learn about keeping safe in an age-appropriate way. They learn about healthy relationships and online safety, for example.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have revised the reading curriculum in view of declining historic outcomes in phonics. Leaders acted to ensure that all staff have received training, and to strengthen their monitoring of the implementation of the phonics programme. There are encouraging signs that this is having a positive impact on pupils' development as fluent readers. However, there are still some inconsistencies in how teachers implement the agreed reading strategies. Leaders should ensure that the school's approach to the teaching of reading is consistently applied across the school, so that all pupils receive the support they need to develop quickly as capable readers.
- The early years curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Children benefit from meaningful learning opportunities in all of the early years classes, through the indoor provision. However, the quality of the outdoor environment does not match that of the indoor areas. Outdoor resources do not promote children's learning as well as they might. Leaders should ensure that the early years environment supports the implementation of the curriculum equally well across all areas of the provision.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	146853
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10242406
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lee Jowett
Headteacher	Michelle Orton
Website	www.uplandsinfant.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Uplands Infant School became an academy in April 2019. When its predecessor school, Uplands Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2009, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the Attenborough Learning Trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior and curriculum leaders.

- The lead inspector met with the chair and chief executive officer from the multi-academy trust, as well as with the chair and another member of the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading; mathematics; religious education; and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss 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 lead inspector observed some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum, reviewed curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks and holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector
Liz White	Ofsted Inspector

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