

Upham Primary School

Church of England (Aided)

Upham Street, Upham, Southampton, Hampshire SO32 1JD
Telephone: (01489) 860355

E-mail: adminoffice@upham.hants.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr David Woolley, B.Ed. (Hons) NPQH NASENCO



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Dear Parents,

Re OFSTED Report Ready for Distribution

The report from our OFSTED Inspection on 22/23 June 2026 has now been finalised and is ready to be shared with parents. Please find a PDF copy attached with this email. The report will also be published on the OFSTED website within a week or so.

How has the reporting process changed?

You may be aware from reports in the media that the process of OFSTED inspections has changed hugely recently, from Feb 2026. Our previous inspection in 2022 was a 'check' that we continued to be 'Good'. Now, only full inspections exploring every aspect of a school's work are conducted. There is no longer an overall grade; each separate area is reported against. The language has also changed. The words 'Needs Attention', 'Good' and 'Outstanding' have been replaced by a new scale. This new 5-point scale is not comparable with the previous and has been designed so that the goal is to have 'met expectations'. This is not especially exciting vocabulary – it might appear to be a euphemism for 'OK', 'average' or 'satisfactory'. It is not. 'Met Standard' is an extremely demanding set of criteria (higher than the old 'Good'). OFSTED themselves describe this as '*It's a high standard, to make sure your children are receiving everything they need and deserve*'. For example, here are the criteria for just the section 'personal development and well being':

Personal development and well-being meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply:

- A coherent and appropriate programme of personal development extends across the taught curriculum and wider opportunities and experiences. It makes a positive difference to pupils and enables them to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.
- The personal development programme includes a suitable and well taught RHE/RSHE programme, which develops pupils' knowledge.
- Pupils develop their understanding of, and respect for, protected characteristics, fundamental British values and cultural diversity in modern Britain.
- Pupils have a range of suitable opportunities that broaden their experiences and enable them to develop their talents and interests in areas such as the arts, music and sport.
- The school's careers education, where relevant, prepares pupils for future education, employment or training.
- Effective pastoral support meets pupils' needs. They are confident in accessing it when they need it.
- The personal development programme is an entitlement for every pupil. Leaders track participation. They take steps to ensure that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, for example young carers, can participate appropriately. Reasonable adjustments or adaptations are made for them.

What is the new scale?

There are 5 potential grades on this new scale. This is how OFSTED describe them

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-ofsted-report-cards-and-grades#what-the-new-ofsted-grades-tell-you>):

'Urgent Improvement – bigger problems that need urgent improvement

Needs Attention - an indication that there is work to be done to reach the 'expected standard'

Met Standard- It's a high standard, to make sure your children are receiving everything they need and deserve.

Strong Standard marks out excellent, consistent work that's making a real difference

Exceptional – practice among the best nationally'

OFSTED anticipate only a handful of schools nationally that would meet either the highest 'Exceptional' or the lowest 'urgent Improvement', most schools will be judged within the central three scale.

You will see from the report that we met the standard across all areas and demonstrate considerable strength in Inclusion. It may interest you to know that in the Behaviour and Attendance section, behaviour was also at the strong standard but attendance was not yet strong enough over time and limited this area – encouraging attendance remains an area I will continue to focus on with parents and talk about regularly. The written section for this explains this a little further.

Highlights

Some key highlights for me which showed how fully the inspectors understood our school include:

'Highly inclusive school where every pupil is welcomed and valued.

Detailed understanding of pupils ... enables staff to provide timely support and respond swiftly when needs change.

Pupils achieve well. Disadvantaged pupils do especially well.

Across the school pupils build knowledge and skills effectively as they move through the curriculum.

Regular communication, including personalised messages from the headteacher, supports families to improve attendance.

Pupils behave very well across the school. Clear routines and expectations help create a calm, respectful environment where pupils feel safe and valued.

Pupils feel supported and the school is a safe place to learn.

A broad, engaging and ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to build knowledge and skills over time.

Reading is a particular strength. Children benefit from an ambitious and well structured phonics programme.

Leaders know the school, its community and its pupils extremely well. They have high expectations and an unwavering commitment to providing the best possible education and care for every child.

They [children] work and play together happily and show kindness, cooperation and respect. Positive relationships help create the school's warm, family atmosphere.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom.

Pupils develop confidence, resilience and positive character traits.'

Actions

Every school always receives a series of next steps. If a school has 'Needs Attentions', these actions would be key actions to address the problems. Since all of our standards are at 'Met Standards' our actions are next steps to achieve even further. These were already and continue to be part of existing improvement plans and represent work we were already doing and planning for.

The Data Card

At the end of the report is what OFSTED refer to as the 'data card'. This covers statistical information about our school. Initially this is factual information, as a small school most of these are below average as the average sized primary school nationally is normally around 280 children.

The performance data then displays numbers related to percentages for Year 6 children in SATs tests over the last three years, you will see the emphasis is on performance for these Year 6 children in these exams and then performance of disadvantaged children – who do very well here (compared to similar nationally). This data is of course already out of date. At the time of inspection, it was already old, relating to 2025 and before. Since then, 2026 data has been published. You might remember in the Newsletter on 17 July 2026 I outlined how impressive our 2026 results were which you might like to compare with:

Year 6 SATs Results	Expected standard	High Pass
Reading (Test)	72.7 %	45.4 %
Writing (Teacher Assessment)	81.2 %	45.4 %
Grammar & Spelling (Test)	81.2 %	18.2 %
Maths (Test)	90.1 %	36.4 %
Combined in all Reading, Writing & Maths	72.7 %	36.4 %

For those of you statistically minded, you may notice the rather inconsistent way 'close to average' is referred to. This is because of the complex algorithms running behind the analysis – it relates to confidence intervals for our small cohorts where one child equates to between 7-9% so changes in percentages can appear substantial but really only relate to one or two children.

Yours sincerely,



D. Woolley
Headteacher