

Tolworth Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	102574
Local authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	376741
Inspection dates	22–23 February 2012
Lead inspector	Penny Spencer

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

Type of school	Junior School
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Ellis
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Dunning
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 September 2006
School address	Douglas Rd Surbiton KT6 7SA
Telephone number	02083994472
Fax number	020 83908584
Email address	admin@tjs.rbksch.org

Age group	7–11
Inspection date(s)	22–23 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Penny Spencer

Additional inspector

Melvyn Blackband

Additional inspector

Richard Blackmore

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team saw 17 lessons and observed 12 teachers. Inspectors also observed pupils and two teachers within the special resource base, known as the learning zone, and the nurture group. They carried out several learning walks and met with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors, parents and carers, and members of the school council. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, development plan, data analysis and evidence of the monitoring and evaluation of teachers' performance. They also took note of the 229 responses to the parental questionnaire.

Information about the school

Tolworth is a larger-than-average junior school. It shares a site and some resources with the infant school, such as the newly-built kitchen and dining hall. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups, or who speak English as an additional language, are above average. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than normal is increasing as is the proportion of pupils who are at an early stage of English acquisition. The proportions of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, and those who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs, are above average.

The school's learning zone provides for 12 pupils with special educational needs. These pupils have moderate or severe learning difficulties, including specific learning difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties. The school also has a separate nurture group for up to ten pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. Extended services are managed by Tolworth Infant School and are not subject to this inspection. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Tolworth Junior School is a good school. Its highly inclusive approach ensures that all pupils work well together and respect each other. Its partnerships with parents and carers and the effectiveness of the governing body are notable strengths. The school is not yet outstanding because although pupils make good progress, their attainment is not yet above average.
- Although pupils' achievement is good overall, some middle-ability pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and therefore make less progress than they should. High-ability pupils and those with a statement of educational needs attain above the national average.
- Teaching is good and is ensuring that all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, now make good or better progress. Teachers' marking and their use of targets, especially in mathematics, are not always comprehensive enough for pupils to understand how they might improve.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Pupils show considerable respect and care for each other and have very positive attitudes to learning. The school has an effective, consistent approach to managing those pupils who have challenging behaviour. A very small minority of parents and carers thought that behaviour was not well managed, but inspectors did not see any evidence that this was the case.
- The headteacher and her senior leaders have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further. Systems for monitoring and evaluation provide accurate and detailed information to support and sustain improvement. The monitoring of teaching is robust. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of all pupils in the coming school year by:
 - ensuring that marking gives pupils a clearer indication of exactly what they need to do to improve

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- making targets more specific and clearly linked to levels of attainment, especially in mathematics, with clear time frames for their achievement
- ensuring that teachers' planning takes account of the needs of all pupils, especially those of average levels of ability.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

As one parent wrote, 'My son loves being a pupil at TJS. He is doing really well and the support he has received has been fantastic.' This view is supported by the inspection team and the vast majority of parents and carers. Where some parents and carers did not agree, the reasons were often beyond the school's control.

Achievement has been above average over time and while there was a slight decline in attainment in 2010 and 2011 it was still at the national average. Improvements in the analysis of data and the introduction of more challenging end-of-year targets are having an impact on current pupils making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, higher-ability pupils were confidently tackling some Year 6 questions on the measurement and calculation of angles. They were able to explain their methods of calculation and their answers using appropriate mathematical language. Appropriate and rapid intervention is quickly improving the achievement of groups that were previously identified as underperforming, including boys and those known to be eligible for free school meals. Progress in mathematics for some groups of pupils is less rapid than in literacy and the school is taking steps to address this discrepancy. Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve challenging targets.

Pupils' achievement in reading is good and pupils use a wide range of strategies to help them read for meaning. Structured phonics sessions, introduced for those pupils in Year 3 who may be working below age-related expectations, and an increasing emphasis on spelling and comprehension are accelerating progress. Most pupils are confident readers by the time they leave school and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils who arrive at the school at the early stages of learning English make good progress because their needs are quickly analysed and interventions are carefully monitored. Those in the learning zone make good progress from their starting points and achieve high standards. Those who started in the nurture group in September are making good progress because their needs are being met and they have gained the skills they need to learn effectively. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in the mainstream classes make good progress because the work is planned appropriately and they are well supported.

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Quality of teaching

Teaching is lively and pupils are motivated and keen to learn. Teachers are knowledgeable and confident in their understanding of their pupils and work is matched well to most groups. They are adept at using investigations as a method of deepening understanding and pupils enjoy working collaboratively together. Teachers are also skilled at questioning pupils to elicit understanding. They confidently alter their questions to allow pupils of different abilities to respond appropriately and feel included. This was particularly the case during a science lesson when a pupil from the learning zone was encouraged to join in and demonstrate her understanding as a result of the sensitive questions.

Better dissemination of class data and a stronger emphasis on the accountability of teachers for the progress of pupils have resulted in teachers planning more effectively for individual pupils. This was particularly evident in the planning for those pupils who are of high ability and for those with special educational needs.

While marking is regular and pupils have frequent opportunities to respond, it sometimes fails to indicate in sufficient detail what pupils need to do next. This means that pupils' responses do not always demonstrate improved understanding. Pupils have targets, especially for literacy, informed by their current attainment. However, because these targets are often not specific enough, or progressive, or regularly evaluated, pupils are often unsure whether or not they have achieved them.

The recent introduction of a new learning programme is giving pupils a range of strategies to manage their own learning effectively. The inspection team saw several instances of pupils using the programme's techniques to good effect.

Teaching assistants are deployed well in the classrooms and work effectively as a team with the teachers. They also make a significant contribution to learning when working with pupils in small groups on intervention activities.

Teaching in the learning zone and in the nurture room is good. All staff are fully involved in the learning process and teaching assistants are skilled in dealing with different needs. Pupils have access to a wide variety of activities and specialist support. Teachers within this resource use a wide range of strategies to ensure everyone is included. Pupils join the mainstream classes after lunch. Evidence was seen by inspectors of effective integration where there was good liaison between support staff and the teacher. The majority of parents and carers of pupils in the learning zone feel their children are included well in the life of the school.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Having respect for everyone, regardless of their needs, is the ethos at Tolworth Junior School and pupils support this view wholeheartedly. They are polite and well

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mannered and pupils of all abilities get along well, leading to a safe, calm and happy atmosphere. Parents and carers also fully support the view that the school keeps their children safe. Policies and systems are robust and regularly reviewed and, as a result, the school fully meets the safeguarding requirements. Pupils understand that bullying is wrong and are aware of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They were adamant that there was no bullying at the school and the comprehensive records of reported incidents supported this view.

The school has a consistent approach to managing behaviour that is understood by all pupils. For those who find managing their behaviour more difficult, individual behaviour plans are agreed and shared. As a result, learning in lessons is rarely disrupted. Pupils have strategies to manage their own behaviour and during observations inspectors were impressed with the way in which these strategies were used and reinforced by the teaching staff. In the learning zone and nurture group, behaviour is usually good because pupils have a clear understanding of rules and expectations and feel secure in their environment. When behaviour becomes a challenge there are sanctions that are consistently applied.

The school council is large. Members are regularly involved in monitoring behaviour in the playground and suggesting ways in which this might be improved. The introduction of peer mediators has been very successful in improving behaviour even further and pupils are keen to undertake this role. Pupils are fully aware of the system of rewards and sanctions and are keen to earn points and certificates for good behaviour.

Attendance is high and pupils are punctual. While there are no pupils who are persistently absent, the school works closely with the education welfare officer to support, with individual attendance plans, those families whose children attend erratically, including Traveller families and families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

Leadership and management

The strong, determined leadership of the headteacher, a very effective governing body and the recent appointment of an experienced deputy headteacher have resulted in swift and significant improvements. Parents and carers are fully supportive of the headteacher and her leadership and many commented on the improvements in communication since her appointment. The quality of teaching and performance management is robustly monitored and support and training for improvement are swiftly made available and effective. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved. This impressive track record indicates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

The school uses its partnerships well, especially one with the local special school which offers advice and training for teachers and support staff in the learning zone and nurture room. As a result, they are increasingly well skilled in managing the

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learning for these pupils. The inclusion manager has an excellent understanding of the special provision and knows how to improve outcomes for those pupils. Her careful monitoring of interventions and support groups for pupils in the mainstream section of the school has resulted in the accelerated progress of some groups.

The school makes excellent arrangements for safeguarding and systems are robust. As a result, vulnerable families and pupils see the school as a safe place to be and are increasingly confident of becoming involved in their children's learning. The school is highly effective in its promotion of equality and in tackling discrimination.

The curriculum is broad and reflects the needs of pupils. Topics show depth and the use a wide range of activities, including trips, to promote learning. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to learn about other cultures and celebrate the diversity within the school, through assemblies and the celebration of festivals. They have a very strong sense of right and wrong and show high levels of tolerance. A memorial service being held the day after the inspection was being prepared by pupils, to celebrate the life of a former pupil, with considerable respect and understanding.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tolworth Junior School, Surbiton KT6 7SA

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. During our visit we talked to many of you and I would like to thank you for the well-thought-out answers you gave to our questions. You obviously enjoy coming to school and get along well with each other.

We think you go to a good school that is still improving. Your teachers understand how to keep you safe. They help you to behave well, even those of you who sometimes find it difficult. They plan and teach you interesting lessons that challenge your understanding and improve your learning. Those of you who are in the learning zone or nurture group are taught very well and you make very good progress.

To help you do even better, I have asked your headteacher to:

- make sure your teachers mark your work in a way that really shows you how to improve
- ensure that the targets you are set, especially in mathematics, show you clearly how well you are approaching your end-of-year goals
- ensure that the work you are given is matched exactly to your ability so you can make the best possible progress.

You can help by keeping up your good behaviour and working hard every day.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Penny Spencer
Lead inspector

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