

# Thames Ditton Junior School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124967
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	359807
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robin Gaff

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	322
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bronach Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nick Fry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Mercer Close Thames Ditton KT7 0BS
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 83983039
<b>Fax number</b>	020 83984919
<b>Email address</b>	office@thames-ditton-junior.surrey.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	359807

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons, observing all 15 teachers present in the school during the inspection at least once. Inspectors held meetings with staff, pupils, members of the governing body, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at planning and evaluation documents. They scrutinised the school's own analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. A total of 192 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were received and analysed, as were questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- How effective the school has been in increasing the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in writing.
- How successful the school has been in addressing examples of weaker teaching.
- How well the school is adapting its curriculum in order to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.
- How successful the school has been in promoting all aspects of community cohesion.

## Information about the school

Thames Ditton Junior is larger than the average primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is well below that found nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. A below-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These cover a wide range of additional needs. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school includes a specialist unit, the Learning Centre, for up to 18 pupils with a statement of special educational needs, from across the county, who have moderate learning difficulties. Before- and after-school clubs, managed privately, operate both on the school premises and in a building adjacent to them. This provision is inspected separately. Both the current headteacher and his deputy were appointed in September 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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Thames Ditton Junior is an outstanding school. Its last inspection report, in January 2008, described it as 'improving'. Driven by the exceptional leadership of the headteacher and his deputy, together with the excellent support and challenge provided by the governing body, its rate of improvement has accelerated dramatically. Parents and carers have very high expectations of the school and, overwhelmingly, they rightly believe that these expectations are being met. One parent said, 'We think TDJS is a lovely, happy school, and our children are stretched academically and full of enthusiasm.' Pupils' achievement is now outstanding. Their levels of attainment are well above those found nationally, and they make excellent progress from their already above-average starting points. This is because the school has substantially improved the quality of teaching, as well as its systems for assessing pupils' progress, and intervenes quickly and effectively if any pupils are at risk of underachieving. The support provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary. As a result, their achievement matches that of their peers, and is an indication of the school's highly inclusive ethos and its excellent promotion of equality of opportunity.

Pupils behave extremely well around the school. Their highly positive attitude in lessons contributes strongly to learning and progress. Inspectors agree with the school that the proportion of good and outstanding teaching has risen, so that its overall quality is now excellent. In a few lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn for themselves and from each other because teachers spend too much time explaining activities. A very high number of pupils, including all those who responded to the pupils' survey, say they enjoy school. Pupils feel very safe there. They are highly supportive of one another and know who to turn to if they have any concerns. Many parents and carers commented on the approachability of the staff, including the headteacher and deputy, and their quick and caring response to any issues they raise. Pupils settle quickly when they join the school and have been prepared very effectively for life beyond it by the time they leave. This is enhanced by the very many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility from which a large number of pupils benefit. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, most notably in the way they learn about and value the different traditions found in the United Kingdom and the wider world, as well as the abilities many of them develop in music and in art.

The governing body is exceptionally well informed about the quality of education provided by the school. Governors ensure a high level of support but are also prepared to challenge senior leaders when appropriate. The headteacher, his deputy and the senior team ensure that staff focus relentlessly on improving pupils' progress. Their evaluation of the school's performance is accurate, if erring on the side of caution, and they have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified by the last inspection. They have also continued to develop the curriculum. This is exceptionally rich and is extremely well suited

**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

to the needs of all groups of pupils, including those who have been identified as being gifted and talented, as well as of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Senior leaders have built productive partnerships with other local schools. They have substantially improved the effectiveness of the school's engagement with all groups of parents and carers so that this too is now outstanding. They have also ensured that the school more than meets requirements with regard to the promotion of community cohesion. As a result of the above factors, the school is well set to improve even further.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by giving pupils more opportunities for independent learning in all lessons.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**1**

By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in English and mathematics, as indicated by their results in national tests held at the end of Key Stage 2, is consistently high. It has risen substantially over the last three years, particularly in mathematics and in writing, which the school had identified as areas for improvement. The levels reached by many pupils go well beyond those measured by national tests. This represents outstanding progress. Pupils are most willing to listen to and learn from one another in class and to work independently. For example, Year 6 pupils in a mathematics lesson worked purposefully and with a minimum of supervision for much of the lesson. They made excellent progress in developing their understanding of how to work out ratios and proportions. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make outstanding progress, including those who have most of their lessons in the Learning Centre, where they feel very secure and can work at a pace which suits them. This is because their teachers give them work which is extremely well matched to their needs and interests and because of the very high quality support which they receive from teaching assistants and specialist teachers. These pupils are also completely integrated into the life of the school, and they benefit strongly from the support and friendship of their classmates.

Pupils show a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy taking part in a wide range of sporting and other physical activities, and understand the dangers posed, for example, by smoking and the consumption of alcohol. However, their opportunities to eat healthily at school are restricted by the limited range of healthy options available at lunchtime. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and the wider community, for instance as members of the active school council, mentors or buddies, and by raising money for a range of local, national and global charities which they choose to support. The school is meticulous in ensuring that pupils' views are gathered, analysed and used to improve provision. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education and for their future working lives. This results from their high levels of attainment and their above-average, and rising, attendance, as well as the programme of enterprise-related activities and visits to local secondary schools. Their excellent social development is demonstrated by the way in which pupils from a range of backgrounds and with different abilities relate harmoniously to one another.

**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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers have excellent expertise in the wide range of subjects that the school offers. They create a very good environment for learning in their classrooms and have extremely high expectations of their pupils in terms of work and behaviour. They prepare their lessons carefully, to include a wide variety of activities which closely relate to their pupils' abilities and interests. Teachers make exceptional use of questioning to check their pupils' understanding and progress, and exploit their responses very well to vary lessons when appropriate. Marking of pupils' work is regular, detailed and informative, so that pupils know how well they are doing and what to do to improve. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long rather than allowing their pupils to work independently when they are well capable of doing so.

Pupils benefit enormously from an outstanding curriculum which enables those who have different interests and abilities to thrive. The school fully meets national requirements and also provides an exceptional range of enrichment activities. Pupils can choose from a wide variety of options on Thursday afternoons, including practical courses, such as cooking and cross-stitch, as well as sports. These courses promote pupils' creative skills as well as their social and physical development. In these sessions, pupils are taught in mixed-age groups, which enables younger ones to learn from their older classmates, and gives older pupils the chance to act as helpers and provide excellent role models. The curriculum also includes a wide range of visits, which develop a powerful understanding of the world

**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

outside the classroom. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke animatedly about a recent visit to a Hindu temple in north London: more than one said, 'It was amazing!' Pupils can choose from a very wide range of clubs, before and after school and at lunchtime. The take-up is high, with well over three quarters of pupils participating in at least one activity.

The care, guidance and support which the school provides for potentially vulnerable pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is exceptional. Specialist and other staff work very effectively together both in the Learning Centre and in mainstream classes. They cooperate closely with many outside agencies and professionals, to ensure that these pupils benefit from the support they need. Pupils throughout the school understand and respond extremely well to the school's system of rewards and sanctions, with the result that exclusions are few and far between. Transitions to and from the school are very well managed. The school has been very successful in improving the already above-average rates of attendance and punctuality.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection, the headteacher and senior staff have put in place effective measures, including high-quality training, which have brought about rapid and significant improvement in the quality of teaching and assessment. They have strengthened existing and established new partnerships, some of which have not yet had time to have a full impact on outcomes for pupils. The governing body provides the school with expertise in several areas, including financial management, as well as a clear strategic overview. The school has extensively developed the means by which it communicates with parents and carers, who feel very welcome in the school and well informed about their children's progress. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust, including vetting staff appointments and ensuring that staff training in child protection procedures is updated regularly. The school has carried out an extensive audit of its situation with regard to the local and wider community. Following this, it has implemented measures which enable pupils to gain an excellent understanding of and appreciation for the variety of faiths and cultures found in this country and elsewhere. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity is highly effective and there is no evidence of any form of discrimination. The school is a very harmonious community, in which incidences of racist behaviour are extremely rare and dealt with most effectively if they do occur. The ways in which the achievements of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are celebrated by all, and their presence welcomed by staff and pupils alike, are exemplary.

**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

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned completed questionnaires was significant. Many of them included written comments, a large majority of which were positive. Several commented on the school's improvement since the appointment of the headteacher and deputy. Almost all of those who responded say they are happy with their children's experience at the school. The overwhelming majority report that their children enjoy school, believe that that it keeps them safe and that teaching is good. A very large majority of parents and carers agreed with all the other statements to which they were asked to respond. Inspectors' judgements support the views of parents and carers. A few expressed concerns about specific issues, including the quality of school lunches and the behaviour of a few of the pupils. Inspectors discussed these issues where appropriate with the school.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Thomas Ditton Junior 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 192 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 322 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	151	79	35	18	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	131	68	56	29	2	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	90	47	91	47	4	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	91	47	85	44	8	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	90	47	97	51	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	94	49	89	46	7	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	104	54	80	42	6	3	1	1
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)	104	54	69	36	4	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	99	52	80	42	5	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	66	34	100	52	9	5	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	87	45	86	45	3	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	121	63	64	33	4	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	125	65	63	33	1	1	1	1

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



29 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Thames Ditton Junior School, Thames Ditton, KT7 0BS**

Thank you for the reception you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We all enjoyed meeting you and listening to what you had to say.

Yours is an outstanding school. You say you enjoy your lessons and the very wide range of activities the school provides. You feel very safe there and you understand the importance of healthy eating and drinking and exercise. We can see this is the case. You behave extremely well in class and around the school, and we were highly impressed by the way you look after one another and learn to respect and value highly each other's differences. You are very well prepared for the next stage of your education. You learn a great deal about people's ways of life in other parts of the United Kingdom and elsewhere. You make an excellent contribution to the school and the wider community. Some of you produce wonderful art work, and we really enjoyed hearing you sing ♦ well done!

Your behaviour and very positive attitude to learning make an excellent contribution to lessons, and you make outstanding progress, including those of you who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because teachers give you an excellent range of things to do in lessons and make sure you know what to do to improve. Many of you reach very high levels in your work. You have an excellent range of out-of-school clubs as well as exciting trips and visits. Your teachers and other staff look after you extremely well.

The headteacher and all the staff, as well as the governors, are working hard to make the school even better than it already is. To help them do this we have asked them to do the following.

- Make sure all the teachers give you opportunities in lessons to learn for yourselves and from each other.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**