

Thrupp School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115544
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	363834
Inspection dates	29–30 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Tony Shield

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	122
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diana Bingle
Headteacher	June Pritchard
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited nine lessons or parts of lessons, and six teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with governors, members of staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including the self-evaluation form, safeguarding and other policy documents, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. While there was no formal meeting with parents and carers, in reaching their judgements, inspectors took into account the views of 72 parents and carers, in addition to those of pupils and staff, expressed in questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether progress is continuing to improve, that the dip in Year 6 results in 2010 has been reversed and that progress is good through the school, particularly in mathematics.
- Whether teaching is sufficiently challenging, particularly in mathematics.
- The quality of the school's monitoring and self-evaluation and whether all leaders are making an effective contribution to school improvement.

Information about the school

Thrupp School is smaller than most primary schools, drawing its pupils from the immediate area and beyond. Most pupils are from a White British background, with a small number from other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, and the proportion of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. These pupils have a range of learning difficulties and physical disabilities. The school has received the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and recently the International Schools Award, as well as the Gold Artsmark Award. The school runs an after-school club.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Thrupp is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The school has the confidence of parents, carers and the community it serves. Typical of a number of comments expressed to inspectors were: 'I am very proud that my son is part of such a happy and cohesive school', and 'because my children are happy at school, I know they are making good progress'. This sense of a happy community is what strikes visitors most strongly. Pupils are friendly, welcoming and open. They take pride in their school and in what they do and achieve.

There are a number of other key strengths and areas for continuing improvement.

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception class. They settle quickly and are happy to learn.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points because teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. In lessons, a purposeful buzz of activity reflects the excitement and energy with which pupils work. Tasks are well chosen to inspire pupils and planning is adapted well to the differing needs of pupils.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. Pupils write imaginatively and with a careful attention to detail. While attainment in mathematics has lagged behind, the impact of measures taken to improve pupils' confidence in manipulating numbers is paying dividends and progress is improving.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes are key factors in their good progress. Only on rare occasions, do they need reminding of how to behave. Around the school, pupils are kind and considerate to others.
- Another important aspect which contributes to good progress is the exceptionally well-planned curriculum. A themed approach ensures pupils enjoy their learning, are highly motivated and understand the relevance of what they are doing. In addition, an appropriate emphasis is given to developing basic skills.
- Pupils have a strong awareness of the value of a healthy diet and do their best to ensure they stick to it! Pupils also make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community through acting as Young Leaders, peer mediators or as members of the school council.
- The school community is harmonious and caring relationships are at the heart of its work. The school takes enormous care in ensuring its policies and procedures for the care and welfare of pupils, including those for safeguarding pupils, are watertight. As a result, almost all pupils say they feel safe and know how to stay safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have an acute understanding of their responsibilities to each other and to others less fortunate.

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- While teaching is good, some inconsistent approaches remain. Some pupils do not always receive enough encouragement to work, investigate and solve problems independently. As a result, they make less progress in developing and applying their learning skills. Not all pupils say they know how well they are getting on with their work.
- The school works in close partnership with its parents and carers to get the best from their children. They appreciate the welcome they receive, good communication between home and school and the listening approach.

The success of the school is based firmly on the clear vision and high expectations of governors, the headteacher and her staff. There is a strong commitment to do the best for all pupils and all staff relish the opportunity to contribute. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on a detailed analysis of pupils' performance and academic progress. Plans for further improvement are focus sharply on what will really make a difference. Improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching are evidence of the school's success and of its good capacity to sustain further improvement. The school's determination to improve even further is clearly evident.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the learning and progress of all pupils by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to investigate, solve problems on their own work and develop independent learning skills
 - ensure pupils understand the extent of their progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment in both English and mathematics has been above average in recent years, despite falling back a little in Year 6 national test results in 2010. Standards have been consistently higher in English, although the school's recent efforts to improve attainment in mathematics are now bearing fruit. Pupils express themselves confidently both in discussion and in writing. They articulate ideas with clarity and use language imaginatively. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 produced some lively play scripts on the Titanic theme while those in Years 3 and 4 confidently acted out their persuasive writing for an advertisement. Pupils take pride in their work and for the most part present it carefully.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of well-focused individual support. Pupils' enjoyment of school is a hallmark of the school's approach. As one parent commented to inspectors: 'Teachers have the children's best interests at heart and do incredible nurturing of their spirits, creating confident happy young people.' As a result, pupils are keen to do well and please their teachers. They are attentive and cooperate sensibly in class. Many pupils have an exceptionally well-developed sense of responsibility for others, and respond enthusiastically to opportunities to contribute. Attendance and punctuality have recently improved as a consequence of the school's work in this area. Pupils' basic skills, including their computer skills, are good, and they learn to apply these confidently in different contexts. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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?

Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. A very positive climate for learning characterises all lessons. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn, and what they will be looking for by the end of the lesson. Activities are well chosen to make learning relevant and fun. Planning is detailed and carefully adapted to meet the needs of the sometimes wide range of ages and abilities in each class. Questioning is incisive and encourages pupils to think more deeply about their work. ♦ Although some very good examples were witnessed during the inspection, pupils do not always get enough opportunity to explore ideas on their own. While marking is carried out meticulously, a few pupils say they do not know how well they are doing in class.

'They never seem to stand still here ♦ there is always something new and exciting going on.' This comment from one of the parents and carers sums up much of what is impressive about the curriculum. It provides an excellent diet of work to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills alongside imaginatively planned opportunities to enrich and excite learning. Provision for gifted and talented pupils and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is particularly well organised. A good range of visits, visitors and clubs further enriches the opportunities for pupils.

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The school's work to ensure the care, guidance and support of pupils is at the centre of all that it does. Pupils are known as individuals and careful attention is given to their personal and academic needs. Sensitive attention is paid to the particular needs of pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable reflecting the school's commitment to removing barriers to learning. The school's links with external agencies are wide ranging. Transition between the school's own Nursery class and Reception class is very well managed and the school takes equal care to ensure pupils are carefully guided and supported when they leave for their secondary schools. Pupils are very well looked after in the after-school club.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The parent who commented that 'I am impressed by the strong team spirit of the staff' was right to recognise the common sense of purpose and drive which characterises the school's leadership and management. Ably led by the headteacher, the staff are united in purpose and dedication to do the best for every child. This ambition is balanced by realistic self-evaluation which in turn is based on a careful analysis of performance data and rigorous monitoring of provision. Challenging targets have been used to raise the bar. The governing body is astutely led by the chair of governors whose detailed knowledge of the school helps ensure governors are able to play an informed part in both strategic planning and monitoring. The governing body ensures policies are regularly reviewed and procedures, particularly with regard to the safeguarding of pupils, are watertight. Staff fully understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection and ensuring pupils are safe. They undergo regular training and are up to speed with the latest guidance. The school is strongly committed to equal opportunities and does all it can to support individuals who may have barriers to learning. However, not all pupils are yet fully reaching their potential. The school does much to promote community cohesion. It plays an important role in the local community and increasingly so at a wider level. While it is developing links with schools internationally and also nationally, these have yet to be fully embedded in the curriculum.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes. The nursery provides a very good launching pad, successfully preparing children for full-time schooling. Children were observed responding warmly to the sensitive approach of staff in the Nursery, joining in the singing and settling down sensibly to structured play opportunities. As a result of the well-planned curriculum, children in Reception are interested in everything around them. They make good progress in acquiring key skills in language, literacy and number work. A mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities ensures children learn to experience and enjoy the whole curriculum. Space, both indoors and particularly outdoors, is somewhat cramped, and this restricts learning. However, the environment is well organised and staff make the best of the spaces available. Ongoing observations of children's progress are skilfully used to build up a picture of each child's development. Parents are fully involved and the 'learning journals' provide a good record of children's progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. The leader has a good understanding of the provision's strengths and sensible ideas for further development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	2

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Stage

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers responding to the questionnaire expressed high levels of confidence and satisfaction in the school. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers believe that their children enjoy school, are safe and make good progress. They also think the school is well led and managed and are happy overall with their child's experience. Typical of a number of written comments by parents and carers were: 'we are hugely impressed with the scale and detail of what he is learning', and 'my children have blossomed.....and a large part of this is down to their positive experience of school life'. There were a few negative comments, and no common pattern to the views expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Thrupp 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection, a higher than average response rate. In total, there are 122 pupils registered at the school. ♦

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	72	19	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	74	19	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	57	27	38	2	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	64	24	33	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	49	68	22	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	56	32	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	54	29	40	0	0	2	3
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)	42	58	22	31	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	56	28	39	1	1	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	44	31	43	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	46	35	49	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	63	24	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	71	20	28	1	1	0	0

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thrupp School, Stroud, GL5 2EN

I am writing to thank you for helping us during the inspection of your school. We especially enjoyed meeting you all and talking with some of you. We have taken your views into account in writing this report. Thrupp School is a good school with some outstanding features. Here are some of the main findings from the report.

- You all get off to a really good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You told us how much you enjoy school, and that is obvious from seeing you taking part so enthusiastically in lessons and in playing around the school. The school is a really happy place to be and you get on well with each other. Your behaviour is outstanding, both in and out of the classroom, and we saw many examples of kindness and politeness during the inspection.
- You make good progress and do well in both English and mathematics. This is because you work hard and the teachers choose things which are interesting and fun to learn. Teaching is good, but sometimes you could do more by sorting things out on your own and working without the help of the teacher. You told us that you don't always know how well you are doing. If you don't know, make sure you ask the teacher!
- The school takes really good care of you and, as a result, you feel safe. You have an exceptional understanding of how to live a healthy and active life. Many of you take important jobs in the school helping out on the school council or as Young Leaders. This gives you a really good sense of what you can do for your community.
- The school gives you lots of really interesting things for you to learn about and get involved in, both during the school day and afterwards.
- We were pleased to see how much your parents and carers appreciate what the school does for you. This is partly because the school works successfully with parents and carers to ensure you get the very best opportunities to do well.
- The governors, headteacher and staff are all working together to make the school better still. You can help by continuing to do your best and joining in everything the school has to offer!

Thank you once again for your help during our visit, and best wishes for your work in the future!

Yours sincerely

Tony Shield

Lead inspector

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