

Long Ditton St Mary's CofE (Aided) Junior School

Sugden Road, Surbiton, KT7 0AD

Inspection dates

17-18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most pupils achieve well. They make good progress from their starting points to reach levels that are around the national average.
- Pupils' achievement has improved significantly since 2011 in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is usually good and is sometimes excellent in Years 5 and 6. Occasionally some lessons require improvement. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well.
- All staff make the school a positive place for learning. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good as they feel safe and secure. Not surprisingly, they enjoy attending and they arrive on time eager to learn.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have been the driving force for the good improvement since the last inspection. With the effective governing body, leaders continue to improve pupils' levels of understanding and skills.
- The school keeps a close check on how well lessons are taught and senior staff give good advice about how to make them even better. Extra training for any teachers who need or want it also helps them to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough to ensure that all pupils make excellent progress.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in writing as they do in reading. Some pupils do not organise their writing well and run out of steam before they finish.
- Subject and year leaders are new to their jobs and are not yet experienced enough to make a strong enough impact on improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons. Three were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons, observed guided reading, listened to pupils read and attended assemblies.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior and subject leaders, a representative of the local authority and members of the Governing Body including the Chair.
- Inspectors took account of 83 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They also took account of the responses from the 27 staff questionnaires completed.
- They observed the school's work, scrutinised a number of documents including the school improvement plan, data on pupils, current progress, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Long Ditton St Mary's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra funding, known as the 'pupil premium', is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils with more severe needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is above average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A range of other ethnic groups is represented in small numbers.
- In 2012, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing through the school further by:
 - helping pupils to organise the way they write so that they are able to produce writing that has a clear beginning, middle and end.
 - giving staff the extra help, training and advice needed to teach writing as well as they teach reading.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make consistently good and excellent progress by:
 - ensuring that all teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and the steps they need to take to get there
 - checking learning more often during lessons so that teachers can respond quickly to any problems or misunderstandings the pupils might have
 - giving all staff the chance to observe the outstanding practice in the Year 5/6 classes to help pinpoint further ways of making pupils' learning excellent.
- Help subject leaders further in spotting weaknesses and improvements needed in their subject by:
 - involving them more in working out what is going well and what needs to be better and then setting clear steps for action to improve
 - giving them more help and advice in knowing what to look for when observing other staff so their advice makes a difference.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils now reach average levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6, which is an improvement over last results reached last year.
- Evidence from pupils' books, lesson observations, the school's checks of teaching and its assessment information indicate that this improved progress is set to continue as teaching is often good across the school.
- In all six classes, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and work together very well to complete tasks. They are enthusiastic and interested learners and are keen to answer questions and contribute to class discussions.
- The progress of pupils supported by extra funding known as the 'pupil premium' and those with special educational needs is good as they have special support to meet their needs and staff check if the extra help is making a difference. If some pupils make slow progress despite the extra help, the school changes its approach thoughtfully to help speed up pupils' learning.
- Pupils from different minority ethnic groups make good progress because the school values all and makes sure everyone has a chance to succeed. Teachers make sure they pitch their activities at the right level for their particular needs.
- Pupils write with some confidence, but less than reading where pupils read widely and with enthusiasm. This is because some pupils have difficulty completing their writing. They start well, often with imaginative ideas, but do not go on to finish their writing with the same sense of enthusiasm. In mathematics, pupils' investigation and calculation skills develop well so that in Years 5 and 6 they work in groups to solve problems applying their understanding of calculation.
- Recently introduced initiatives, which include improving the quality of teachers' marking and their skills in teaching mathematics, are having a strong impact on increasing the rate of pupils' learning and progress. Improvements in writing are less marked as staff have only just started to focus on how it can be improved.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now typically good with an increasing proportion that is outstanding, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Planning is effective so work is set at the right level which aids pupils' good progress and enjoyment. Teachers manage classrooms well so that pupils are involved in their learning for the whole lesson. Relationships are very good so pupils like their teachers, want to learn and are excited about their work. For instance, Year 5 and 6 pupils made good progress with a mathematics investigation where they successfully applied what they had learnt from previous lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well so that there is hardly any disruption in lessons. Pupils buckle down quickly to their work and little time is wasted. Teachers have good subject knowledge and often give pupils activities that inspire them to work hard. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 'booster' mathematics class, pupils discussed their work enthusiastically right up to the end of the lesson.
- Teaching is strongest in Years 5 and 6 because there is a greater focus on ensuring that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and how to be successful. Teachers are also good at checking progress so they quickly answer pupils' questions, correct any misunderstandings. In Years 3 and 4, there are times when pupils are not clear about the task or the lesson moves on before everyone has understood fully.
- Additional adults support learning effectively. They are well prepared, work closely with the class teacher and have a good understanding of pupils' learning and how to move it forward. In an English lesson, teaching assistants were able to support their particular group as well as other pupils because they were clear about the purpose of the task and had good skills.

- Marking and checks on pupils' progress are good. The school's recently introduced marking policy is used consistently by teachers and understood by pupils who say it really helps them to improve their work.
- As a result of the extra funding for particular groups of pupils, the school provides additional one to one tuition, classes for the more able to ensure they meet their potential, a counsellor who provides emotional support and a range of after school clubs ranging from chess to a wide range of different sports.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The school provides plenty of playground activities at break times and lunchtimes are supervised carefully ensuring that those playing football do not use the "quite area". Lunchtime in the hall is calm and orderly. Pupils enjoy attending and they arrive on time to school. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils report that they feel safe and secure in school. They told inspectors that teachers and other adults support them very well. They understand how to keep themselves safe including when using the Internet.
- Pupils are typically polite, well behaved and always get on well with others regardless of age, background or disability. They are very respectful of others, and are kind and thoughtful. This is reflected in their enthusiasm for raising money for charities, for example for their partner school in Uganda. Pupils enjoy school a great deal and have positive attitudes to learning: as they said, 'school is fun; teachers make it fun and you learn'.
- Bullying and disruptive behaviour are rare. When they do occur pupils say that any incidents are dealt with effectively by the headteacher. One pupil noted that the present headteacher has had a strong impact on reducing bullying and this is supported by the views of those parents and carers who are positive about behaviour and safety.
- The reason why pupils' behaviour and safety is not yet outstanding is that a few pupils find it difficult to behave responsibly at times. However, they respond well to the school's consistent approach to promoting good behaviour so severe disruption is rare.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have worked effectively to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Since his appointment in 2010, the headteacher has focused on improving teaching. His accurate observations of lessons help spot areas of strength and areas to improve. Some staff reorganisation and the appointment of new teachers have ensured that weaknesses have been remedied. Decisions about pay rates are based on the quality of teaching.
- Accurate checks on what works well or not, pinpoints the actions needed to bring about the necessary improvement. Information on how well pupils are making progress is used well. For example, the way that pupils' achievement in writing, the quality of teaching and leadership and management has improved, reflect the school's good capacity to make the school even better.
- Leaders at all levels are committed to improving pupils' achievements, such as the newly appointed special needs coordinator who has worked successfully to improve support for pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities. However, other recently appointed subject coordinators are relatively inexperienced and are not yet skilled in knowing how to maximise pupils' learning in their subject. As a result, excellent teaching is not a regular feature of all lessons.
- The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities for pupils and meets their needs effectively, including pupils with special education and those from different ethnic groups. 'Wacky Wednesday', a topic based approach to learning, is highly valued by pupils and teachers.

It provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their investigation and research skills, to link school work to the real world and gain independence. The curriculum is boosted by the well attended out of school activities that enrich pupils' experiences.

- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about other cultures and faiths. Links with the local mosque and synagogue and with the school in Uganda help to give pupils an understanding of other peoples beliefs and promotes tolerance and understanding. Assemblies provide opportunities to reflect on their lives and the lives of others. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development develops well.
 - The support given by the local authority and the programme for training have had a positive impact on helping the school make the necessary improvements to teaching, pupils' achievements and leadership and management.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body know what the school is currently working on and keeps a close eye on how well pupils learn and how it's linked to the quality of teaching. It makes sure that the school keeps focused on the essential areas needed for further improvements.
 - A recent review of the governing body's work prompted changes to the way committees were organised and now governors have a clearer focus on the most important issues. Governors ensure that the safeguarding of pupils is top priority with staff vetting, procedures and records maintained well.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125180
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	402318

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Barry Fairbank
Headteacher	Mr David Gumbrell
Date of previous school inspection	17-18 November 2009
Telephone number	0208 398 1070
Email address	head@stmarys-surbiton.surrey.sch.uk

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