

St Martin's Church of England (Aided) Junior School

Ashley Road, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 7AD

Inspection dates 10–11 January 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | 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.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Attainment is consistently above average by the end of Year 6, and pupils are well prepared both socially and academically for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers make learning interesting and ensure that pupils' skills improve quickly in most lessons.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning, especially when working with disabled pupils or those with special educational needs.
- Pupils are very well motivated and develop a love of learning. They work hard and very enthusiastically and take responsibility through activities such as the 'School Forum'.
- The relatively new headteacher has ensured that there has been a good pace to recent improvement. There has been a strong and successful focus on improving teaching, and consequently pupils' attainment is rising.
- All leaders, including the governing body, monitor provision thoroughly. This means that there is good understanding of current priorities.
- The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. They make a significant contribution to its success by supporting their children with their work.
- Pupils feel very safe and behave well. They are sociable and express their views confidently. They have good manners and are sensitive to the needs of others.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is good, there are still some minor inconsistencies. Pupils' differing needs are usually met well but occasionally teachers do not stretch the more able enough, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise and reinforce their scientific skills and knowledge because science is not taught regularly enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 25 lessons including four joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, members of staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 102 parents and carers who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also talked to a few parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspectors analysed 22 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Wendy Forbes

Additional inspector

Jamie Hassan

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also broadly average.
- One pupil is educated for part of the week at Woodlands Special School, which provides for pupils with complex special educational needs.
- A well-below-average proportion of the pupils (6%) are eligible for the pupil premium which provides additional funding in this school for children known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher was appointed permanent headteacher in September 2011 after a period as acting headteacher.
- The before- and after-school clubs are managed by an external provider and were not inspected.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate minor inconsistencies in teaching and learning by ensuring that the more-able pupils are always fully challenged, especially in mathematics.
- Give pupils more opportunities to develop scientific skills and knowledge by ensuring that science is taught more regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- When pupils start school in Year 3, most are working at or above the levels expected for their age. Teaching builds well on these starting points and pupils' progress is good across the school. Consequently, pupils' attainment is consistently above average by the end of Year 6, reflecting their good achievement.
- Pupils write confidently. For example, they make good use of similes, metaphors and alliteration when writing Greek myths in Year 6. Pupils write enthusiastically in different subjects, spelling accurately and using increasingly complex vocabulary as they get older.
- Pupils develop a love of reading. Younger pupils read well, with even the less able using their good knowledge of letter sounds to help them 'sound-out' new words. Older pupils talk about their favourite authors and confidently use books to research topics.
- In numeracy lessons, pupils clearly explain what strategies they are going to use to solve a problem and they carry out complex calculations accurately. For example, Year 5 pupils demonstrated a good understanding of mathematical investigations in a lesson where they explored 'palindromic' numbers.
- Boys and girls do equally well and there are no significant differences between the progress made by different groups, although just occasionally the more able are not challenged enough, especially in mathematics, slowing the pace at which their skills improve.
- The pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding make rapid progress, benefiting from a wide range of support including working in small groups where necessary and receiving individual tuition as appropriate. Consequently, the gap between their attainment and that of others closes quickly.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Their work is carefully matched to their needs and focuses successfully on developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy, as well as on improving the social skills of those who have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.
- The pupil with complex special educational needs who works for most of the week in alternative provision at another school is well integrated and makes good progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good and this ensures that in most lessons pupils learn well.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well and explanations about what they are expected to learn are very clear. Teachers use marking and target setting effectively to help pupils understand the next steps in their learning.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. This means that pupils are confident about trying new things without fear of failure. Teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves and they make learning purposeful by linking subjects together.
- In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and they adapt work well to meet differing needs. However, just occasionally, teaching requires improvement because a lesson starts with most pupils working on the same activity. When this happens, the most able are not challenged well enough, especially in some numeracy lessons.
- Teaching is sometimes outstanding. In these lessons, teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to inspire pupils and astute questioning very effectively deepens pupils' knowledge of new concepts. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, teaching focused very sharply on the use of technical vocabulary such as personification and pupils very quickly improved their skills because they were fully involved in discussions that put language into a practical context.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well. Teaching assistants

provide good support in lessons and work is well matched to pupils' needs. Small group activities at other times focus on developing basic skills and help pupils to learn quickly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to do their best. There is a harmonious atmosphere in lessons, with pupils supporting each other well and working very sensibly.
- When they are moving around the school building and at lunchtimes and playtimes, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite and courteous and have good manners. In lessons, they behave well, although just occasionally some become fidgety or do not listen well enough.
- Pupils understand the school's rules and they feel that teachers manage behaviour fairly so that they know what is expected of them. They feel very safe and they have great confidence in the way that the school handles their worries. They say that there is very little bullying and that if it happens 'Mr Twells quickly sorts it out.' A recent focus on teaching them about internet safety means that they have a good awareness of the dangers of using social networking sites.
- Rates of attendance are high, reflecting pupils' great enjoyment of school. Pupils are very positive about almost all aspects of school life, making comments such as 'Every day is different' and 'I love my work', although they are very firm in their view that they do not do enough science.
- The school successfully promotes equality of opportunity, ensures that there is no discrimination and fosters good relationships between pupils. Good use is made of pupil premium funding to ensure that eligible pupils can participate fully in activities.
- Pupils keenly take responsibility and they feel that they are listened to well. They like being able to talk to the headteacher at the weekly 'Tea-Party'. Through the 'School Forum' and by being 'Eco-Warriors', they contribute well to improving the school and its environment. For example, the 'School Forum' has recently helped to improve playground resources.

The leadership and management are good

- This is a school that is not resting on its laurels. The headteacher has high expectations and has created a strong leadership team. They support him well and share his commitment to continuing the recent rapid pace of improvement.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and development planning focuses on the right priorities for improvement. Key development points from the last inspection have been tackled successfully and the school is moving forward quickly. Consequently, the local authority provides 'light touch' support for what it identifies as a good school.
- Procedures for checking teaching and setting targets for improvement have been a key factor in developing teaching. Teachers know that their work is monitored closely and they feel that they are supported well by the process. Leaders have established clear links between the performance of teachers and the awarding of pay rises. Opportunities for training are well matched to teachers' and the school's needs.
- The school makes good use of data to check pupils' progress and to identify any groups who may not be doing well enough. Responsibility for doing this is now being delegated down to class teachers so that accountability is spread even more widely.
- Leaders focus sharply on ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential. The pupil premium is used well to close the gap for eligible pupils by, for example, providing individual or small group support or ensuring that they are able to take part in after-school clubs.
- There has been extensive development of the curriculum over the last year and the effect has been largely positive. Parents and carers as well as pupils feel that the new curriculum which links subjects together is rich and vibrant. They like the way that enrichment activities such as photography, first-aid and dance teach children new skills. All subjects are taught over the year, but science is not taught regularly enough and this slows the pace at which skills and knowledge

improve.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through 'special days' and by writing in the delightful 'Heritage Book'. They happily participate in assemblies and, through fundraising, show good concern for the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Under the new headteacher, the governing body has taken on greater responsibility and it now provides good challenge to the school. Governors are well trained and they monitor provision carefully by talking to teachers, visiting school and sitting in on meetings where pupils' progress is discussed. Consequently, they are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and about the school's performance in comparison with others. Governors work well with the headteacher to ensure that pupil premium funding is used to good effect and there is a sharp focus on ensuring that spending is used to benefit pupils' learning. Governors monitor performance management closely to check that it is used to recognise and reward good teaching. The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures are thorough and meet statutory requirements.

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

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| Unique reference number | 125142 |
| Local authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 403568 |

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

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| 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 | 254 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Claire Potter |
| Headteacher | Bob Twells |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 June 2008 |
| Telephone number | 01372 721996 |
| Fax number | 01372 739176 |
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