

Thorpe CofE Primary School

The Bence, Rosemary Lane, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8QD

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The vast majority of pupils make excellent progress through the school. As a result, by the end of Year 2, their attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and these high achievements are sustained in Year 3.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make mostly good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Teaching is never less than good and often outstanding. Teachers know their pupils well, are very caring, and plan lessons to make sure all make at least good progress.
- Great emphasis is given to ensuring children's safety. Pupils say they feel safe and happy.
- Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is, with few exceptions, excellent and reflects the strong Christian values that permeate the life and work of the school.
- Almost all pupils are keen to learn, courteous, and both caring and respectful of each other.
- The headteacher is passionate about providing the very best education possible for all pupils. She is strongly supported in this by staff at all levels and by the attentive governing body. As a result, the school provides an outstanding quality of education that has been sustained over time.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons and part lessons, of which seven were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector talked with pupils, looked at samples of their work, and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher and assistant headteacher, and some of the school's subject leaders. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority to discuss the extent and impact of support provided to the school.
- In planning the inspection, the inspector took account of the 53 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the views of 10 parents who spoke with him during the inspection, and 20 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at many documents including minutes of governing body meetings, the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school's development plan, performance management documentation, planning documents, monitoring and assessment information, school policies, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

John Collins Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a much smaller than average-sized primary school. The school was, until September, an infant school. Its first cohort of Year 3 pupils began in September 2013.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- Fewer than one in 10 pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is well below average. This provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school is part of a confederation of 13 schools, which support each other and share expertise; for example, in ensuring the accuracy of teachers' judgements about pupils' attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that the written feedback on pupils' work makes clear to pupils what they must do to improve.
- Make reports to parents of children in all year groups more informative by making clear what each child has achieved well and what needs to be done for them to reach even higher levels.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding because their attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently well above national averages over a three-year period. Their achievements in other subjects are good and often outstanding.
- On entry to Reception most children do not have the skills expected for their age. However, they make exceptionally good progress and by the time they join Year 1 almost all meet and exceed the levels expected for their age in each of the early learning goals, including early reading, writing, number and social skills. Their rapid progress is due to the wonderful atmosphere in which to learn, created by the teacher and teaching assistant coupled with consistently good teaching.
- Reading is given special emphasis throughout the school and pupils' progress is helped greatly by the programme in all years in which pupils learn about the sounds that letters make (phonics). As a result, almost all pupils' reading is good and the pupils say they enjoy reading every day. The most able pupils are remarkably fluent and expressive in their reading, at levels well above those expected for their age.
- Pupils learn to join up writing from the very beginning of school and by Year 2 almost all are able to write well-punctuated sentences with clear meaning through simple short stories.
- By Year 3, writing for different purposes is generally grammatically correct, and often both lively and thoughtful.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are outstanding throughout the school. The inspector was both impressed and amused when he asked a Year 1 pupil, buying from a make-believe shop, what she was doing, she explained she was buying something 'because ladies like shopping'.
- The great majority of pupils also make good progress in mathematics because it is well taught. Pupils in all years are able to solve simple appropriate problems in writing, and practically; by Year 3, the great majority of pupils know most of the multiplication tables and show good ability to think problems through in their heads.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make very good progress. This is because they receive skilful teaching from both their teacher, and teaching assistants who have been trained well. Most pupils achieve as well, and sometimes better, than other pupils in the school and reach well above average standards, especially in reading.
- Inspection evidence and school records show that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is as a result of close checks on their progress, good teaching, and additional support from specially trained assistants.
- The progress of more-able pupils is exceptionally good. They think well for themselves and most read, write and calculate at levels well above those expected for their age.
- Many parents told the inspector that they were very pleased with the progress made by their child and this was further confirmed by the great majority of parents who responded to Parent View.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers set high expectations and are highly skilled in making sure that pupils learn and apply new skills and knowledge in ways that are engaging and often exciting. As a result, almost all pupils make excellent progress.
- In Reception, strong emphasis is given to developing children's language skills through a wide variety of activities inside and outside the classroom; for example, writing words that rhyme with 'ten', speaking and listening in a make-believe shop, explaining to each other how they can walk on mud using upturned pots.
- In a Year 1 science lesson, pupils actively took part in an experiment to decide which of several

different materials would make the best waterproof coat for their teddy bear.

- In a Year 3 English lesson, pupils were able to use adverbs and adjectives correctly to enliven the adventure story they were writing. For example, one girl gave the example 'she took it gratefully', whilst a boy suggested 'a huge and frightening monster'.
- In each classroom, walls are adorned with examples of pupils' work and posters and artefacts made by teachers that create both a wonderful environment and further opportunities to learn.
- Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and use this information to ensure that the tasks set are appropriately challenging.
- Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, disabled pupils, and pupils with special educational needs are very well monitored and supported, often by highly skilled and knowledgeable teaching assistants. A few teachers do not provide sufficiently helpful written advice when marking pupils' work. This limits the opportunities for pupils to make the best progress they can.
- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View, and in conversations with the inspector, were very positive about the quality of teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is, with few exceptions, excellent. The Christian values promoted by all school staff are much in evidence and this supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The pupils say they love their school.
- The school has created a culture of kindness and respect; it ensures pupils know right from wrong. For example, in Year 1, a boy picked up a pencil and gave it to another pupil saying, 'This is your pencil, I saw you drop it.' Similarly, a girl in Year 2 noticed her friend was cold and offered her coat, saying, 'I am not feeling cold, please put this on.'
- Almost all pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and listen attentively to their teacher. Even in Reception, pupils' full attention was given to the teacher while she explained how to pronounce certain letter combinations. Pupils' willingness to take an active part in learning is evident in every classroom as pupils respond quickly and without fuss to their teachers' instructions.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say, and behaviour records show, that bullying is very rare, but if it happens teachers deal with it swiftly. Pupils say if they see unkindness, or hear hurtful things, they tell the person it is wrong and tell an adult in the school, knowing that it will be stopped. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Pupils have a very strong awareness of various kinds of unsafe situations and understand about internet and road safety through the school's assemblies and specially taught lessons.
- The school takes the safeguarding of its staff and pupils very seriously. The site is secure and every effort is made to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.
- Following robust efforts by the senior leaders, attendance and punctuality are above average. The school is very inclusive and promotes equal opportunities very well.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is passionate about ensuring all pupils are provided with the best education possible. Supporting her vision, the assistant headteacher and the entire staff are committed to the school's values and are enthusiastic about the part they play in helping pupils to achieve their best.
- Pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings. If any pupil is seen to underperform, extra help is arranged and has proved to be very effective.

- Subject leaders check weekly planning to assure the quality of what is to be learned. Together with the headteacher, they take part in checking each other's teaching and make sure expertise is shared.
- The planning of the Early Years Foundation Stage teacher is very effective and is based on excellent knowledge and understanding of children's development. As a result, all children make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. Detailed observations and records of the progress of each child are kept. The teacher works hard to make sure the transition from home to school and from Reception to Year 1 is smooth and enjoyable.
- Teachers in all year groups undertake checks, in cooperation with other schools of the confederation and the local authority, on the standards of pupils' work in each year group, to be sure about the accuracy of their judgements.
- The professional development of staff is given strong support by the governors and the special training afforded to teachers and teaching assistants has greatly contributed to the sustaining of pupils' excellent achievement.
- The school's own evaluation of how well it is doing is accurate and correctly identifies its strengths and weaknesses.
- Planning for further improvement is checked by governors and rightly focuses on improvements in pupils' achievement and in their personal development.
- A wide range of subjects is taught and, together with the many extra learning opportunities, gives all pupils a well-rounded education, much of which relates closely to their lives.
- The weekly curriculum information shared with parents encourages a high level of parental involvement in pupils' learning. However, this is not always reflected in the reports teachers write about pupils. These sometimes do not give parents enough information about what their children do well and what they need to do next to improve further.
- The primary school sport funding has yet to be used because of repairs to the school hall and the long-term illness of the external consultant the school engaged. It is due to be spent on training for lunch time supervisors on activities such as using hula hoops and skipping, for teachers of gymnastics and physical education, and for the purchase of additional recommended equipment.
- Most pupils willingly take part in home-learning activities such as reading, learning spellings, or completing simple research projects, some of which are of exceptionally high quality.
- All staff, and the great majority of parents responding to Parent View, say the school is well led and managed.
- The consistently good outcomes by pupils over the past five years led to the local authority having well justified confidence in the leadership and management of the school. Hence, it provides only light touch support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have benefited from relevant training and have a good understanding of how well pupils are doing compared with national averages. They systematically check the school's progress against the agreed plans for improvement, visit lessons and events, and monitor safeguarding on a frequent basis. They have very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use these to hold the school to account. This enables them to take a major role in setting policies and planning school improvement. Their awareness of the need to improve progress for the small number of pupils that are eligible for pupil premium funding, or who have special educational needs, shaped the allocation of funds. These provided specialist training for teachers and teaching assistants, together with extra support for those pupils, for example through one-to-one tuition. As a result, their progress is now close to that of their peers. Governors are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching, and are very much involved in decisions about teachers' status and pay; they use safe recruitment procedures. They are aware of the comprehensive planning by senior leaders to make best use of the sports funding. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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	125174
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	431441

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eric Peacock
Headteacher	Helen Southgate
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2009
Telephone number	01932 562329
Fax number	01932 562259
Email address	admin@thorpe.surrey.sch.uk

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