

# Thames Ditton Junior School

Mercer Close, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0BS

**Inspection dates** 27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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' achievement is good. Many pupils enter the school with above average attainment. By the time they leave, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently well above national averages.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, in classrooms and in the special support centre, make good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Teaching is typically good and often outstanding. As a result, almost all pupils enjoy their learning and make good and sometimes outstanding progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary and is typically good in most classrooms. Almost all pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their lessons.
- Safeguarding is outstanding. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school and their well-being is given high priority by all staff and governors.
- The headteacher, with strong and effective support from his deputy and the attentive governing body, has driven necessary improvements with firmness yet sensitivity over the past two years. This work is having the intended impact and has resulted in significant improvements in both teaching and in pupils' achievements

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teaching requires improvement in order to raise achievement even further.
- Some subject leaders are not yet adequately fulfilling their role of checking how well their subjects are taught and how well pupils are learning it.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons and part lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors talked with pupils, looked at samples of their work and listened to two groups of pupils read.
- Meetings were also held with teachers, a group of governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and the school’s middle leaders. Telephone conversations were also held with the Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative of the local authority to discuss the extent and impact of support provided to the school.
- In planning the inspection, the inspectors took account of the 149 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the views of nine parents who spoke with them during the inspection, a letter received from a parent electronically, and the 22 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at many documents including the minutes of governing body meetings, the school’s checks on how well it is doing, the school’s development plan, staff performance documentation, planning documents, monitoring and assessment information, school policies, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safety.
- The school had a pre-arranged parents meeting during the afternoon of the first day of the inspection resulting in no classes taking place.

## Inspection team

John Collins, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Keith Homewood	Additional Inspector
Janet Simms	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an above average-sized junior school and has a specialist centre (Special Support Centre), currently providing education for twelve pupils.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very much smaller than the national average.
- A few pupils join the school each year part-way through their primary education.
- About one in 16 pupils is eligible for the pupil premium. 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; this is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is less than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all teaching is good or better by making sure that:
  - written feedback to pupils makes clear what they must do to improve their work and is followed up when necessary to ensure they have acted on the advice
  - in all subjects, more opportunities are provided for writing and spelling, punctuation and calculation are always corrected when necessary
  - work for the most-able pupils is not too easy, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics, and requires them to think hard.
- Strengthen the role of middle leaders by requiring they regularly, systematically and rigorously check the quality of teaching and learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Information collected by the school supports the view of the vast majority of parents (Parent View) that the current achievement of pupils in all year groups, including those who arrived partway through their primary education, is at or above that expected for their ages.
- In Years 3 to 6, conversations with pupils, lesson observations, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read confirm that almost all current pupils are making good progress from their starting points. Consequently achievement is good.
- As a result, attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above national averages in reading, writing, and in mathematics. More-able pupils do particularly well and far exceeded national averages at the highest levels in the summer 2013 national tests. This is because of consistently good or better teaching.
- Almost all pupils make good progress in their other subjects and especially in French, history, information and communications technology (ICT), geography and science.
- Pupils do especially well in the national checks for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Most pupils enjoy reading and read widely at school and at home. However, pupils' writing though generally good, is not as strong as their reading.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in classrooms, and in the special support centre, is good in almost all subjects, particularly in Years 5 and 6. This is mostly because of the high quality teaching and support they receive.
- Pupils who join the school partway through their primary education are well supported in their studies and achieve broadly similar results to those who started in Year 3.
- School information and inspection evidence confirm that the current achievement of pupils that are eligible for pupil premium has improved significantly. In all years, they are no more than one term behind, and sometimes ahead, of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. Those who also have special educational needs and attend the unit make good progress from low starting points. This too is mostly because of the high quality teaching and support they receive.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching across the school is typically good and often outstanding.
- Teaching has been a focus for improvement and the results are clear to see in the great majority of lessons and in pupils' books. As a result, almost all pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and make good progress. This supports the view of the great majority of parents.
- In mathematics and in English, almost all teaching is good and much is outstanding. As a result, progress in reading, writing, and mathematics is generally good and sometimes much better.
- Most teachers use information about pupils' progress effectively to make sure work for all groups is suitably demanding. This has had a clear impact on achieving high standards in both subjects. However, a few teachers provide work that pupils say is too easy for them, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Pupils are not always able to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects. However, an example of developing language skills was evident in a Year 3 science lesson.
- Pupils of all abilities took part in practical work in the new laboratory. They were able to describe the properties of different kinds of materials fluently and knowledgeably. This enabled them to classify liquids according to how they behaved when poured. One pupil wrote 'the washing up liquid is beautifully scented but pours more slowly than water because it is more viscous.'
- Some teaching sets very high expectations for pupils to attain. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils of all abilities were working very confidently and competently with

protractors; first estimating the size of angles and then checking their accuracy with a protractor.

- Almost all teachers give pupils high quality advice and guidance, both orally and in writing. However, some pupils do not always follow their advice and so make less progress than they could.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in many ways. For example, through assemblies, through teaching about the school's values, encouraging pupils to work together in lessons and learning and participating in activities with other more multi-cultural schools abroad.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and provide skilful support to small groups and individual pupils in their learning; they are particularly effective in the special unit. As a result most of these pupils make good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The vast majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons. School information shows their behaviour around the school is also typically good but during the inspection it was exemplary. They are smartly dressed, clearly respect the school's environment and contribute much to it through displays of work and keeping it litter free.
- Pupils flourish well in the school's calm and very pleasant atmosphere and say they love coming to school. The great majority of parents responding online (Parent View), and to the school's own survey, agree.
- A consequence of this is that attendance is above average, pupils are punctual to school and to lessons, and exclusions of any kind are well below average.
- In lessons, pupils engage willingly in discussion with each other and work well both collaboratively and independently. Their conversations are mostly fluent, confident and show respect for the views and beliefs of others in accordance with the school's values.
- Inspectors found pupils to be courteous, helpful and well mannered. Governors, many of whom visit the school regularly, and parents, confirm this is typically the case.
- An inspector, having lunch in the dining hall with a group of Year 3 pupils, was impressed by their good table manners and their knowledge of the Tudor period in history. They spoke authoritatively and accurately about their visits to Hampton Court and knew an astonishing amount about the wives of Henry the Eighth. This was because they were inspired by their teacher to read more about Henry at home.
- Pupils are tolerant of the differences in others and know that if they are worried they can talk with an adult in the school. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding; it is given high priority by staff and governors. Pupils say they feel safe and are happy at school.
- Pupils have a good awareness of unsafe situations, including internet safety and road and rail safety, and they know how to keep safe. Pupils throughout the school know the importance of exercise and are knowledgeable about healthy eating.
- Pupils say bullying rarely happens but if it does, and the teacher is told, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. They know that other pupils provide excellent support when they share any worries. The school promotes a culture of kindness and pupils know that it is wrong to say hurtful things to, or about, others.
- The very positive views of the majority of parents and staff support the inspection findings about behaviour and safety.

## The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together to provide strong, caring, and effective leadership. They are committed to making sure the school's vision of excellence in all the school provides, agreed with the governors, staff, parents and pupils, will come to fruition.
- Their evaluation of how well the school is doing is accurate and makes clear where its strengths and weaknesses lie. Planning for further improvements is correctly focused on improving the achievement of all pupils and the measures taken have the full support of governors.
- That the school's senior leaders and governors are committed to continuous school improvement is evident in many ways. For example, they have successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection and established a very good quality of education resulting in high pupil attainment. Given its improving track record the school is well placed to improve further.
- The checks on teaching and learning are systematic and accurate. As a result, the management of teachers' performance is effective and is closely linked to appropriate training opportunities.
- Teachers and other staff responding to a questionnaire and in their conversations with inspectors are very positive in their comments about the school and its leadership. All staff show commitment to, and enthusiasm for, improvement. This is evident in the high numbers that regularly attend further training.
- Subject leaders are providing good leadership in most respects but some are not yet monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in a sufficiently systematic and rigorous manner. As a result, they do not always check that teachers are marking pupils' work in the manner required and providing difficult enough work for the most-able pupils.
- The range of subjects and activities motivates and inspires pupils and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It provides a rich and exciting programme of opportunities for pupils to learn. This happens not only through the subjects taught but also through educational visits, and many clubs. It includes regular lessons in French by a specialist teacher. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for their imminent visit to France where they will be able use their language skills to buy groceries, order food in restaurants and engage in short conversation with native speakers under the supervision of their teachers.
- The sports funding has had good impact on both sports provision and improving pupils' physical development; it also enabled teachers to have specialist training in various sports and gymnastics. As a result pupils' performance in competitive activities is excellent and a wide range of well-attended sports activities is provided, including for example, golf twice per week.
- Home learning is encouraged and is partly based on self-chosen projects that meet pupils' individual needs and then on improving pupils' literacy skills and mathematics.
- The consistently good outcomes by pupils over the past two years led to the local authority regarding it as needing only minimal support. Nevertheless, it has continued to audit the school's performance and offer advice to improve pupils' progress, especially in writing.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is good; it is both transparent and accountable. The well-trained and very conscientious governors make effective use of the data dashboard and national information; they understand well how pupils are doing compared with national averages. They take part in checks of the school's performance, visit lessons and events, and monitor safeguarding and the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs on a frequent basis. They have very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this to hold the school to account. This enables them to take a significant role in school improvement planning and in policy making. Governors actively supported the plans for improving pupils' physical development by making effective use of the government's funding for sports. Their awareness of the need to improve progress for the pupils that are eligible for pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs led to the allocation of funds to provide small-group and one-to-one tuition for those pupils. 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 and do not

permit unjustified promotion or salary increases. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met, and have good capacity to assist the school with further improvements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124967
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	441053

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<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>	430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bronach Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nick Fry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 83983039
<b>Fax number</b>	020 83984919
<b>Email address</b>	office@tdjs.org

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', 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 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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 123 4234, 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 information 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'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
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 2014

