

Thorpe Lea Primary School

Huntingfield Way, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8DY

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school so pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- More able pupils are not given work which is challenging enough and do not learn as well as they should in lessons.
- Mathematics is not taught effectively across the school to help pupils to understand what they are learning and to develop their mathematical skills.
- Progress between year groups is not consistently strong, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils' written work shows that pupils achieve well in some classes and less well in others.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are below that of others in the school and other pupils nationally at Key Stage 2.
- The teaching and provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not precisely enough monitored, so that these pupils do not always do well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders provide strong leadership and have a good understanding of the priorities to improve the school. They have raised the aspirations of both pupils and staff. The governing body is knowledgeable and provides the correct level of challenge.
- Pupils are proud of the school. They feel happy and safe and behave well. They have a clear understanding of the school's values and work and play well together.
- Parents have a positive attitude towards the school, especially towards the changes which have been made by the new leadership. They say that their children enjoy coming to school and that they are well informed about their children's progress.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. Children settle quickly and make good progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 11 lessons, three of which were seen together with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also made short visits to a number of lessons, looking at pupils’ work and meeting with a group of pupils. An inspector listened to pupils reading and discussed their reading habits with them.
- The inspectors held discussions with school staff and with members of the governing body. They met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked carefully at safeguarding documentation, information about pupils’ progress, self-evaluation documents and the school’s development planning.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They had informal discussions with parents and carers.
- Inspectors also considered the views expressed in a questionnaire returned by 24 members of staff.

Inspection team

Josephine Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bryan Meyer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Thorpe Lea Primary School is an average-sized primary school with 218 pupils. It has a part-time nursery and there is one class in each year from Reception to Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care) is above average.
- One in four pupils comes from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching to the highest levels by:
 - fully stretching pupils of the highest ability
 - ensuring that time is used effectively in lessons so that all make rapid progress
 - making sure that pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs achieve as well as others.
- Improve pupils' mathematical skills by:
 - giving them regular opportunities to solve problems
 - allowing pupils more time to think for themselves and develop their understanding.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Key leaders and managers, including the governing body, are ambitious for the success of the school. They share a clear vision and are pleased that the school is now seen as having changed for the better in the local area.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and identifies priorities which are matched to the regular monitoring and to improving outcomes for pupils.
- Arrangements to check the performance of teachers' set targets are linked with the school priorities for improvement. This ensures that staff are trained to provide effective teaching and support for pupils. The school is actively engaged in sharing best practice to develop whole school spelling with West Byfleet Junior School.
- Teaching is checked accurately and frequently through external reviews and also internally by middle and senior leaders. Middle leaders receive teachers' weekly planning in numeracy and literacy and comment on good practice, as well as making suggestions for more effective delivery. Written work is also looked at weekly by senior and middle leaders and feedback is given to the teachers on their application of the school marking policy and the usefulness of their comments to help pupils improve their work. This careful checking is beginning to improve teaching as teachers adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils and support them to make better progress.
- Middle leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in literacy and mathematics in the school. They are involved in training staff, together with a local authority consultant, following a skills audit. The school is buying additional resources to support the delivery of the new curriculum.
- The subjects pupils learn are broad and balanced and provide pupils with a good understanding of the development of life in modern Britain. An example is a Year 6 topic on the Ottoman Empire which increases pupils' understanding of Islamic civilisations. Alongside this, they discuss beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences. Individual pupils have targets set and these are discussed with their teacher each half term. If they have not been fully met then they experience teaching which embeds their prior learning.
- The school's actions have secured improvement for disadvantaged pupils at Key Stage 1, but the same is not true across all subjects at Key Stage 2.
- The extra government funding for primary physical education and sports is used to employ a specialist teacher of physical education across all year groups and a secondary physical education teacher to support teachers. There are opportunities to be involved in athletics at Key Stage 2, swimming events and in sports competitions. This has increased participation, particularly for the older pupils.
- In a school assembly the pupils are questioned on school values and encouraged to think about the meaning of respect. Around the hall the displays celebrate various aspects of school life. Displays around the school include a world map celebrating where the children's families come from and this encourages pupils to treat each other with respect, kindness and to develop curiosity in finding out about each other's culture and faith. There is an overall atmosphere of community, harmony and warmth.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority is actively involved in monitoring and reviewing the work of the school. It provides a useful external assessment of the quality of the school's work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching in the school and how well the pupils are doing. They ensure that pay progression and promotion are linked to how well pupils achieve. They receive summaries of the self-evaluation document and raising achievement plan. They are also given a summary data sheet which gives them the key facts from the school's data. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and they develop their understanding of the self-evaluation by regular visits to the school and by speaking with the headteacher.
 - Each committee of the governing body has a strategic plan. This ensures that they work effectively with senior leaders and that they challenge them. It also gives clarity to the links which exist between information about progress and the planning documents. Governors regularly meet with, and talk to, parents and are increasing their links with local businesses and with Royal Holloway College. The governing body ensures that sound financial decisions are made and that money is spent well on projects which support pupils' improvement. All statutory arrangements for safeguarding are in place.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their attitudes towards learning are generally positive and low level disruption is minimal. Pupils move around the school sensibly and they help each other and are courteous to adults. There is clearly a respect for the learning environment which is orderly and tidy.
- At breakfast club, behaviour is good across the age ranges. Pupils talk with each other and with adults with confidence. They are happy and enjoy being there.
- In lessons there is a good relationship between pupils and adults. A variety of strategies are used to encourage good behaviour and pupils usually respond promptly to their teachers' requests. This is not always the case when they finish their work quickly and there is some low level disruption.
- At playtime, playleaders engage with groups of pupils who have access to a wide range of toys. The pupils behave well and are playing across year groups. They respond well to the bell and line up quickly and quietly.
- Incident logs show a reducing number of incidents, reports of bullying and aspects of negative behaviour, including racist incidents. Rates of exclusion are currently zero.
- Attendance has improved and is now above national averages. Pupils respond well to the rewards they receive for good attendance.
- Pupils are very positive regarding bullying and the support offered by all the adults in school. They understand aspects of name calling and homophobic issues well, and they have positive mature attitudes in discussion.
- Parents are very positive about the behaviour of pupils.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and are safe. Procedures are understood by all and appropriate records are kept.
- A child protection policy is in place and all training is up to date. Training has also covered fire safety, positive touch, e-safety and safer recruiting.
- Pupils understand e-safety and have lessons to ensure that they keep safe online and know what to do if they have any anxiety about usage or images on the internet.
- Parents consider the school to be a very safe environment.
- The school site is vast and well maintained. There are locks on every gate and everyone knows when these are used and what to do should they need access to the main entrance.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching does not always engage all pupils and involve them in work which is challenging enough to support their achievement. In some lessons pupils do not learn well because the work is too easy for them and they waste too much time, for instance in writing out questions. Some teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations and repeat those things which the pupils, especially the more able, have already learnt.
- In mathematics, some pupils are not sure about what they are being asked to do. This is not picked up quickly enough and limits their progress. Misconceptions and mistakes made by more able pupils are not corrected quickly enough to support better progress.
- At Key Stage 1 the teaching of practical mathematics is inspiring girls and they are starting to make better progress.
- The support provided by additional adults is not consistently well managed. Effective help was seen to be given to a more able group of girls in a mathematics lesson, which prompted them to develop their ideas and extend their learning. However, support given to disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils is frequently less well directed and does not allow these pupils to make quick gains in their learning.
- Where teaching is less effective, pupils' progress, particularly that of the more able, is slowed and lesson time wasted as pupils sometimes wait for others in the class to catch up with them. Occasionally, they are given extra work when they complete a task, which does little to extend their thinking or strengthen their skills.
- Pupils are often unsure how to improve their written work as some teachers do not make clear what pupils need to do next to make progress. Pupils are not encouraged to share examples of good quality writing and spelling errors are not corrected for the more able pupils. Although there is a greater emphasis on

correct spelling in Year 6 written work, this is not found in the work of younger pupils.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement, including those from minority ethnic heritages. Achievement is stronger at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2 for all pupils. At Key Stage 2, achievement is weak in mathematics for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs at school action plus.
- Attainment in English grammar, punctuation and spelling is significantly below expected for all pupils at above Level 4. It is below expected compared to pupils nationally for all subjects higher than Level 4.
- For disadvantaged pupils, attainment is below that of other pupils nationally across all subjects. For disadvantaged pupils, progress is below that of other pupils nationally in mathematics and reading, and it is above for writing. There is an upward trend across all subjects.
- For all subjects there is a gap of two terms between disadvantaged pupils and others in school and other pupils nationally. The difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and nationally is two terms in mathematics, reading and writing. Overall, these gaps are closing, but not at a quick enough rate to make up for the lost ground of recent years.
- Attainment for more able pupils at Key Stage 1 is well below average in reading and writing, and is average in mathematics. Attainment for more able pupils at Key Stage 2 is below average for reading and writing, well below average for mathematics, and significantly below average for English grammar, punctuation and spelling. At Key Stage 2, progress is above average across all subjects, with an upward trend in mathematics.
- The attainment of those pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is slightly below other pupils in the school, except in mathematics where they do better. They also make better progress than others in the school. The attainment of those supported at school action plus is well below other pupils in the school, particularly in reading.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs receive targeted support as well as support in class. In some cases this support is not as effective as it might be because it does not allow them to get on by themselves. Those who do not do well enough are not closely monitored to ensure that interventions and support are effective.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make better progress than other pupils in all subjects because they enjoy their lessons and are proud of their successes.

The early years provision

is good

- All children make good progress from their starting points and most reach a good level of development by the start of Year 1.
- Literacy and mathematics are weaker areas of learning for some children. They are a whole school focus, as well as being a focus in early years. Children are encouraged to develop their writing skills including at the end of sessions in which they sound out letters and they are given plenty of opportunities to practise both in the indoor and outdoor environments. This allows them to learn quickly and makes sure that they remember what they have learnt.
- Those children who are disabled or have special educational needs are supported by intervention programmes in reading, writing and number. Those who have poor speech development are well supported with phonics and word-building interventions which allow them to make good progress.
- More able children make exceptional progress. They listen well in group sessions and gain in confidence so that they can work independently with a good level of concentration and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Those children for whom English is an additional language are supported to develop their communication skills and join in weekly small group activities to develop their confidence. They have exemplary attitudes to learning and show determination and resilience which prepare them well for the move to Year 1.
- Lower ability children make good progress, but do not achieve a 'good level of development'. They are sometimes distracted and struggle to work independently. This means that it is harder for them to settle into Year 1. However, the school provides interventions where they show interest, for example challenges in mathematics, and helps them to develop their written language skills.
- The early years leader has been working with the early years leader from The Raleigh Primary School to share best practice. They each received feedback from their partner school. This has resulted in opening up the outdoor provision to create a much larger area and an early years unit which is shared with the nursery. There are clearly demarcated and labelled specific indoor and outdoor zones for learning,

including several role play areas, a garden for knowledge and understanding of the world, and vehicle tracks to develop gross motor skills.

- All these changes have resulted in accelerated progress for all children. Progress is now carefully monitored to ensure that no children fall behind, and interventions are used to support them if they need more opportunities to develop particular areas of learning.
- Teaching assistants work effectively to support the children as they make choices from the many things provided for them to play with. These change daily in response to children's interests. One of the inside activities is a post office. Role play involves writing tax discs, completing forms and writing and posting letters. This clearly promotes children's literacy development and personal, social and emotional development.
- Children behave well and are aware of expectations. They respond quickly to instructions.

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	125072
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	449037

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Davis
Headteacher	Leslie Semper
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 November 2012
Telephone number	01784456398
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