

# Thorpe Lea Primary School

Huntingfield Way, Thorpe Lea, Egham, Surrey TW20 8DY

## Inspection dates

20–21 October 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors have secured significant improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 attainment is in line with the expected standards. They also achieve well in other subjects including history, geography and religious education.
- Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution in providing additional support to groups of pupils. Disadvantaged pupils, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress at rates similar to their classmates.
- Teaching is good. All groups of pupils learn well and are now making faster progress from their starting points. Teachers make sure that pupils know precisely how to improve their work due to detailed feedback.
- Some teachers do not consistently set activities that extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially for the most able pupils.
- Children in the early years settle in quickly and happily. Teaching is excellent and as a result children make outstanding progress and are exceptionally well prepared for when they start in Year 1.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They conduct themselves exceptionally well in the playground. They are respectful towards adults and each other.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. They work hard in lessons and play harmoniously together at playtimes.
- The curriculum is very well planned to provide stimulating experiences for pupils. It links tightly to the school's new approach to assessing pupils' learning.
- Questions put to pupils do not always test their knowledge and understanding in sufficient detail.
- The teaching of phonics is not used widely enough in lessons to ensure that pupils have a good grip of early reading skills.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further to secure consistently rapid rates of progress for all pupils by:
  - ensuring that teachers consistently set work at the right level of challenge to enable pupils to make even stronger progress – especially the most able pupils
  - make sure that questions set by staff test pupils' knowledge and understanding of different subjects more deeply
  - making sure that the teaching of phonics is used effectively in lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the previous inspection the headteacher, senior leaders and governors have implemented changes that have led to rapid improvements in teaching and learning and set an ambitious culture of continuous improvement. They have high expectations and are moving the school forward quickly. There is a strong team of teachers and support staff who share this drive for ongoing improvement.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, know the school well and have an accurate picture of its performance. Strong leadership of English and mathematics, through accurate monitoring and evaluation of teaching and achievement, has secured improvements.
- Senior leaders and governors rigorously check the quality of teaching and learning and the progress made by all groups of pupils. If any weaknesses are identified in teaching, effective support is given and improvement is checked carefully and thoroughly.
- There is a robust system in place to manage the performance of staff, with clear targets aimed at improving outcomes. Training and development is linked closely to need, and staff are appreciative of growing opportunities to share their practice, learn from each other and observe outstanding practice in other schools.
- The school improvement plan identifies priorities well and clearly outlines strategies for ensuring that these areas are successfully addressed. There are times when there is not enough detail for leaders to check the impact of strategies at different milestones as the school continues to improve.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils can achieve as well as others nationally and are able to participate fully in all aspects of school life. One-to-one tuition and small-group work in mathematics, reading and writing, led by skilled and trained learning support assistants, have helped to ensure that these pupils make good progress. The disadvantaged most able pupils also make good progress and nearly all are attaining highly.
- The school uses its primary school sport funding effectively to ensure that pupils learn and take part in a wide range of sports. This has provided them with more opportunities for competitive sport, and has enabled opportunities for pupils to take part in sports which are new to them. Teachers' subject knowledge and skills are enhanced by the work they do alongside specialist coaches.
- The school also prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. They know about and demonstrate through their actions the key values of respect and tolerance. They develop a good understanding of other faiths and beliefs and these are supported through opportunities for reflection within the curriculum. School assemblies allow pupils to reflect on core values such as kindness to others and respect for those from different backgrounds. They have a clear knowledge of democracy and put this into practice through elections to the school council. Pupils of all backgrounds are welcomed into school, reflecting the school's commitment to equal opportunities.
- The curriculum is wide ranging and motivates pupils well. Interesting activities such as talks by visitors and visits to local places of interest add to pupils' enjoyment of

learning. Topics such as 'The Great Fire of London' helped them to make links between subjects such as literacy, history and art. They reflected on how it might feel to lose their home, and this promoted their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded well throughout the curriculum and is reflected in all that the pupils do, to prepare them well for life in modern Britain. There are many opportunities for pupils to think deeply about the key school values, and these are seen throughout its work. Pupils know what is right and what is wrong, can make informed decisions and understand the consequences of making poor decisions. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to consider their learning in order to make it better.
- The local authority has provided effective support since the school's previous inspection. This has included support for governors and other leaders to ensure that self-evaluation is accurate and leadership strengthened.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors now provide good levels of support and challenge to school leaders. Since the last inspection, governors have undergone an external review of governance and have made significant changes to their organisation and the ways that they operate. This has resulted in them having a clear view of the strengths of the school and also areas where it can improve.
- Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and understand the link between teaching and pupils' achievement and that staff pay and progression is dependent upon good quality of teaching. Governors check the school's finances to ensure that all funds are spent wisely. They know how the pupil premium is spent and the impact it is having on achievement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding is regarded as a high priority within school and is managed very effectively. All staff receive regular training and are aware of how to identify if pupils are at potential risk. School policies and safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively.
- Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that pupils' welfare is given the highest priority and any concerns are acted on swiftly and effectively. All staff are quick to identify potential issues and flag them with relevant professionals.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching across the school is typically good. As a result, different groups of pupils in all classes are making good progress from their various starting points.
- Teachers plan and organise lessons carefully to motivate and capture pupils' interest. Well-planned work between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that additional help given to pupils, to support and challenge, promotes good learning and progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress that is in line with other pupils, and this is narrowing differences in their attainment. Skilled learning support assistants work well alongside teachers in all classes and make a

strong contribution to improving pupils' learning.

- Work in pupils' books demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils currently at the school are taught well and make good progress. Leaders meet with class teachers at pupil progress meetings to plan tailored support, using the pupil premium funding, to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress from their starting points as other pupils nationally. The most able disadvantaged pupils usually make fast progress because tasks make pupils think hard, but there are times when this is limited in the challenge that is provided.
- Skilful questioning is used well by some teachers and teaching assistants to check pupils' understanding, clarify misconceptions and make them think for themselves. High levels of mutual respect and supportive relationships raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence so that they learn without fear of getting an answer wrong.
- There are times when the questions asked of pupils do not make them think hard enough. This means that pupils' subject-specific knowledge is not developed well enough.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and to learn from their mistakes. This helps pupils to develop positive attitudes and behaviours such as resilience, perseverance and independence. This particularly supports pupils who need to catch up to fully understand previous weaknesses in their understanding and skills.
- Teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are expected to do and this helps pupils to learn and be appropriately challenged for most of the time. Pupils said they enjoyed being challenged because it made them work and think hard. Teachers use a good range of practical equipment to help pupils complete their work and this helps them to progress well and grasp new ideas quickly.
- Mathematics is taught well. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary so that pupils can express their understanding and explain their methods.
- Pupils develop their English skills quickly because the school provides opportunities for pupils to express and enhance their ideas and new learning. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge and skills in writing and communication across the wider school curriculum. This ensures strong progress in different subjects, but particularly in writing.
- Staff have adopted a well-structured approach to the teaching of phonics across the school. Teachers and teaching assistants lead lessons that engage pupils and develop pupils' early reading skills. Pupils read well and enjoy reading both in and out of school.
- The understanding of phonics is limited for some pupils. This is because phonics is not used well enough in lessons to make sure that pupils have a secure grasp of the blend (the sound of more than one letter put together) of letters.
- The most able pupils are generally taught well. They receive tasks that usually make them think hard, especially when they involve explaining and justifying reasons for their lines of enquiry and problem solving. Their books show that from their starting points the most able pupils make good progress.
- Occasionally, the most able pupils do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable because not all work stretches them to think and articulate full answers or requires them to think hard enough about their learning.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Staff know pupils well and there are positive and productive relationships in the classroom. Through the activities they set, staff work hard to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn.
- In some lessons the work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils, particularly the most able pupils. When this happens pupils' learning slows down because the work is too easy and they are ready for more difficult work. Consequently, this limits the amount of progress that this group of pupils make.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and those who spoke to inspectors felt that the school keeps their children safe.
- School lunchtimes and breaktimes are calm and well organised. Pupils play very happily together in the playground and enjoy the resources sensibly. In the classroom pupils treat the environment carefully and know how to be successful in their learning. There are very occasional times when pupils do not treat equipment as well as they should.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, both within school and when they are away from school. They recognise the potential dangers that the internet could pose to them and say that the school provides them with good information on how they can remain safe.
- Pupils are confident to take risks with their learning and are prepared to take on a challenge. They know that their opinions and efforts will be valued.
- The safety of pupils is a very high priority and staff are encouraged to be constantly vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe and secure at school. Consequently, pupils are confident that should an incident occur, they would be well looked after.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying. They say that bullying is extremely rare and this is confirmed by the detailed records that the school keeps. Inspection evidence showed that any such incidents and concerns are being managed appropriately.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In most lessons, pupils are attentive and they concentrate well. They are able to manage their behaviour without reminders from staff. Just occasionally, in those lessons where they are not provided with sufficient challenge, pupils lose concentration and chat among themselves. That is why pupils' behaviour is not yet outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct in the playground and classrooms is very good. Pupils play extremely well together and are very polite, respectful and caring towards each other and adults.
- Pupils with specific behaviour problems are well supported and so they do not disrupt the learning of other pupils. Over time, the behaviour of these pupils improves as the school works closely with parents and outside agencies to secure the required support.

- Pupils are proud of their behaviour in their school and say that any disagreements are sorted out quickly. They know and understand what is expected of them as they conduct themselves around school and in lessons. Pupils make sure that they routinely follow these clear expectations.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. This is as a result of the robust procedures that the school has in place to ensure that parents and their children understand the impact that good attendance has on achievement.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection with pupils now making good progress in all key stages and all subjects as they move through the school.
- Attainment in 2015 in key stage 1 was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils meeting typical expectations is rising in all year groups, and this is seen across key stage 1 and in key stage 2. Attainment in the 2015 test information, at the end of key stage 2, was in line with or above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, although mathematics and writing were a strength. Pupils' rapid progress from below-average starting points means that they are gaining ground and are well prepared for secondary education.
- Disadvantaged pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils make good progress. They attain in line with other pupils nationally. These groups of pupils benefit from the extra support for their learning. They have access to all the opportunities at school, such as clubs and trips, and are given any necessary extra support to help them catch up or be extended in their thinking. Consequently, differences in attainment and progress between these groups and other pupils nationally have diminished or are closing swiftly across all year groups.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check is slightly below the national average. However, the school recognises the need to improve the phonics knowledge of pupils and already has this as a key priority. There is more work to be done to improve the early reading skills of pupils but the school has good evidence to show that pupils who were in the school at the end of the Reception Year last year achieved well in this test. Reading outcomes in other year groups are also showing strong improvements.
- The work of pupils currently in the school and the school's checks on progress show that pupils in all year groups are making good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, attainment is rising. However, it is not rising as fast in reading as in writing or mathematics.
- Most pupils read confidently and enjoy stories and non-fiction books from an early age. They enjoy selecting books from the well-stocked school library and class reading corners. Those who are behind in their reading now receive extra support in small groups which are increasingly effective. However, early reading skills are not reinforced during literacy lessons frequently enough and this means that some pupils have not developed a good knowledge of phonics.



- Support and challenge for low-attaining pupils, to help them catch up with their peers, has been successful. The proportion of these pupils making and exceeding expected progress across the school is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress from their starting points as other pupils nationally. This is because they receive well-targeted support for their personal, social and emotional needs, as well as for their academic needs. Teaching assistants provide focused support by breaking down work into more manageable steps, and this helps pupils to better understand what they are expected to learn.
- The most able pupils are typically well challenged in lessons in key stage 1 and 2 and so they are making good progress. In class discussions pupils are not always questioned in enough depth or challenged by staff to justify or explain their reasoning or thinking, which holds them back from making more rapid gains.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is above the national average. From starting points that are below those typically found, this demonstrates outstanding progress and prepares them very well for the key stage 1 curriculum.
- Disadvantaged children progress very quickly from their starting points. This reflects the very effective use of pupil premium spending based on an insightful knowledge of each child's needs. When the children start Nursery, staff meet with parents and make very careful assessments to gain a complete and full understanding of each child's stage of development. This means that, right from the start, teaching matches well the needs of each individual child.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. Children are given highly stimulating experiences so that they are always motivated and continuously want to explore and find things out for themselves. Staff have an exceptionally good understanding of the needs of young children. Effective conversations and questions challenge the children to think for themselves and move learning on extremely quickly.
- Classrooms are very carefully designed and organised with a range of exciting resources of high quality that helps children to learn. Provision both indoors and outside is of high quality and children are encouraged to work and play in both areas. All staff are vigilant and provide high-quality care to ensure that children are well looked after.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding. They work and play well together and despite having been in school for only a few weeks they know how to take turns, listen to what other people are saying and cooperate very well with each other.
- Good links are made with parents and pre-school settings before the children start school to ensure that each child's start to school life is as smooth as possible. Adults make sure they get to know the children quickly. They place high importance on personal, social and emotional development to ensure that children feel very safe and secure.



- The skilful leader of the early years has accurately identified key areas for improvement. The early years team constantly refine their practice in order to drive forward the highest standards of teaching. There are very well-thought-through plans to make further improvements, and there is a discernible sense of drive and urgency to offer the best possible provision
- Early years staff ensure that children are safe. Policies and procedures are implemented consistently and there are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements. Consequently, safeguarding is effective.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and one parent reported that she was extremely pleased with the provision and her child's progress in her first weeks of schooling.

## School details

Unique reference number	125072
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10019893

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Davis
Headteacher	Zoe Ezzard
Telephone number	01784 456 398
Website	<a href="http://www.thorpe-lea.surrey.sch.uk">http://www.thorpe-lea.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@thorpe-lea.surrey.sch.uk">info@thorpe-lea.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	5–6 November 2014

## Information about this school

- This school is similar to an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is slightly higher than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and children looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils with statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards that set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the early years attend part time in Nursery and full time in Reception.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- There have been significant changes in staff since the last inspection. The headteacher joined the school in September 2015.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all classes. In addition, one inspector listened to some pupils read, and both inspectors reviewed a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, the headteacher, other members of the teaching staff and a representative of the local authority. There was a meeting with some pupils who are 'class ambassadors'.
- The inspectors viewed a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievements over time, the school's data on current and recent progress of pupils, and the school's own view on how well it is doing. The inspectors also reviewed the school improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding and records of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 58 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and comments made by parents online and six letters sent in by parents. They also analysed the results from the inspection questionnaire for staff.
- The school's website was scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Crompton	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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