

Long Ditton St Mary's CofE (Aided) Junior School

Sugden Road, Long Ditton, Surbiton, Surrey KT7 0AD

Inspection dates

24–25 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides effective and decisive leadership. Together with other senior leaders, he has worked diligently to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school since the last inspection. Consequently, pupils make good progress in a range of subjects.
- Leaders' and governors' relentless ambition to eradicate underperformance is translated into effective action and this means that the school continues to improve.
- Governance has improved. Governors have high ambitions for the school. They are developing more effective challenge to hold senior leadership to account for all groups of pupils.
- Middle leaders have made a substantial contribution to improvements in the teaching of English and mathematics. They regularly monitor pupils' progress.
- Outcomes for pupils are improving rapidly. Pupils clearly enjoy their work, tackling learning with determination and a desire to succeed. They work well and productively.
- This year, pupils in all year groups, including disadvantaged pupils, have made securely good progress from their starting points. This progress is the result of the careful analysis of pupils' needs and the effective support provided.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after. The fostering of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by all adults is a strength of the school. The school is effectively preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Although pupils' progress in writing has improved significantly since the previous inspection, pupils fail to apply their basic literacy skills of handwriting, punctuation and spelling consistently in English and other subjects.
- Pupils' misconceptions in mathematics are not always identified quickly or addressed.
- Attendance has improved and continues to do so. Pupils who are disadvantaged, however, do not attend as well as other pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of progress pupils make in writing by improving the accuracy of pupils' handwriting, punctuation and spelling in all of their writing across all subjects.
- Strengthen the teaching of mathematics so that all pupils make better progress by ensuring that teachers quickly identify and address misconceptions and errors so that pupils make more rapid progress.
- Improve attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that pupils maximise their time for learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, along with the leadership team, has developed an ethos of high expectations for all. He has tackled the school's weaknesses head-on and has united the staff in this endeavour.
- Leaders know the school well and have an accurate picture of its performance. They share this information with all staff to ensure a team effort in moving the school forward. Staff are proud and happy to work at the school and feel well supported by leaders.
- Leaders are precise in identifying the essential priorities for improvement. The school's development plan is detailed and sets out a clear path to further improvement with ambitious but realistic targets for pupils' achievement. As a result, there is strong capacity to secure further improvements for the benefit of all pupils.
- The headteacher develops his staff so that they can effectively take on leadership responsibilities. This builds capacity to sustain improvement in the school. Middle leaders are now fully effective in checking the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. They are knowledgeable about the strengths and areas for improvement in both their respective subjects and the school's priorities.
- Leaders and governors work effectively with other local schools in the Ember Learning Trust to raise standards of teaching, learning and assessment. Members of the trust's schools share training opportunities and leadership development and work together to check the accuracy of teacher assessment.
- Leaders' commitment to and promotion of equality ensure that they are meticulous in checking the progress of all pupils. They swiftly identify pupils' learning needs and put into place support and interventions.
- The special needs and inclusion leader is highly effective and leaders use the allocated pupil premium funding and special educational needs funding wisely. Consequently, these groups of pupils are making good progress from their starting points.
- Senior leaders are swift in providing feedback and guidance to teaching staff and middle leaders. Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching and learning, which then inform appropriate support and training. Performance management targets tie in with whole-school priorities so that all staff are working together to drive improvement.
- Leaders have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. Respect and courtesy are the norm at the school and are well developed through the school's Christian values and attitudes to learning. This results in a school community where pupils flourish in their learning.
- The curriculum is well adapted for the different groups of pupils and effectively delivered to prepare pupils as lifelong learners and for life in modern Britain. The curriculum is extended and enriched with a broad range of exciting and interesting extra-curricular activities that cater for pupils' wide-ranging interests. It includes a 'Girls Can' club that has increased the number of girls participating in competitive sport.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.

Pupils enjoy learning about the world around them and are encouraged to be reflective.

- Parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were extremely positive about the changes that have taken place. The vast majority of parents are happy with the school and the education it provides for their children, and nearly all would recommend the school to other parents. One wrote: 'The warm and caring ethos of this school makes my child feel safe and happy, thereby providing my child with the best foundation for effective learning.'
- The local authority has provided very effective support for the school since the previous inspection and has confidence in the senior leaders' ability to maintain the school's good performance.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors have a broad range of skills and experience appropriate to the role. They have undertaken an external review of governance and have acted on the recommendations. Consequently, they are clear about their roles and have the ability to carry them out. Governors are passionate about the school and ambitious for the future of the pupils.
- The governing body supports the school well and has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors receive and challenge information about the school's work. They use assessment information to question the school's effectiveness and make valuable contributions to action plans.
- Governors visit the school regularly to assess how well pupils are achieving. They are knowledgeable about how the different additional funding is used, but acknowledge that this could be more sharply analysed.
- Governors make sure that they are informed about how well the school looks after pupils and how risks are managed so that pupils are kept from harm.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Procedures to check the suitability of adults working with children meet statutory requirements. All staff have received training and are up to date with the most recent policy and guidance on keeping pupils safe. Frequent training and updates make staff vigilant about child protection matters, including radicalisation and extremism. Risk assessments are compliant and reviewed regularly by leaders.
- The school works well with parents and external agencies to address the needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. All staff and almost all parents responding to Ofsted's online surveys agree that pupils are safe and well looked after.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is now good, representing an improvement since the school's last inspection. As a result, a high proportion of pupils reach the national standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave Year 6.
- Teaching is characterised by well-prepared and well-organised lessons that have a strong sense of purpose. Staff have high aspirations for pupils and expect them to work hard and behave well. Pupils are very keen to learn and respond well to teachers and teaching assistants.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and this view is echoed by parents, one of whom wrote: 'My children have received strong moral guidance – respect and kindness to others.'
- The teaching of reading is good. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to reading and are keen to read. They do this with confidence and fluency. When appropriate, pupils use a range of methods to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. They have access to a wide range of reading materials and are confident in discussing their choice of book.
- The number of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing has been steadily rising over the past three years to be above the national average in 2016. This has been the result of a focus by the leadership team on ensuring that pupils know how to make improvements in their written work. As pupils make progress, they are able to use increasingly sophisticated language. However, pupils fail to apply the skills of handwriting, punctuation and spelling consistently in all of their writing.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved and teachers are skilled at showing pupils how they should approach and present their work. For example, pupils are taught how to break down the stages of a problem and this contributes to good progress in mathematics lessons. However, in some lessons, teachers are not quick to spot and address misconceptions, resulting in slow progress for some pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support. These pupils are given carefully planned tasks that are designed to meet their specific learning needs. Teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully so that they know what is working well.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to apply their mathematical and English learning in a range of subjects. For example, in science, pupils are challenged to use their knowledge of mathematics to collate how the heart rate fluctuates during exercise, and in topic work, they are given many opportunities to write at length.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are confident, friendly and articulate. They care about their school, their teachers and each other.

- The headteacher has fostered a strong, caring ethos which is embraced across the school. Core values are on proud display and pupils regularly reflect upon them in assembly and in lessons. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to school and to their learning. They take pride in the school and promote 'LDSM Proud'. Comments displayed in the school entrance include 'LDSM Proud means having a positive learning attitude, representing the school well, in smart uniform.'
- The school has a calm and harmonious atmosphere where pupils play and mix happily with each other. Pupils independently follow the rules that they introduced when taking turns on the table tennis tables. The tables are very popular and are enabling all pupils to practise their skills to a high level of competence. A large number of pupils are highly proficient at solving Rubik's cubes at breaktime and are keen to explain the algorithms behind the solution.
- Pupils are given opportunities to develop their leadership skills through a range of activities. For example, pupils are given opportunities to become sports captains and school councillors. This helps them to develop their social skills and exercise the rule of democracy.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards others in and beyond their community and thrive as they take part in charity events. A recent event combined fundraising with exercise by challenging the whole school to work as a team to complete 10,000 steps on 30 pedometers every day for a month in aid of Cancer Research.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Disruptions in lessons are very rare. Pupils enjoy their learning and persevere when they find work challenging. If pupils do become distracted, teachers and support staff are quick to motivate them to concentrate on their tasks.
- Pupils follow routines and rules at playtimes and lunchtimes, playing safely in the school grounds. Recent changes to routines at lunchtime have resulted in a dramatic reduction in the number of behavioural incidents occurring during this time.
- In their drive to reduce absence, school leaders are faced with many challenges outside their control. However, attendance has improved recently and is continuing to improve. Leaders work effectively with families of pupils who are persistently absent to improve their attendance. However, disadvantaged pupils do not attend as well as other pupils.
- Pupils from different backgrounds and faiths get along well together, both in lessons and in the playground. They told inspectors that bullying is rare and they understand how to get help if needed. Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- The vast majority of parents feel that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved and that bullying is effectively dealt with. Some parents commented about poor behaviour in the past but, as one wrote: 'Since the last Ofsted inspection ... the school has much higher standards expected for the children's behaviour.'

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016, by the end of key stage 2, pupils attained standards that were at least in line with those seen nationally in mathematics and English. In some cases, particularly for the most able pupils, standards were above the national average. Therefore, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education and are on track to have the academic and personal skills required to thrive in secondary school.
- Over the last three years, pupils' progress has improved steadily from their different starting points but was still below the national average in 2016 in English and mathematics.
- Leaders have put into place a robust system to track pupils' progress, based on pupils' starting points. They regularly identify the strengths, weaknesses and next steps and put into place effective actions to improve outcomes for pupils. The school's assessment information and the work in pupils' books show that pupils currently at the school are making good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding are making better progress in all subjects now than in the past. They benefit from the approaches astutely selected by the school to support them with their learning. Differences with other pupils in the school and with other pupils nationally are diminishing.
- Many pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress as a result of well-targeted support. However, some progress is less than good as a consequence of low attendance for a small number of pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	125180
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10032882

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Mr Barry Fairbank
Headteacher	Mr David Gumbrell
Telephone number	020 8398 1070
Website	www.longdittonstmarysschool.co.uk/
Email address	info@stmarys-surbiton.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Long Ditton St Mary's Church of England Junior School is smaller than the average junior school.
- The school is a member of the Ember Learning Trust.
- There are more boys than girls.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small number speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils receiving support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan or who have a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in classes on 18 occasions. Most of these observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met frequently with senior leaders throughout the inspection. The lead inspector also met members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and talked to a representative of the Diocese.
- Inspectors met informally with pupils, heard four pupils read and met 16 pupils formally.
- Inspectors took into account 123 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's confidential online survey. The lead inspector considered 122 free-text responses to this survey and to letters from two parents.
- Inspectors met formally with five teachers at different stages in their careers and spoke to members of staff at various times during the inspection. The lead inspector considered 31 responses to the school's staff survey and to 94 responses to the pupils' survey.
- The team reviewed a wide range of the school's documents. These included the school's own evaluation of its performance, records of governors' work and information relating to the performance of pupils. In particular, inspectors examined records of work undertaken to raise standards.

Inspection team

Marcia Goodwin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Kusum Trikha

Ofsted Inspector

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