

Inspection of a good school: Long Ditton St Mary's CofE (Aided) Junior School

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

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2022

Outcome

Long Ditton St Mary's CofE (Aided) Junior School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils show immense pride when warmly welcoming visitors to their school. They are joyful, polite and respectful. Staff have aspirational expectations for all. Pupils are proud of their high standards. Behaviour in class is excellent and lessons are never disrupted. Pupils feel safe. They are not worried about bullying, and trust adults to help with any worries.

Pastoral care is strong. If pupils need help when they are upset, staff provide effective support. Personal development is exceptional, and pupils are passionate about equality. They celebrate differences through a curriculum deliberately planned to promote diversity.

School life is enhanced by trips to local attractions and national museums. Pupils love hosting visitors, including authors, archaeologists, artists and a member of parliament. Another highlight was a 'night at the museum' when the school was converted into a museum after dark. Pupils' loved seeing their work showcased as they toured the school with parents and friends.

Sporting opportunities are broad and varied. Clubs are diverse and popular, and all pupils represent the school at events. Links to a local hockey club are valuable, providing frequent matches and tournaments. Pupils keep active every playtime, enjoying the obstacle course, table tennis, football and dodgeball. 'Forest school' provides rich outdoor learning experiences.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Reading is at the heart of this school. Teachers recognise when pupils need help with phonics at the start of Year 3. Timely assessments identify gaps, leading to targeted support. Leaders show relentless dedication to ensure that no pupil is left behind. Staff

teach pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to learn sounds with supportive practice using well-chosen books. Staff running interventions are well trained and knowledgeable. As a result, all pupils, including those with SEND, are achieving well with reading. Pupils love their library, which is well stocked with a diverse range of books. Teachers read daily to classes, selecting books from different cultural viewpoints to widen pupils' experiences.

The curriculum is highly developed. Leaders have precisely planned language, knowledge and skills to teach through 'projects'. Pupils begin units of work with 'non-Google-able questions'. At the end of each project, teachers use revision sessions to check pupils' understanding. In history, teachers encourage pupils to be curious by questioning sources and viewpoints. Pupils know and remember their learning about Vikings, Romans, Egyptians and World War Two. They love exploring artefacts with visiting archaeologists.

Teachers make meaningful links across subjects. In geography, pupils' work shows understanding of the impact of climate change. Inspired by this learning, in English, pupils wrote persuasive letters as environmental activists. They then carried out experiments to recreate biomes in science. Foundation subjects are all well planned. In computing, pupils are developing coding skills by building forms for websites. Music and physical education are also prioritised as part of a creative and active curriculum.

Mathematics is another strength. Pupils have frequent opportunities to improve and embed number skills through well-paced activities. They know and remember mathematical concepts and apply them through investigative work. In 2022, Year 6 pupils achieved high standards compared to national outcomes. Pupils with SEND made strong progress from their starting points.

Behaviour at this school is exemplary. Pupils meet impeccable standards expected of them in class. This impressive conduct continues to the playground, and on school trips.

Pupils' broader development is highly prioritised. They speak with confidence and without prejudice, asserting that everyone should be celebrated from all faiths and family backgrounds. Pupils write manifestos to seek election to the school council. They lead projects to enhance the local environment, including initiatives to improve road safety.

Leaders and governors share high ambitions. They are determined that every pupil should 'flourish academically, socially and spiritually'. Governors demonstrate diligence and expertise to provide challenge and drive school improvement. They know their duties and fulfil them, including frequent review of equality objectives. Staff are happy and proud. They are a strong team, highly motivated by developmental opportunities. Leaders ensure that workload and well-being are managed well. Several subject leaders are developing their expertise further while leading projects to support other schools.

Parents hold leaders in high regard. One, typical of many, expressed that the 'fantastic headteacher' has made 'hugely positive impact'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to identify and share concerns about pupils. As a result of regular training, all staff understand and meet robust safeguarding requirements. Leaders follow up serious concerns by making referrals for specialist support. Communication is strong and records are well kept.

Leaders are diligent when recruiting staff or volunteers. With strong support from governors, rigorous processes are followed.

Pupils show an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and online safety. Leaders design curriculum content to prepare pupils for modern Britain. As a result, pupils leave Year 6 with a well-developed awareness of how to stay safe.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	125180
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10241675
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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachel Cook
Headteacher	Sarah Martin
Website	www.longdittonstmarysschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Guildford. The school was rated good in its most recent section 48 inspection, in February 2022.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils, and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at pupils' work in geography.
- The inspector listened to a range of pupils read.
- The inspector observed catch-up interventions to learn how staff provide extra support to pupils.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, teachers, support staff and the SEND coordinator.
- The inspector met 10 members of the governing body, including the chair and vice chair of governors.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector studied documents and records, including the school's single central record and child protection referrals. The inspector spoke with the designated safeguarding leader, staff, and pupils.
- The inspector considered responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses.
- The inspector considered responses to the pupil survey and met with a range of pupils to learn their views about the school.
- The inspector spoke by telephone with a representative from the Diocese of Guildford and the local authority.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022