



# Tolworth Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 102574  
**Local Authority** Kingston Upon Thames  
**Inspection number** 286428  
**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Nicola Davies

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Douglas Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Surbiton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		KT6 7SA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8399 4472
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	350	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8390 8584
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ms C Giles
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms C Clarke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Although the majority of pupils in this large school are of White British heritage an increasing proportion come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Over a quarter of pupils are bilingual, and there are a growing number of pupils who are at early stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Tolworth Junior is a good school which has improved significantly since the last inspection. A major building project has transformed the facilities for pupils which means that the fabric of the school now matches the good quality of education within. As one parent wrote, 'The school now looks and feels warm and welcoming and children enjoy learning in this new environment'. Improvements have been achieved through the good leadership of the headteacher who has built an effective and close knit team of senior teachers, staff and governors who share a common vision for the school. As a result, the school is a happy, inclusive and exciting place to work and learn. Searching and accurate self evaluation highlights areas for improvement which are pursued with determination and imagination and this contributes well to the school's good capacity to improve.

Staff have a clear view of where they want to get to and they have all played their part in establishing good partnerships with others who can help them achieve their goals. This common approach has done much to enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils are at ease with themselves and others because they enjoy lessons and are confident that they are valued. Pupils get on well together and they show respect for and value differences in backgrounds.

Extended school arrangements provide extra opportunities to help the pupils to achieve well and have strengthened the good relationships with parents. They appreciate the good quality care and support that the school provides and particularly welcome the 'open door' policy which means they have ample opportunities to discuss any concerns. Governors take a full part in the life of the school and make a real difference. One good example of using stakeholders' and the community's views and support to enhance learning has been the development of the popular new playground facilities.

Teaching throughout the school is good because the headteacher has developed a team which shares its skills and expectations for the benefit of the pupils. The school makes good use of its 'expert' and specialist teachers to provide support to less experienced or less confident colleagues. The impact of this can be seen in the good progress which current pupils now make. Pupils achieve well. Standards are average and improving. However, there remain weaker areas, of which the school is well aware. Not all teachers consistently challenge the more able pupils well enough in lessons and in some lessons staff miss opportunities to let pupils explore their own ideas.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils are consistently challenged in lessons.
- Ensure that teachers are more consistent in providing opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas through open ended activities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are average and improving as illustrated in the results of the most recent national tests at the end of Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that pupils make good progress. The rate of progress is improving because the school has worked successfully on its key areas for development. The leadership identified that progress in English for younger pupils has been historically too slow. Good initiatives have tackled this issue and evidence shows that pupils are growing in confidence. Another success has been in raising standards in writing. Through a number of well considered initiatives pupils now have increased levels of competence in expressing their ideas. However, further work is needed on raising the achievement of the more able. In the most recent national tests, not all potentially higher achieving pupils attained the results expected of them in writing.

Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English make good progress because their needs are met effectively, both within their classes and through skilled additional support. These same levels of support apply to those with learning difficulties and contribute to good achievement in meeting targets.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well being are good. The pupils have a good understanding of the school's system of rewards and sanctions which they accept as fair. As a result, they feel safe, are confident and behave well. Their good behaviour and the happy atmosphere of the school are enhanced by the well trained pupil mentors who help sort out any difficulties which arise between pupils during lunches and breaks. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Pupils enjoy school a good deal and are never absent without a valid reason. They are successfully encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and particularly welcome the extra time and facilities they now have for physical exercise. Pupils show a good awareness of safety issues. They make a good contribution to school life through the wide variety of responsibilities they hold and the effective school council. Because of improvements in literacy and numeracy pupils' are well prepared for secondary school and their future beyond school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy learning, work hard and want to do well and these positive attitudes have contributed to their improving progress over time. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and teachers manage behaviour well. Teachers make clear to pupils

what they are expected to learn and how well they have achieved their objectives. Good teamwork between teachers and support staff means that pupils with learning difficulties and those at early stages of learning English are always included and well motivated.

Teachers modify their plans to match activities to the needs of particular groups of pupils in their classes. However, some are not as successful in matching work to the needs of more able pupils. Teachers regularly check pupils' progress and use this information well to set targets for improvement. Good marking indicates to pupils how they can improve their work and meet their targets. A weaker aspect of teaching is the lack of consistency in providing open-ended activities which give all pupils scope for investigating and clarifying their thinking and understanding.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of most pupils well. However, it is less well adapted for more able pupils than for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. There is a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy, personal development and creativity which contribute much to pupils' enjoyment and motivation. A good variety of clubs, including sport, music, choir, chess, drama and martial arts, meets a wide range of pupils' interests and needs. Out of school activities are popular and the school monitors attendance and encourages all pupils to experience some of the opportunities on offer.

Links between subjects have a positive impact on pupils' learning, particularly in literacy and increasingly in information and communication technology. Personal, social, and health education helps pupils to understand the importance of staying safe and being healthy, and prepares them effectively to contribute to their community. Events such as the themed weeks, visits, visitors and residential trips very successfully add to the richness of the curriculum and reinforce the school's emphasis on making learning enjoyable.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Good child protection and risk assessment systems are in place and all staff receive regular training. The school provides good advice and support for pupils when they enter and leave the school, which means that their transition is smooth and their education uninterrupted.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported, as are those who find behaving well more difficult. Such pupils are quickly identified and helped to make good progress by the school's behaviour specialists aided by volunteer learning mentors. Support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good as it is based on a thorough system of assessment, monitoring and support. The progress of these pupils is helped by the school's good range of well-attended classes

for parents who are learning English. Teachers carefully monitor the academic progress of all pupils. They use this information well to set targets which pupils can understand.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Effective leadership and management have improved the school significantly since the time of the last inspection. At that time, inspectors found examples of unsatisfactory behaviour, weak support for those new to learning English and insufficient awareness of different cultures. All these issues have been robustly addressed so that behaviour in and around the school is now uniformly good. In addition, the needs of the growing number of pupils at early stages of learning English are well addressed and pupils have many enjoyable opportunities to find out about how different people live, worship and behave. These successes clearly illustrate that the school has a firm understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and the capability to continue improving.

There are very thorough procedures to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning which have led to improvements in pupils' progress. The indications are that these benefits are making an impact on standards, although more remains to be done to ensure consistent challenge for the more able pupils. Governors meet their legal responsibilities well and make a good contribution to improving the school.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. We enjoyed seeing how you worked and talking to so many of you around the school. We don't have space here to tell you everything we found out but we have included the main points in this letter.

We agree with you, your teachers and your parents that you go to a good school which has improved a lot since the last time inspectors visited you. We were pleased to see all the improvements that your headteacher and all the other adults have made to the school. This not only means your new classrooms and equipment but also the interesting things you do in lessons and around the school. We were particularly pleased to see how well you are involved in improving the school, for example by helping each other to behave well.

The adults at the school take good care of you and are keen to make sure that they help all of you do as well as you can. One of the ways they do this is by sharing with each other what they do really well. This is why you enjoy your lessons and make good progress. We have suggested two ways in which your school can get even better. Some of you feel that your work is sometimes too easy and so we have asked the staff to make sure it is always hard enough for you. We would also like to see more opportunities for you to try things out on your own and solve problems which we could see you really enjoy.

We were pleased to see how well you have all settled in to your new classes, and wish you the best for the future.

With best wishes.

Nicola Davies Lead Inspector