

Inspection of Thames Ditton Infant School

Speer Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0NW

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Thames Ditton Infant School is a vibrant, welcoming and ambitious place. Pupils feel happy and safe because of the caring culture of the school community. Pupils enjoy coming to school and look forward to learning new things. They respect their teachers and like to be with their friends. Pupils are bright, lively and eager to please.

Leaders set high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour, and pupils rise to the challenge. They know that staff expect them to be polite and always try their best. Pupils are kind to each other and are proud of how friendly their school is. Pupils behave well in lessons and concentrate on their learning. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. If bullying occurs, staff respond to concerns quickly and effectively.

Pupils really enjoy playing together in the beautiful school grounds, with many activities to choose from. There are a range of activities for pupils to develop their interests and talents, which they appreciate. There is a range of lunchtime and after-school clubs such as art, French, football and choir.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about this school. For example, they appreciate the inclusive approach and treating pupils as individuals. Everyone works together to enable all pupils to thrive and feel that they belong.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum and continue to refine their offer, beyond English, mathematics and science. Leaders have identified the essential knowledge and skills that all pupils should learn and remember. In mathematics, teachers carefully check and make sure all pupils, including those in the early years, learn the important concepts well. Pupils confidently use and apply their knowledge of number to solve problems and can explain their reasoning.

Teachers plan work that pupils often find interesting and demanding. In most subjects, lessons clearly build on prior learning. Pupils remember what they have been taught and use this to help them learn new things. However, in some subjects, such as music and computing, this is not yet the case. This is because leaders and teachers do not use assessment consistently or well enough. For example, assessment is not used to help pupils use knowledge fluently, check for understanding or inform future teaching. Leaders are aware and have plans to address this.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' additional needs are swiftly identified. Appropriate and effective support helps these pupils develop important knowledge and skills with increasing fluency. As a result, they are able to learn alongside their peers.

The teaching of reading is effective. Leaders have recently strengthened their offer with a new phonics programme and high-quality training for all staff. Teachers follow the phonics programme meticulously. They make sure that pupils purposefully practise their skills by reading books that closely match the sounds they have learned. Leaders have ensured that pupils who need extra help receive the support and practice they need to build their knowledge and fluency.

Children in the Reception classes settle quickly into the routines and get off to a secure start in their reading. They develop their language and communication skills quickly. Modelling and astute questioning from teachers help develop vocabulary, check for understanding and inspire curiosity. As a result, children develop knowledge and confidence to build future learning on.

Pupils behave well. Leaders have ensured that all staff have high expectations and a positive approach to managing behaviour. Systems for rewarding, celebrating and challenging pupils are applied consistently across the school. Pupils are well motivated and show positive attitudes to their learning. They know how to learn, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements. From Reception, children learn how their behaviour can affect others and also how to manage their emotions.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. Pupils know why it is important to listen and show respect to others. Leaders offer a wide range of opportunities to foster pupils' interests and enhance the curriculum. For example, children in Reception took an exciting school-based 'trip' to France, including visiting a café and an art gallery. Pupils in Year 2 enjoyed a space workshop with virtual reality headsets to deepen their experience and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to be good citizens and are taught carefully about difference and diversity.

Governors are knowledgeable and skilled. They work effectively alongside leaders to develop strategic plans and rigorously check these are working as intended. Governors offer useful support to help leaders achieve their ambitious goals. They have an accurate view of the schools' strengths, areas for improvement and future priorities. Staff are very proud to be part of the team. They appreciate and value that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Systems for checking understanding of safeguarding following staff training are rigorous. Staff know how to identify immediate concerns and the small changes in behaviour that indicate something might be wrong. Staff use the agreed reporting systems well, providing leaders with the right information to support families quickly.

Leaders ensure that all employment checks are robust and clear. Staff know their pupils and families very well. Leaders have good relationships and work effectively with health and social care professionals.

Teachers prioritise helping pupils understand risk. As a result, pupils have a secure knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment in some foundation subjects is not yet consistently in place. As a result, teaching is not always informed by what pupils demonstrate they know securely. Teachers should collect assessment information that matches the new curriculum plans and use it consistently to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	124968
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10228499
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-Chairs of governing body	Charissa Fiander-Derry Jay Bimbrah
Headteacher	Rebecca Hicks
Website	www.thames-ditton-infant.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2008

Information about this school

- Thames Ditton Infant School joined The Ember Learning Trust, a co-operative trust, in 2016.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out the inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteacher and special needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with four governors, including one of the co-chairs of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, music, and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed curriculum plans with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to

teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documentation including the school's record of recruitment checks and records of concerns about child protection. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and one of the deputy designated safeguarding leads. Inspectors also spoke with leaders, pupils and staff about safety and child protection.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school and school improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, and parents' written comments. An inspector also talked with parents on the morning of the first day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views about their learning, what behaviour is like at the school and whether they felt safe. Inspectors also talked to pupils about their views on personal development.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.
- Information about pupils' behaviour, attendance and incidents of bullying was reviewed.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kirstine Boon	Ofsted Inspector
Lucy Hillyard	Ofsted Inspector

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