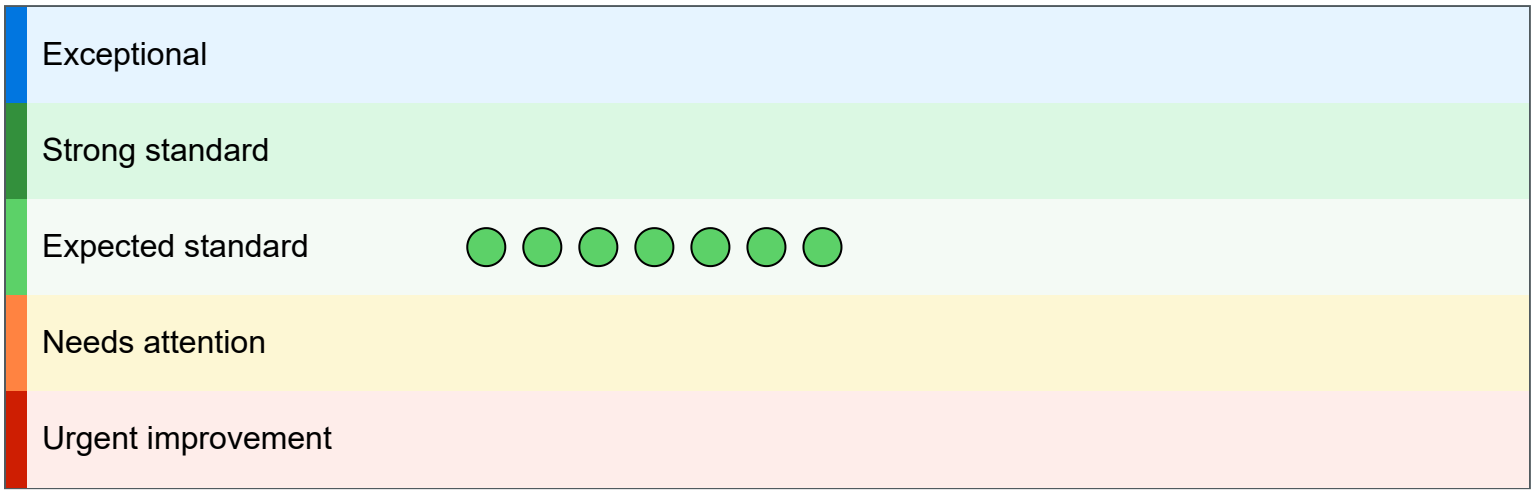
Thames Ditton Infant School

Address: Speer Road, Thames Ditton, KT7 0PW

Unique reference number (URN): 124968

Inspection report: 22 September 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in this school. This is because leaders ensure that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need in early reading, communication and language, writing and mathematics.

Pupils learn to read with increasing levels of fluency. They learn to recognise initial sounds from the moment they begin Reception Year. By the end of Year 1, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check is above the national average.

Pupils typically remember the knowledge and skills they need across the curriculum. However, they could develop a more detailed understanding of what they learn in the wider curriculum. Leaders are taking the right actions to address this.

Pupils with SEND, including pupils who access the school's specialist resource provision, make suitable progress from their starting points. Pupils are typically well prepared for their next stage in education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders recognise the importance of regular attendance and communicate their expectations to parents and carers, pupils and staff clearly. As a result, pupils attend school often and arrive punctually, eager to begin the school day.

Leaders carefully review pupils' attendance. This ensures that attendance remains a priority and that pupils who face barriers to regular attendance receive the support they need. Leaders' actions have been effective in ensuring that the number of pupils who miss too many days of school is now low.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They ensure that well-trained staff implement the school's relational approach to behaviour management consistently. Staff typically apply strategies well across the school. Pupils who have additional barriers, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported effectively by staff who understand their individual needs. This helps these pupils to succeed in school.

Pupils understand the school's rules and routines. They generally follow these and behave well in school. Pupils show positive learning behaviours in lessons, play cooperatively with one another during social times and develop respectful relationships with others. Pupils say that unkindness and bullying are rare. Staff know pupils well and ensure that pupils receive help if they are worried.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Pupils learn a broad and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have developed a curriculum that is carefully sequenced into small, progressive learning steps. As a result, pupils develop their

knowledge and skills in a range of subjects.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop the core skills they need in early reading, writing and mathematics. Early reading is prioritised, and children learn to read as soon as they start school. Staff deliver phonics lessons effectively.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge of the curriculum areas they teach. They deliver the curriculum well and support pupils to acquire new learning through careful explanation. Teachers make purposeful checks on learning, and this enables them to address misconceptions.

Leaders ensure that pupils who require additional help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, typically receive the support they need to access learning. Teachers' adaptations to the curriculum and teaching are generally helpful. At times, these adaptations are not precisely matched to pupils' needs. This means that some pupils do not access the curriculum as well as they otherwise could.

Leaders make regular checks on the quality of the curriculum and how well teachers deliver it. Because of this, leaders understand what is working and identify areas that require further refinement.

Early years

Expected standard

Children make a positive start to their school journey during the Reception Year. They quickly learn rules and routines and swiftly settle into the life of the school.

The early years curriculum is well planned. Children have plentiful opportunities to develop their independence, problem-solving skills and social development. Leaders ensure that the curriculum equips children with the knowledge and skills that act as the foundation for future learning effectively. For example, well-trained adults help children to recognise letter sounds and develop as early readers. Leaders also ensure that children develop their early writing skills and mathematical understanding.

Staff typically engage children in high-quality interactions. These interactions help children to develop their language and vocabulary at an early age.

Staff develop constructive relationships with parents and carers. Staff get to know children well at an early stage, even before they begin school, and this helps them to identity children who may need additional support. This includes children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities. By the time children finish the Reception Year, they are well prepared to begin Year 1. This is reflected in the high proportion of children who achieve a good level of development.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other vulnerabilities.

Leaders implement processes that are effective in ensuring that pupils' needs are identified early. This identification process begins in the early years. Leaders use what they know about pupils to identify the right strategies to help them. Leaders involve parents and carers in their work and, when appropriate, they seek the advice of external professionals, for example speech and language therapists.

Leaders make sure that staff develop their knowledge of inclusive practices through ongoing professional training. This builds staff expertise. Typically, therefore, pupils with additional barriers to learning who access the school's mainstream classes receive the support they need.

Pupils in the school's specialist resource provision benefit from support that is well matched to their needs. Skilled staff support these pupils to make suitable progress from their individual starting points by delivering a curriculum that caters to pupils' needs.

Leaders understand the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face. They target the use of additional funding effectively to support these pupils and keep their strategy under review.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders are ambitious for their school. They are absolutely determined to make sure that all pupils make a positive start to their education. Leaders know their pupils and the school community well. They make time to forge warm relationships with families. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and value the efforts that staff go to for their children.

Leaders are knowledgeable about their school. They understand what is working well and where further refinement is needed. Leaders' work with other professionals, including the local authority school improvement team, helps leaders to identify the right areas to focus on to bring about improvement. Leaders' actions typically have a positive impact on the experiences of pupils.

Governors are aware of and fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Governance arrangements ensure that the governing body seeks the right assurances about the school's performance, and this supports governors to understand the school's strengths and priorities. However, leaders and governors do not evaluate the effectiveness of the school's work as precisely as they could in order to accelerate high-quality provision in all aspects of the school's work.

Leaders prioritise staff development and professional learning. Staff training is typically matched to the school's priorities, although leaders also ensure that staff have access to other training that supports their growth and development.

Leaders, and those with governance responsibilities, show consideration to the workload and wellbeing of staff. Staff value leaders' openness to considering workload. They are supportive of the leadership team.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The personal development and wellbeing programme is effective. It is well planned and ensures that it supports pupils' personal growth and develops their understanding of the world.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education meets statutory requirements. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the importance of physical and mental health and healthy relationships. Each day, pupils complete a daily mile run around their school's beautiful grounds. This helps them to remain physically active. Pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe online and in the community. For example, pupils learn about road, river and rail safety.

Through the curriculum, leaders provide opportunities for pupils to build an understanding of the wider world. Pupils develop their cultural understanding through learning about other faiths and religious festivals. Pupils learn about the fundamental British values, including democracy and respect, and this helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Alongside the taught curriculum, visits to parks, the seaside and places of historical significance enrich pupils' experiences and bring their learning to life. Pupils enjoy these trips and speak fondly of them. Additionally, leaders plan meaningful opportunities for pupils to actively make a positive contribution to society. For example, pupils regularly donate to the local food bank and sing at local care homes.

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can participate fully in a broad range of extra-curricular opportunities, where pupils develop their talents and interests. The club offer, including activities led by external providers, ranges from sports and music to languages and the arts.

Leaders identify pupils with barriers to learning and/or wellbeing and provide well-matched pastoral support. This is provided by trained staff who understand the emotional and pastoral needs of pupils well. Leaders also ensure that wellbeing is a whole-school priority. Each year, pupils engage in 'Wellbeing Week', where they learn strategies such as mindfulness.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming and nurturing infant school, where they make a positive start to their education journey. They are cared for by adults who know them well and who prioritise their safety and wellbeing.

Pupils are welcomed as part of the school community by staff who take time to get to know them, their individual needs and their family. Because of this, pupils attend school often and arrive punctually.

Pupils learn in an environment that is calm and settled. Most pupils behave well and are role models for the school's values of kindness, respect and cooperation. In classrooms, pupils typically show positive attitudes to learning. During social times, they relish playing games

together and interacting with one another, turn taking and sharing equipment. Pupils say that bullying happens rarely in this school. They know that, if they are ever worried, they can show their ‘Bubble card’ to an adult, who will take time to listen to their worries.

Pupils benefit from a curriculum that offers a broad range of subjects and experiences. Pupils learn about science, the humanities, music and art, as well as developing core knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. From the moment pupils begin school, they learn to read and develop into increasingly fluent readers.

Pupils who have additional barriers to learning and/or wellbeing, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, typically receive the support they need to access the full life of the school. This includes pupils who attend the school’s specialist resource provision.

During their time at Thames Ditton Infant School, pupils develop their independence and understanding of the world. By the time they leave in Year 2, pupils are well prepared to begin junior school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently make adaptations to teaching and the curriculum that match the individual needs of pupils with greater precision.
- Leaders should continue to refine the curriculum to enable pupils to develop detailed knowledge and skills across the full curriculum, alongside reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders, including governors, should ensure that they precisely evaluate the effectiveness of the school’s work in order to secure greater consistency in standards.

About this inspection

The co-chairs of the board of governors of this school are Bronek Carr and Rachael Claridge.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This inspection took place on 22 and 23 September 2026.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty’s Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinators, during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with representatives from the governing body as well as the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes provision for 14 pupils with autism spectrum disorder.

The school currently makes use of no alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Elspeth Leach

Lead inspector:
Luke Graham, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Katherine Russell, Ofsted Inspector
Michael Eggleton, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

ⓘ The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 22 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

190
Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 268

School capacity

210
Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

2.11%
Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

7.37%
Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

5.26%
Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

SEN unit

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	3.7%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.0%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	3.8%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	6.1%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.1%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.5%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional 🔵

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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