

Thorney Island Community Primary School

Thorney Island, Emsworth, Hampshire, PO10 8DJ

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- School leaders, including governors, are ambitious and they have created a delightful learning environment in which pupils feel safe and happy and achieve well.
- Pupils across the school typically make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They have very positive attitudes to school and they are keen to learn.
- Thorough tracking of their progress has closed gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils. This shows that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers have high expectations and they plan lessons that are matched closely to the needs of all pupils. Most teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils in lessons so that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite, friendly and considerate to each other and to adults. Pupils get on well together and quickly build friendships as new pupils arrive at school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and it provides a wide range of enriching experiences for pupils. Pupils particularly enjoy the extensive sporting activities available for them.
- School leaders have relentlessly focused on improving the quality of teaching. They have successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection, demonstrating that they have the capacity to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because a few teachers do not probe pupils' understanding through effective questioning. Not all pupils correct their work after teachers have marked it, which hinders their progress.
- Middle leaders do not yet take an active role in leading their subject and have not yet had time to have an impact on raising standards

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. She also attended an assembly.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of their work. She observed their behaviour in lessons and around the school and listened to what they had to say about their school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspector also met with two members of the governing body and spoke to a local authority adviser on the telephone.
- Documents reviewed included the school's development plan, governors' minutes, arrangements for performance management and records of pupils' progress. The inspector also reviewed the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils.
- The inspector took account of the responses of 37 parents and carers who completed the online survey (Parent View) and the views of those who responded to the school's own questionnaire. She also took account of the views of staff expressed in a questionnaire recently administered by the school.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools, although the number of pupils on roll varies considerably, owing to its location on a military base.
- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school mid-way through the year is much higher than usual, owing to the posting of their parents. At any time, a significant number of pupils may join the school while a large number leave.
- Most pupils in school are eligible for pupil premium funding because their parents serve in the army. This is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils who have a parent in the armed forces, pupils eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority. The number of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than usual and the school currently has no looked after children.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is higher than usual although the proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement is lower than usual.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- There has been a significant change to the teaching team since the previous inspection and the school has undergone an extensive building programme to provide additional classroom space as well as administrative accommodation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding and raises achievement by ensuring that:
 - all pupils consistently respond to teachers' marking by correcting and improving their work
 - all teachers ask pupils complicated questions to challenge them and probe their understanding.
- Ensure that newly trained middle leaders play an active role in leading and developing their subject across the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They work hard and they make good progress so that by the end of Year 6, their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are usually above average. Scrutiny of pupils' work and the most recent assessment information shows that all pupils make consistently good progress across the school. Pupils' progress is not yet outstanding because pupils do not regularly respond to teachers' comments by correcting and improving their work.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly. They are happy and they get on well together. By the time they start Year 1, they read and write simple sentences using their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) to build words. They count accurately to ten and beyond and carry out simple calculations involving addition and subtraction.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs progress at similar rates to their classmates. This is because staff quickly identify where they struggle and provide specific programmes of work to help them to overcome their difficulties. Additionally, skilled teaching assistants provide support to pupils in lessons by explaining to them what they have to do.
- The pupil premium funding has been carefully targeted to provide pupils with additional help in classrooms. Specially trained staff provide pupils with emotional support so that those who are new to the school settle quickly. This has improved their attainment and progress so that it is at least in line with, and often above, these pupils nationally in English and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy reading. By the end of Year 2, they have a good grasp of phonics to help them and they are beginning to use punctuation to read fluently and confidently. By the end of Year 6, pupils talk about the wide range of books they read for pleasure and to find information.
- Actions taken by staff have improved the quality of pupils' writing. Pupils plan their writing by using pictures and symbols so that they have a clear idea of what they want to say. They share their ideas in classroom discussion, with timely interventions by the teacher to help them to refine their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics because lessons are usually briskly paced and engaging and this helps them to make good and occasionally better progress. They confidently use their good numeracy skills to solve real-life problems. By the end of Year 6, they calculate fractions or percentages of quantities, using their quick recall of multiplication facts.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching in both English and mathematics is typically good. Most teachers use imaginative methods that capture pupils' interest and so pupils enjoy their lessons and behave well. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher inspired pupils to write by using a video clip to help them to structure their stories. Consequently all pupils achieve well over time.
- Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan lessons that are matched well to pupils' needs. Lessons build securely on previous learning so pupils develop their skills step-by-step. This also ensures that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs progress at rates similar to other pupils.
- Children in the Reception class learn well because staff plan imaginative activities that help them to develop their skills. There is a good balance of activities that are led by staff and those that children select for themselves. During the inspection, one group of children used pastry cutters to make shapes using play dough while another group developed physical skills using bicycles and scooters.
- Although teachers have high expectations for pupils and provide good challenge in lessons, this is not always seen in pupils' books. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, often making detailed comments telling them what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. However, opportunities to accelerate pupils' progress are missed because pupils do not

always respond to these comments by correcting and improving their own work.

- A strong feature of teaching seen during the inspection was the way in which teachers observed pupils and adjusted their lessons accordingly. This meant that those who struggled could receive additional support while those who understood could be moved on more quickly.
- The quality of discussion in the classroom is high and this provides pupils with opportunities to share their ideas and to talk about their work. However, although teachers ask pupils plenty of questions, a very few do not always ask more challenging questions that probe pupils' thinking to further develop their understanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their attendance, which is above average. They feel safe and secure, knowing that adults care for them. Pupils are valued equally and say that discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated. Those who join the school part way through the year are helped to settle in quickly because the school has well-established and thoughtful induction arrangements in place.
- Pupils behave well in all lessons because they want to learn. They are kind and considerate and show respect towards each other and adults, and this helps to foster good relationships in school. They all get on very well together but, should a disagreement arise, they know there is always an adult on hand to help to sort it out. Just occasionally, pupils spend too much time chatting before settling down to work but teachers quickly address this.
- Pupils understand different forms of bullying, including that related to race, gender and the Internet but they are adamant that it does not occur. School assemblies provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on the need to be kind to each other, demonstrating the school's good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe from dangers outside school. They are very aware of the dangers associated with roads, strangers and fire, as well as dangers posed by substances such as tobacco and some drugs.
- The vast majority of parents, carers and staff who responded to the surveys strongly agree that pupils' behaviour is typically good and that children are safe and happy in school.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders are dedicated and have high expectations for pupils and staff. They want pupils to leave the school as confident learners who have choices regarding their future decisions. Consequently, pupils across the school achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and where further improvements can be made. Their plans for development are tightly focused on raising pupils' achievement, showing that they seek to build on what they already do well. They are fully responsive to the appropriate 'light touch' support provided by the local authority.
- There is a strong culture of developing staff at all levels throughout the school to enable them to take on additional responsibilities. Some younger teachers have recently attended training in preparation for leading and developing a subject within the school but have not yet had time to put this into practice and improve pupil outcomes.
- Senior leaders are determined to secure the highest possible quality of teaching. They regularly visit lessons both formally and informally and provide feedback to help teachers to develop their skills. A planned programme of professional development is tailored to the needs of individual teachers to help them to achieve their professional targets.
- The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing enriching experiences such as music, drama and visits to local places of interest. The provision of sports is already strong and the school plans to use the new primary

school sports funding to appoint additional sports coaches.

- The school takes full advantage of partnerships within both the local authority and the army. Senior leaders have provided training to other local schools and the headteacher works closely with partner schools. Army personnel are on hand to help with activities within school and pupils have the opportunity to play tennis and other sporting activities using facilities within the base. School leaders enjoy the full support and confidence of parents, carers and staff who responded to the surveys.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet all requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are enthusiastic and ambitious for the school. They know the school well because they receive comprehensive information from the headteacher. They visit the school as often as possible, given that many are sometimes deployed overseas. They understand performance information and so they know how well the school performs in comparison with other schools. They know about the quality of teaching and that teachers' progression on the salary scale is dependent on their performance. They carefully check the school's finances, including the use of the pupil premium funding. They know that this funding provides academic and emotional support as well as additional curriculum experiences to ensure pupils do not miss out.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125868
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	426629

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Hallam
Headteacher	Dean Clegg
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2008
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