

Meath Green Junior School

Greenfields Road, Horley Surrey RH6 8HW

Inspection dates: 4–5 November 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is led and managed well. The recently-appointed joint headteachers have a clear vision and a strong ambition for the school. There is a real team spirit among staff and a passion to succeed. The quality of teaching has risen and pupils are making good progress in all subjects.
- The leadership team has a clear picture of the school's strengths and where further improvements need to be made. Leaders have developed rigorous systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and provide well-organised support for teachers to continually improve their practice.
- The governing body has a good understanding of school performance information and provides a good balance of strong support and robust challenge. Governors ensure that all necessary safeguarding procedures are effective.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Their personal development is good and they develop self-confidence and speak clearly.
- Pupils feel listened to and valued. They are happy and attend regularly. Around school, they are polite and considerate.
- The school's 'Values Wheel' promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively and helps to make the school a calm and purposeful place. Pupils feel part of a community and are very aware of the need to respect others.
- Pupils want to do well and work hard. They behave well in lessons, listening to their teachers and settling to work quickly.
- Parents report an improvement in many aspects of the school's work. They say teachers are approachable and supportive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers are not consistently checking that the planned activities are suitably demanding for pupils or asking questions that make pupils think hard.
- Pupils are making less progress in mathematics than reading and writing because they do not have enough opportunities to develop their reasoning skills.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that all teachers:
 - always check that activities for pupils are suitably demanding and reshape tasks appropriately
 - regularly ask questions of pupils that make them think hard.
- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics by providing more opportunities for them to develop their mathematical reasoning skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The school is led and managed well. The recently appointed joint headteachers have a clear vision and a strong ambition for the school. There is a real team spirit among staff and a passion to succeed. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils are making much better progress than before in all subjects.
- The leadership team has a clear picture of the school's strengths and where further improvements need to be made. Leaders have developed rigorous systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and provide well-organised support for teachers to continually improve their practice. Teachers' targets for improvement are suitably challenging and underperformance is tackled robustly.
- The joint headteachers have created a culture where staff work harmoniously to improve the school's and their own performance. They have brought about significant changes in the way the school operates. By judicious restructuring of the leadership team, they have capitalised on leaders' strengths to make sure teaching quality is checked rigorously and that the best teaching practice is shared efficiently. As a consequence, teaching has improved significantly and the rate of pupils' progress is improving rapidly.
- Leaders have high expectations of staff and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They hold teachers to account for how well their pupils are doing. As a result, teachers' planning is more careful and considered.
- Senior leaders have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. The plans for further development are achievable, clearly set out and focused on the right areas. They have made good progress in addressing the recommendations in the previous inspection report. For example, leaders at all levels are trained and involved in monitoring teaching, and achievement information is analysed more often to track pupils' progress accurately.
- A well-planned programme of training addresses the school's weaker areas and meets the needs of individual teachers and teaching assistants well. Teaching staff work together in year teams to share good practice and assess pupils' work. One of the headteachers is a moderator for the local authority and teachers regularly work with colleagues from other schools to ensure that they recognise the standard of pupils' work.
- School leaders check pupils' progress regularly. They ensure that extra support is given to any who are in danger of falling behind and check that the support for them is effective. All pupils are given an equal opportunity to succeed and pupils and staff will not tolerate discrimination.
- The curriculum, which includes the demands of the new National Curriculum, is broad and balanced, with a suitable focus on numeracy and literacy. A wide range of trips, for example to museums and a wildlife centre, and clubs enrich pupils' experiences. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, such as the recorder or keyboard, and to perform with past pupils and parents in the junior orchestra. They learn French in each year and can learn life skills in the Forest School. The school has developed its own assessment system for the new National Curriculum but it has yet to be implemented in full.
- The school focuses strongly on its values and promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils aim to live by these values, such as respect and cooperation, and gain a 'Values Award'. Together with their teachers, Gloucester University and the Malawian High Commission, pupils are developing a Junior Ambassador programme to support children's education in Malawi. Pupils practise democracy in the school parliament and house captain elections. As a consequence, pupils' behaviour is good and they are being well prepared to become responsible citizens in Britain.
- Aspiring leaders are well supported to develop their leadership skills further. As well as gaining from regular opportunities for continuing professional development, they get relevant experience in monitoring and training others and are held accountable for their areas of responsibility. Leaders at all levels are helping to make sure pupils' progress in their learning continues to improve.
- The local authority has provided good support through regular visits and advice.
- The school uses primary sports funding well to encourage pupils to become more active. Specialist teachers help pupils to develop the right skills and help teachers to improve their coaching. The school offers a wide range of sporting activities, including competitive ones, for example, cross-country, tag rugby and dance. Pupils enjoy the sporting opportunities and are more active than in the past.
- The school ensure that pupils are safe. One headteacher, as the designated safeguarding lead, follows up any concerns about pupils' safety promptly and effectively. All staff are suitably trained in safeguarding. Attendance, including at after-school clubs, is checked thoroughly. Absences are followed up immediately.

- Parents say they have noticed the positive changes since the new leadership took over. They say that teachers are approachable and helpful. New parents are very happy with the school and the information they have been given. They particularly liked the recent workshops about reading and mathematics.
- The breakfast club is appreciated by parents. It provides pupils with a healthy breakfast and a chance to socialise with others. It ensures that they start school ready to learn.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has a wide range of relevant skills and have taken up further training to stay up to date. Governors are well informed, through reports from the school and their own regular visits. They know the progress pupils are making and about the quality of teaching. They ask challenging questions of school leaders and also offer strong support.
 - Governors, working with the local authority, set suitably challenging targets for the performance of the headteachers. They make sure that all pay awards are warranted and that underperformance is tackled robustly.
 - Governors ensure that the pupil premium is used effectively to help disadvantaged pupils make better progress and catch up with their classmates. They check that the primary sports funding is used to improve pupils' health by promoting a more active lifestyle.
 - The governing body regularly checks that all safeguarding and health and safety arrangements are fit for purpose and compliant with current legislation.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- There has been a notable improvement in teaching since the new systems to monitor and support teachers were introduced. Teachers have risen to the challenge and responded well to the programme of continuing professional development. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and, consequently, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good.
- Good relationships with pupils are a key element of teachers' success. Pupils listen to their teachers and follow instructions well. Teachers try to make lessons interesting and enjoyable. For example, Year 3 pupils were really engaged in a very relevant geography lesson using maps to create a list of directions for the 'replacement' coach driver to take them to the wildlife centre the following day. Pupils enjoy regular opportunities to discuss their ideas and learn to speak clearly and listen to others.
- Pupils' written work is marked regularly and teachers include guidance on how pupils can improve. Pupils understand the colour-coded marking system that teachers use consistently. Pupils say they have regular opportunities to respond to their teachers' advice, which helps them to make progress.
- Teachers often explain ideas clearly and model what they expect pupils to be able to do. Typically, pupils enjoy the activities planned for them and persevere with their work.
- Teachers work closely with leaders when planning activities to ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive the support they need. Extra help, such as one-to-one support or modified resources, is matched to each pupil's needs. Teaching assistants know what is expected of them. They work closely with teachers in lessons to support individuals or small groups of pupils.
- Homework, ranging from regular spelling, reading and mathematics activities to longer projects, is used to build effectively on learning in the classroom. Pupils enjoy the challenge and are proud of the projects they have completed.
- Teachers listen closely to pupils. They begin new topics by finding out what pupils already know and what they would like to find out more about. Pupils' prior learning is used well to plan suitable activities. However, teachers do not always check quickly enough how well pupils understand or cope with a task so that sometimes pupils are set work that is not demanding enough. Not all teachers ask questions that make pupils think hard or explain their reasoning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school ensures that pupils are kept safe. Pupils say they feel safe and cared for at school and have

learned how to stay safe in different situations, for example when crossing the road or using the internet.

- Pupils know the different forms of bullying and report that incidents of bullying are rare. They have great confidence in their teachers and other adults and know they will sort out any problems they may have quickly and fairly.
- Pupils have learned how to stay healthy. They know about balanced diets and the need for regular exercise. They say there are lots of opportunities for playing different sports at school and enjoy the regular swimming activities.
- Pupils develop self-confidence quickly. They are articulate and eager to join in discussions to share ideas.
- Pupils settle to work without fuss and stick to the given task, whether it is working in a group or independently. For example, Year 6 pupils researching events in World War Two worked industriously to gather relevant facts from books and the internet and, through discussion, shared their findings effectively. Occasionally, when activities are not challenging enough, a few pupils can become restless.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils know how they are expected to behave and that it is 'good to be green' on the classroom behaviour ladder. Their good behaviour contributes immensely to the calm, purposeful atmosphere in the school. They know their behaviour affects how well they do at school.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and considerate when moving around the school. Year 6 pupils often remind younger pupils to queue quietly or walk sensibly in the corridor. At playtimes, pupils get along well with each other.
- Pupils show pride in their school and their achievements. They readily shoulder extra responsibilities, such as becoming a member of the school parliament, being a house captain or librarian, or managing the school shop. 'Playground buddies', training for the Primary Sports Leaders Award, look out for anyone who has no one to play with and help to organise games for others.
- Adults follow the expected behaviour management procedure closely. The school records incidents of misbehaviour well and such incidents are low.
- Pupils like their teachers and enjoy learning. They are happy to come to school and attendance remains above average.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- School performance information and work seen in books show that over the past year pupils made much better progress in all subjects than before, reflecting the improvement in teaching. Despite the improved progress in their final year, by the end of 2015, Year 6 pupils attained below average standards in grammar, punctuation and spelling and at the higher levels in reading. Standards in writing were above average and in mathematics were average.
- Work seen in books shows that pupils in all years are continuing to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in mathematics is not as strong as in the other subjects.
- Pupils are making particularly strong progress in writing. They have many opportunities to write lengthy pieces, including in other subjects, such as history, and edit and redraft them. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and respond well to the advice teachers give them so that their writing is better next time. Since the start of the year, teachers' marking has focused more on grammar, punctuation and spelling so that pupils' spelling is more accurate and they are using grammar correctly more often.
- The school promotes a love of reading well. Leaders responded promptly to pupils' requests to refurbish the library and create an outside reading area. Pupils enjoy the increased opportunities for reading, particularly in the convivial *Swallows and Amazons* environment of the library. Regular competitions and guided reading sessions provide pupils with opportunities to read high-quality texts, discuss opinions and practise information retrieval to improve their reading comprehension.
- Teachers make mathematics interesting, for example doing practical mathematics outside and solving word problems, so that pupils enjoy the work. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to show and develop their mathematical reasoning.
- Through effective extra targeted support, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making similar progress to their classmates. For example, all pupils increased their reading age during a four-week support programme, some beyond a gain of six months. The very few pupils who speak

English as an additional language receive effective support to achieve well.

- Disadvantaged pupils are enabled to take full advantage of all opportunities available at school. As well as enriching their life experiences, such things as one-to-one tuition, emotional support and the use of a home school link worker have been effective in helping eligible pupils make similar or better progress than others in school.
- The most-able pupils have good opportunities to work together on more challenging activities, for example the Junior Language Challenge, where they compete against other countries and mathematics activities at a local secondary school. They are making similar progress to their classmates.

School details

Unique reference number	125012
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10002310

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Sutton
Joint Headteachers	Patrick Amerio and Serena Beasley
Telephone number	01293784298
Website	www.mgjs.org/
Email address	info@meath-green-junior.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 December 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average junior school. It has three classes in each of Years 3 to 6.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is around the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The joint headteachers were appointed in September 2015.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, frequently accompanied by senior leaders, observed pupils in all year groups engaged in a range of activities in different subjects. They looked at pupils' written work in all years and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- The inspection team held meetings with the headteachers, other school leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and five other governors. An inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to a groups of pupils and, informally, with other pupils in lessons and around the school. An inspector listened to pupils reading and spoke to them about their reading habits.
- Inspectors examined several school documents. These included the school's evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan, notes of governors' meetings, information about pupils' progress and attainment, evidence about the quality of teaching, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 145 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, two comments sent to Ofsted, and the views expressed informally by parents as they arrived at school. The team analysed 26 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Jim McVeigh, lead inspector	Ofsted inspector
Christine Bulmer	Ofsted inspector
Douglas Brawley	Ofsted inspector

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