

# Dorchester Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102982
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sutton
<b>Inspection number</b>	355292
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Dunn

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	432
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tony Marshall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Austin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Dorchester Road Worcester Park Surrey KT4 8PG
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8330 1144
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They saw 20 lessons taught by 14 staff. Inspectors spoke with pupils, parents and carers, staff and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at planning, monitoring, a range of policy documents and records, governing body meeting minutes and a range of pupils' work. They analysed 142 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 111 from pupils in Years 3 to 6 and 23 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How successfully leaders at different levels use a range of information about the school's academic performance to identify trends and patterns in order to promote improvement.
- Whether current teaching is of sufficient quality to sustain any improvements in rates of pupil progress.
- How successfully teachers use assessment information to adapt teaching and the curriculum to promote at least good progress.
- Particular features of provision that contribute to positive outcomes for pupils with English as an additional language, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## Information about the school

Dorchester Primary is larger than most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than average. The percentage with English as an additional language is higher than in most primary schools. Fewer pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities than is typically seen; most have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or speech, language and communication needs, though the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The numbers of pupils that arrive or leave at times other than the scheduled points of entry are much higher than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is rapidly growing, but remains below average. The school has achieved Healthy School Status and Activemark. Building work to provide new classrooms in preparation for the school becoming three-form entry from September 2011 is currently limiting the outdoor area for Reception classes.

The on-site childcare provision, including the breakfast and after-school clubs and holiday play schemes, is managed by a private provider and was not part of this inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Pupils at Dorchester Primary are notably proud of their good achievement. The drive to involve pupils fully in their learning is a significant factor in the success of this good school. Pupils develop an increasing understanding of the levels at which they work and what they need to do next to improve. Assessed writing, sent home before consultation evenings to inform the discussion, involves parents and carers in the process, and is just one example of the excellent engagement with them. As one parent put it, 'We are all part of the school.' This positive relationship begins in the effective Early Years Foundation Stage, where children get off to a good start. The outstanding care demonstrated at all levels of the school's work, including the excellent support for pupils whose circumstances might make them potentially vulnerable, contributes to personal development outcomes for pupils that are consistently at least good. Pupils' contribution to the community and extent to which they adopt healthy lifestyles are outstanding. 'Fruity Fridays' is an excellent example of both, where pupils are involved in planning a fruit stall, ordering supplies from the local greengrocer and selling healthy snacks.

The school's success in securing good teaching has ensured that progress is good. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain above average levels at the end of this year. Standards of attainment and good progress evident in pupils' books across the school indicate that this trend is set to continue. New 'learning books' introduced at the start of the current academic year, in which pupils do all tasks except mathematics, have increased the consistency of good work. Teaching typically challenges and enthuses pupils to do well. However, the school has not completely eradicated unevenness in rates of progress because some satisfactory teaching remains. This is largely when the lesson is not pitched at quite the right level to promote good progress for all groups within the class. Although teachers regularly use assessments of pupils' learning to adapt teaching, assessments of pupils' overall levels of attainment are sometimes less secure. Having successfully tackled writing, the school is now turning its attention to assessing levels in mathematics.

Progress made by pupils with English as an additional language and by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good, and sometimes exceptional. Teaching assistants provide effective support for these pupils in lessons, including for pupils that have a statement of special educational needs. An extensive range of interventions, carefully planned to meet specific needs, contribute very effectively to the significantly accelerated progress sometimes seen. In lessons, teachers pitch the level of tasks for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. For pupils with English as an additional language, the school tracks the gains made by those at the early stages of language acquisition very carefully to target support and ensure they quickly fulfil their potential.

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The school has a good capacity for further improvement. The governing body provides the school's leaders with effective challenge and support. Together, they have successfully developed and sustained good performance in a number of key areas since the last inspection, and raised the quality of care and some of the personal development outcomes for pupils to 'outstanding'. The headteacher and senior leadership team have successfully created a strong sense of ambition and purpose across the school. Leaders at different levels have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and all contribute to plans for improvement, informed by a thorough analysis of the performance of different groups. However, leaders have missed opportunities to use information about trends in the school's performance over time to focus its improvement planning more sharply and promote even more rapid improvement. That said, even where practice is outstanding, there is no sense of complacency.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure progress is at least consistently good and increase the proportion that is outstanding by:
  - providing additional training and support in the current academic year, so that teachers confidently and accurately assess the levels at which pupils work in all areas
  - eradicating the remaining satisfactory teaching by September 2011, and ensuring lessons consistently challenge all groups to do as well as they can so that more are outstanding.
- Use information from the school's tracking systems and other available data more effectively to identify trends in performance over time in order to precisely target further improvements.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Although over time, children have started school with skills broadly in line with those expected for their age, increasingly these are falling, particularly with regard to language skills, and in aspects of their personal, social and emotional development. Throughout the school, pupils clearly demonstrate good levels of enjoyment in learning through their engagement in lessons, and in the quality and quantity of work produced. An example of pupils being justifiably keen and proud to share what they have done was seen in Year 1. Pupils were so engrossed in enthusiastically explaining to the inspector the detail of how they had effectively improved their work they had to be reminded twice to return to sit on the carpet! Pupils evaluate their own and each other's work well, and teachers' good questioning provokes deeper reflection. In a Year 6 follow-up lesson to a workshop with a visiting poet, pupils pinpointed things they had learned that they could apply to their own writing. The impact of this was maximised, because the teacher gave them opportunity to review previous work in the light of their increased knowledge of different writing techniques. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieved well, prompted by the teaching assistant's effective questioning to support their developing ideas. Pupils collaborate successfully and are supportive of each other. In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils achieved well when tackling problems involving subtracting fractions, by engaging together in animated discussions about different mathematical processes.

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However, the pitch was not quite right for the highest ability pupils who could have made even faster progress. They reported only really feeling challenged when they reached their final task, which could therefore have been their starting point. Notwithstanding this, the proportion of pupils that attain the higher levels of attainment by the time they leave school is at least in line with the national average, and sometimes above.

Pupils feel safe at school and are confident that adults deal quickly and effectively with those rare problems they might encounter. Pupils have a strong voice in the school and, most importantly, feel listened to. Regularly rotated positions on the school council ensure widespread opportunities for them to serve. Pupils proudly demonstrate commitment and maturity in carrying out their responsibilities in these and other roles, including as prefects, monitors and Eco-prefects. Pupils' detailed knowledge of the school's charity work, combined with regular interaction with the local area through visitors coming in and visits out, significantly broadens pupils' sense of community. Their behaviour is welcoming and positive, and pupils from different backgrounds mix well. Pupils demonstrate respect and reflect on their own and others' needs and interests. They actively participate in discussions around anti-bullying and racism. Events such as the recent 'International Week' help pupils develop a good understanding of other cultures, and they participate well in a wide range of artistic and sporting activities, including the 'Big Arts Week'.

Although they learn about a range of religions, including visiting different places of worship, pupils are less confident when discussing these. Pupils have an excellent understanding of different factors affecting their health. High take-up and enthusiastic participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities to promote healthy lifestyles, including a healthy-eating cookery club, have helped the school gain both the Healthy Schools Status and the Activemark award. Pupils have good opportunities to develop a wide range of skills, for example through the 'Dorchester does "The Apprentice" ' project for the older pupils. Combined with the good progress pupils make in developing their basic skills and with their above average attendance, they are well prepared for their next schools and life beyond.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Excellent transition arrangements throughout school are typical of the high priority placed by the school on the welfare of its pupils. Support for pupils whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable is highly tailored to their individual needs, supported by excellent links with families. Excellent induction procedures for pupils who join the school able to speak little or no English, including links with other professionals to support initial assessment, ensure progress for these pupils is at least in line with their peers. The school's curriculum is imaginative and creative, including a rich array of visits out to places of interest and visitors in to school to enhance learning, such as the poet workshops during the inspection. Small group or individual interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good use of a range of interesting activities, such as the 'sound detectives' work, visual support and good questioning. Teaching assistants' good subject knowledge and their excellent relationships with pupils secure the quality and success of these sessions. However, the school acknowledges that the curriculum is not always as well adapted for more able pupils.

Lessons typically make good use of pupils' engagement in their learning by actively involving them, and teachers make good use of new technologies and other resources to support this. They regularly draw learning together well at the end of the lesson. For example, in a Year 1 poetry lesson, the teacher used her ongoing assessment of pupils as they were working to identify a common mistake, and used this to adapt the final planned

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activity. This is an example of some outstanding practice emerging in the use of assessment to support learning, though sometimes teachers miss opportunities to address pupils' misconceptions as they arise.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have used partnerships with other schools and professionals well to challenge their own view of the school's effectiveness. This is typical of the good level of ambition demonstrated by the school and governing body. Targets the school sets itself are challenging. Most of its plans for improvement include these as potential measures of success. However, the overall school improvement plan does not always clearly prioritise the most significant aspects that will improve outcomes for pupils. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, work to increase the rigour and quality of teaching has effectively secured good achievement for pupils. The school makes good use of its analysis of performance to adapt provision for different groups, and consequently gaps between them are closing. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and there have been no reported racial incidents in recent years. Together with the highly positive relationships with parents and carers, the school operates as a cohesive community. Careful analysis of the school's own ethnic, religious and socio-economic context has led to developing opportunities for pupils to engage with groups beyond the school, nationally and internationally, though the school recognises the need to deepen pupils' understanding of different religions.

The governing body works closely with the school's staff and takes good account of the views of pupils, as well as parents and carers, to evaluate the school's performance and help set future strategic direction. It uses the broad range of expertise and backgrounds of its members effectively to challenge and support the school's leaders, for example in its monitoring of the school's robust safeguarding procedures. Associated policies and procedures are clear and effective, regularly reviewed and understood well by staff. A good range of training equips staff with the understanding required to safeguard children, relevant to individual roles. Taking outcomes for pupils into account, the school provides good value for money.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils' pride and involvement in learning throughout the school is cultivated effectively in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Without prompting, children in the Reception Year were eager to share their 'learning journey' books, which contain examples of their creations, contributions from their parents and carers and observations from adults in school. As they begin this journey, children settle quickly into the bright, attractive environment, supported by excellent relationships with adults. Careful thought has gone into the organisation of different areas of learning, independently accessed by children.

'Challenges' are included to extend children's play and a good range of resources is readily available to support this. Adults know how to interact with children to extend their learning. For example, in the Nursery, a teaching assistant took the opportunity to reinforce mathematical vocabulary as children played in the sand, before successfully extending the activity into experimenting to see which containers would hold the sand in. Children then made predictions and tested which would let the sand out fastest. Adults sometimes miss these opportunities in the Reception Year, because at times they are all engaged in focus-group activities. However, they do maintain the balance for children between these and self-chosen activities. Current building work has reduced the size of the outdoor area for Reception Year children. However, adults have seized on children's interest in the building work they can see through the fence, by creating a construction role play area. Children wearing fluorescent tabards interacted well as they busied themselves purposefully with a range of tools on their 'building site', whilst another made them all a cup of tea!

Children develop good habits supportive of developing a healthy lifestyle by independently accessing fruit, vegetables and milk. They make a good contribution by clearing away after themselves. They demonstrate their feelings of safety through their confident, happy engagement, and mix well. Good leadership and management have secured a consistency

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in approach across the different early years classes and ensured children make good gains in their learning. A strong focus on developing children's skills in communication, language and literacy has been effective in accelerating the gains children make in this area, particularly in writing. Children engage enthusiastically in the extensive opportunities to write, including 'feeding their writing to the dragon' in one of the Reception classes. Adults are currently working together to ensure that their assessments of children's capabilities are consistently accurate across all areas of learning, particularly in creative and physical development.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers that answered each question within the questionnaire were unanimous in their agreement that the school helps them to support their children's learning at home and prepares them well for the future. The overwhelming majority expressed positive views about most aspects of the school's work. A number of parents and carers added comments to the questionnaire, the majority of which were positive. Many of the positive comments gave examples of how the school has worked supportively with children and families to meet specific needs. Inspectors followed up areas of concern raised on questionnaires through inspection activities or discussions with the school. The only common area was the few parents and carers that disagree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection found pupils' behaviour to be good. It found the school uses a good range of strategies to deal with any behaviour that may present as challenging, including through the outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 142 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 432 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	60	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	66	20	31	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	40	37	57	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	52	28	43	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	60	26	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	49	31	48	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	43	36	55	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	46	25	38	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	51	27	42	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	45	22	34	6	9	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	48	23	35	9	15	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	40	31	48	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	58	27	42	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



18 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Dorchester Primary School, Sutton KT4 8PG**

Thank you so much for the warm and friendly welcome you gave my team of inspectors when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to see how proud you are of your work. Thank you for sharing it with us and giving us so much information about your school. You told us you enjoyed school and we can see why ♦ it is a good school.

You are right to feel proud of your work because you achieve well. The care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. You develop good personal skills for the future and have an excellent understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Your involvement in 'Fruity Fridays' particularly impressed us. This is also one example of your outstanding contribution to the community. The Early Years Foundation Stage is good.

You have good teachers who make sure you are involved in your learning. You have a good understanding of how well you are doing and what you need to do next to make your work even better. Those responsible for running the school do a good job and work extremely well with your parents and carers to promote your achievement and well-being.

Your school has good plans to make it even better. To help with this, we have asked leaders to do some important things.

- Help you all to make as much progress as you possibly can, by making sure teachers accurately assess your levels in all areas and always give you tasks that have just the right level of challenge for you.
- Look at how well different groups of you are doing over a number of years, to see where the school can do even better.

You can all help by continuing to get so well involved with your learning by always trying hard to improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Clive Dunn

Lead inspector

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