

# Ditton Church of England Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118854
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	358461
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gavin Jones

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Graeme Proud
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robert Holder
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	New Road Aylesford ME20 6AE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 13 lessons. All class teachers, present during the inspection, were seen at least once. Inspectors met with groups of pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, including playtime and assembly, and looked at planning, monitoring, assessment data, a range of school policies, the governing body minutes and a range of pupils' work. They analysed 66 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 17 from staff and 104 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The reasons for progress in writing appearing to be inadequate and the attainment and progress of girls overall seemingly being below the national average.
- The accuracy of the school's own judgements concerning the quality of teaching, exploring possible variations between year groups.
- The quality of leadership and management at all levels, in relation to monitoring and driving improvement.
- The extent to which pupils understand ethnic, religious and cultural diversity in British society and on a more global scale.

## Information about the school

Ditton is a broadly average-sized school, which has grown over recent years. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. A very small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, as almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The school has several awards which reflect its keen interest in sport and healthy living. An after-school club operates each day, but this is not managed by the school and therefore was not inspected at this time.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

Ditton Primary School continues to provide a satisfactory education for its pupils as it did at the last inspection. A strength of the school is the good level of care it provides for its pupils. Arrangements for safeguarding are good and they are regularly updated.

Vulnerable pupils are supported well and as a result make the same progress as their classmates. Because of the level of care given, pupils feel very safe and secure and enjoy school. All parents and carers who completed the Ofsted questionnaire agree with this. Pupils' academic achievement is, as it was in the last inspection, satisfactory. Recent very successful meetings between the junior and infant schools have made it easier for the school to confirm the inspection team's judgement that pupils' progress is satisfactory.

By the end of Year 6 pupils reached average levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science in 2009. The most recent, but not yet validated results for 2010 suggest that while attainment is broadly average overall, it has improved in mathematics but fallen slightly in writing, as some more-able pupils did less well in this aspect. The progress and attainment of girls have fallen behind national profiles over a period of years, but this situation is being overcome through improvements in planning and significantly better liaison with the infant school. Although there is no inadequate teaching and learning in the school, the satisfactory teaching is not yet good enough to support better attainment or progress. Aspects of teaching in need of improvement are not monitored sharply enough. Areas for development include setting work at different ability levels, making better use of teaching assistants and providing more opportunities for pupils to be involved in independent learning activities. The school's tracking systems have been improved with information being used more strategically in pupil progress meetings. Target setting is now more regularly addressed and marking has improved, although there are still some inconsistencies. The school accurately evaluates its own strengths and areas for development. It knows that its community cohesion programme has addressed local issues well but that pupils do not have sufficient understanding of what life is like in other areas of the United Kingdom for boys and girls from different social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Positive moves forward, for example, in raising attainment in mathematics and developing the use of assessment, together with the new dialogue between schools, indicate that Ditton Junior has a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvements.

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

- Improve attainment and progress in writing by:
  - using data more consistently to identify and provide for pupils who need extra support to reach levels above those expected for their age

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- giving subject leaders more opportunities to make use of whole-school data, monitor teaching and learning, evaluate the success of new interventions and share good practice
- through the growing links with the infant school establishing at what stage girls in particular begin to underachieve in their learning
- capturing the interests of girls so that they are excited by writing opportunities.
- Improve teaching so that it is more consistently good by:
  - ensuring all teachers use the information gathered from the range of assessment procedures to pitch teaching at the right level for all pupils
  - checking that teachers move pupils more rapidly into independent and collaborative tasks
  - making better use of teaching assistants in the early parts of lessons
  - checking pupils' understanding more regularly during lessons
  - making the monitoring of teaching focus clearly on learning and progress.
- Improve pupils' cultural development, especially their understanding of the multicultural country in which they live by:
  - providing a wider range of books reflecting our multicultural society
  - ensuring that in each year group topics and work in literacy more regularly reflect a multicultural dimension
  - putting into effect community cohesion strategies to establish links with other schools nationally in order to support pupils' understanding of the lives of children with different social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils enjoy learning with 100% of parents agreeing with this in the questionnaire. One parent wrote, 'My child loves school', a view reflected by pupils in discussion. Pupils attend regularly with rates of attendance above the national average. They want to do well and are keen to discuss their work in paired discussions. Sometimes when pupils have to sit for too long, without being active in their learning, this can lead to insufficient time for them to work independently or in groups. In a Year 6 topic lesson, however, pupils worked well together gathering information about life in Victorian times. This type of activity has produced good-quality writing and illustrations, as is evident in previous work. In a few classes work, especially for the more-able pupils, is not challenging enough. In one mathematics lesson, a group of pupils got to the extension activities far too quickly, as the tasks they had previously been set did not have enough challenge. Nevertheless, pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in lessons with some making good progress over time. Attainment in both mathematics and science has been improved, but the proportion of pupils reaching levels higher than those expected for their age, especially in English, are below the national average.

The overall level of basic skills and above-average attendance indicate that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education. All groups of pupils say they feel completely safe in school and almost all parents agreed with this in the questionnaire.

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Pupils are proud of the contributions they make to school and the school council has been involved in such activities as designing a wildlife garden and meadow area for the school. Pupils enthusiastically participate in extra-curricular activities: for example from early morning gymnastics to golf and dance clubs. They have a good understanding of how these activities and good diet can help them keep healthy. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently good. A variety of activities support good spiritual awareness, although their multicultural awareness is only satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</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?

Teaching was never less than satisfactory during the inspection and a small number of good lessons were seen. However, teaching is not consistently effective in order to drive improvements to pupils' progress and attainment sufficiently fast enough. Many teachers have good subject knowledge, especially in mathematics and science and they use their interactive whiteboards well to focus pupils' attention effectively and support learning. Some lessons immediately gain pupils' attention and are effective in enabling pupils to launch quickly into new learning, as in a science lesson in Year 6. However, on a variety of occasions, teachers move through their well-planned lessons slowly, spending too much time on revision and not enough on making pupils active learners in new areas of learning. In a minority of lessons pupils' progress is not checked regularly enough, resulting in insufficient challenge in aspects of the work, especially for more-able pupils.

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The curriculum is considerably enriched through clubs, visits and visitors and is becoming more creative and imaginative. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning, but the absence of computers in some classes reduces opportunities for pupils to put into effect their skills during lessons. Music, modern foreign languages and sport have a high profile in the school. A full class of ukulele players was seen in the hall, while many photographs and trophies bear testament to the school's sporting prowess. The science curriculum has been improved and improvements in attainment have followed. However, the curriculum to support pupils' multicultural development is not sufficiently well developed.

Good care, guidance and support are illustrated by the effective range of activities provided to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Induction arrangements into Year 3 are good and recently enhanced by purposeful liaison with the main feeder infant school. Transfers to secondary school are managed effectively. Parents express satisfaction with communication and support for their children, recognising the effective way pupils' work is displayed, for example poetry work from a London Underground project.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders have established effective working relationships with staff, parents and local partners so that a vision for improvement has been established. Challenging targets are set for the school and it is using these targets to spur on progress, and this is just beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. Tracking of progress is carried out effectively and, following recent improvements, data is being used effectively in termly pupil progress meetings. As a result pupils are achieving satisfactorily. The performance of groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is tracked effectively, ensuring on nearly all occasions that these groups make similar progress to others in their classes. Procedures to ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity are satisfactory with strengths in the way pupils are treated fairly. The school is focusing on improving provision designed to raise the performance of girls and some more-able pupils. It is too soon to see the full impact of this so far on pupils' learning, but there are positive signs, for example in mathematics

Safeguarding procedures are good and regularly checked. Child protection training is very up to date and risk assessments are regularly carried out. There have been no cases of racial discrimination over the last few years. There is a good partnership with parents with a small minority sometimes feeling that their views are not always acted upon. As a result

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the governing body has introduced an informal system for establishing and responding to their views. Governors' effectiveness is satisfactory. The governing body is increasingly aware of the need to improve attainment and progress in the school, but its involvement in self-evaluation, although satisfactory overall, is underdeveloped. Other partnerships, with secondary schools, the local authority, outside agencies and the strongly developing links with the infant school, are positively impacting on the school's confidence in its judgements on attainment and progress. Sport is supported well through links to one of the local sports colleges. The school has an effective view of its own context and has provided strong links with the local community and parish. Developing links with the wider community to enhance pupils' awareness of different lifestyles is correctly recognised by the school as a key area for improvement.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Most of the comments on questionnaires were positive and reflected the good levels of satisfaction in the school's work across a number of areas. All parents and carers feel their children are safe in school, reflecting the school's good safeguarding arrangements. Almost all feel their children enjoy school and learn how to lead healthy lifestyles. A small minority disagreed that the school is dealing with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors looked closely at this issue. Discussions with various groups of pupils both formally and informally did not indicate that pupils had concerns about behaviour. Taking into account the behaviour observed at break times, in assembly, in corridors and on stairs and in lessons, inspection evidence shows that behaviour is good overall. This is due in no small part to the good quality of care, guidance and support.

A few parents and carers raised comments about communication, while others highlighted this as a strength. A small number of recent concerns, which the school may consider



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further, did have an adverse effect on the proportion of parents making negative comments here.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ditton Church of England Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 215 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	47	32	48	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	42	38	58	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	30	39	59	4	6	3	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	21	41	62	11	17	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	32	37	56	6	9	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	26	39	59	5	8	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	21	51	77	0	0	1	2
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)	14	21	39	59	2	3	3	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	21	41	62	9	14	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	23	37	56	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	18	42	64	7	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	27	40	61	6	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	36	34	52	6	9	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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.**



5 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ditton Church of England Junior School, Ditton ME20 6AE**

You may remember that three inspectors came to visit your school very recently. Thank you for making us all so welcome. We enjoyed meeting you and I am writing to tell you what we found out. You go to a school that takes good care of you and provides you with a satisfactory education. It has a number of good features.

- You are making satisfactory progress in your work, with most of you reaching the expected levels in English, mathematics and science.
- Everybody in the school looks after you well and this makes you feel very safe.
- Although a few parents and carers have some concerns about behaviour, we have judged behaviour is good.
- You all enjoy school. Your parents agree and help you attend regularly.
- You know a good deal about staying healthy and keeping fit.
- There are good links with other schools to help in areas of learning such as sport.

We have asked the school to do three things to help it improve further.

- Raise your attainment and progress, especially in writing, and help girls make the same progress as the boys.
- Work towards making more teaching consistently good.
- Help you understand what life is like in other parts of the country and the world.

All of you can help by continuing to behave well and working hard at your writing.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Jones

Lead Inspector

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