

# Dolton Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113450
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	357353
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jane Burchall HMI

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	49
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Atton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Brennan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	The Square Winkleigh Devon EX19 8QF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector observed a total of six lessons, and three teachers. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, school data about pupils' attainment and progress, monitoring records, safeguarding and child protection documentation, and the school improvement plan. She also spoke with a group of pupils, governors and staff. The inspector considered the responses to questionnaires from 18 parents and carers, 32 children and three members of staff.

The school is part of The Tarka Federation alongside one other school; The Clinton Church of England Primary School, in Merton, Oakhampton, Devon. Separate inspections of each school were carried out simultaneously.

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

- The impact of the steps taken by the school to raise pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics.
- How well reading and writing are taught across the school.
- How well teaching and assessment support pupils' learning so that they all progress as well as they can.
- The impact of provision for outside learning on the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How well the school makes use of its pool of expertise and resources across schools in the federation.

## Information about the school

Dolton Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average school serving the village of Dolton and surrounding villages. Pupils are taught in two classes, one for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and one for pupils in Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is significantly below the national average, and currently there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The overall percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above that seen nationally. The school joined a management partnership with The Clinton Church of England Primary School in September 2009 prior to becoming a federation in January 2010. The headteacher has responsibility for leading and managing both schools within the federation. Subjects are led by coordinators who hold responsibility across both schools.

**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

Dolton Church of England Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory education which has some good features. During their time in school, pupils build appropriately on their skills and knowledge. With some variations in the rates at which pupils progress, achievement overall is satisfactory and attainment is broadly average. Recent concerted efforts in reading have seen a positive impact, with pupils making good progress. The school has been less successful in promoting pupils' progress in mathematics, which is much more variable; whilst some pupils make progress at expected rates, others do not. This is because during lessons, pupils are not always sufficiently aware of what they are expected to learn or are not challenged at a level appropriate to their needs. The school is beginning to draw upon the expertise of the recently appointed coordinator across the federation in order to improve provision in mathematics and increase pupils' progress.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Pupils have easy access to a range of activities which promote their development across all areas of learning within the classroom. Whilst they have access to outside provision, this is dependent on dry weather conditions. In addition, the outdoor area is not stimulating and does not fully encourage children to engage. Teaching is satisfactory overall. This is due mainly to the fact that teachers' planning and approaches do not consistently focus on what pupils with different levels of skill need to learn next, based on ongoing assessments of what they can and cannot do.

A warm and caring ethos is evident across the school and the care, guidance and support for pupils are strong features. Staff have a good understanding of pupils' individual welfare needs and work well together to meet these. There are high levels of attendance by the vast majority of pupils who arrive at school punctually. Pupils are well behaved and quickly settle in lessons. Pupils feel safe in school and their parents overwhelmingly agree. They know who they can go to for help and feel confident that staff will support them. Keeping healthy is important to pupils and they understand the steps they need to take in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Pupils take responsibility around the school and undertake jobs within their classrooms. Some are active members of the school council and act as a voice for their peers. Pupils engage regularly with the wider community through taking part in village, federation, learning community and county-wide events. They welcome older members of their village community to have lunch with them on a regular basis.

The headteacher, governors and staff show a clear commitment to improving the school further. Most areas identified at the last inspection have been addressed, although weaknesses in mathematics continue. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and leaders are aware of the school's strengths and areas which require improvement. Essential systems to improve progress and attainment, such as strategies that enable teachers to continually

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assess pupils' progress, are being developed. They have yet to have a full impact across the whole curriculum. The school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve consistency in the quality of teaching so that it is all at least good by:
  - embedding strategies across all subjects that enable staff to continually assess pupils' progress in lessons
  - developing planning further so that lessons are sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Drive pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics by:
  - ensuring all lessons challenge all pupils to achieve as much as they can
  - ensuring pupils understand what they are expected to learn and how they can achieve this.
- Ensure children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have consistent access to a stimulating and inviting outdoor learning environment.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils start school with skills and levels of development that are just below those typical for children of this age. Overall, they make satisfactory progress during their time at Dolton Primary School so that by the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 2, they reach standards which are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Attainment in English is stronger than that in mathematics as the school has successfully focused on improving pupils' progress in reading. Progress in mathematics has been the school's weaker area over time and, in 2010, was significantly below that expected. The headteacher, mathematics coordinator and staff are fully aware of this and some steps have been taken to make improvements. These are in their infancy and the full impact of these have yet to be realised. Pupils with special needs and/or disabilities are also supported to make suitable progress. Staff regularly track their progress and develop individual education plans to ensure they make progress equal to that of their peers. In the majority of lessons observed, pupils showed an interest in their lessons, particularly when they were more actively involved, for example when making circuits in a science lesson. However, when tasks were not sufficiently matched to pupils' skill level, pupils were observed to either struggle to understand how to complete the task set or to complete it with ease and not be extended further.

Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes an unsafe situation and they know how to take sensible steps to keep themselves safe. For example, they fully understand the risks presented by using the internet and how to avoid these. Pupils have a good understanding of the components of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy taking part in physical activity and understand the elements which make up a healthy balanced diet. In personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons, pupils explore their emotional well-being. They show care and understanding for each other. Older pupils, in particular, naturally assist younger pupils when they need help. Pupils develop an understanding of spirituality through the whole-school ethos, religious education lessons and assemblies. They know right from wrong and good relationships are evident. Through undertaking joint visits and

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'team building' activities alongside pupils in their federated school, they develop their social skills well. Their knowledge of different cultures is developing and they show curiosity about the world around them. Pupils develop satisfactory skills which contribute to their future economic well-being; they attend school very regularly and develop basic skills to a suitable level.

*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>2</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>	1
<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?

Overall teaching is satisfactory and has some good features. Teaching is most successful where lesson planning builds sequentially upon prior learning and provides opportunities for pupils to revisit aspects in which they lack confidence, teachers clearly communicate what they expect pupils to learn from lessons, and where plenary sessions are used effectively to help pupils recognise what they have learnt and the next steps they need to take. Conversely, teaching is less successful when learning objectives are not successfully communicated to pupils or where they are unable to recognise when they have been successful in their learning, personal targets are not easily accessible to pupils so they can apply these within their work, and where lesson content is not sufficiently differentiated to suitably challenge all pupils.

Teachers are developing strategies to continually monitor pupils' progress to ensure lessons are appropriately pitched to meet the needs of all pupils. This has had a positive impact on their progress in English and staff are aware that these strategies need to be

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embedded across the curriculum. Systems to track pupils' progress and attainment have been developed. These are beginning to be used to monitor where pupils are at risk of not achieving as well as they can. These systems have yet to be fully developed and, as a result, on occasion, pupils have not been monitored closely enough to ensure they make good progress, particularly in mathematics.

Overall, pupils access a broad curriculum which is enriched with opportunities for off-site visits and visitors to the school. The school is developing the curriculum for mathematics to ensure it is reflective of the needs of all pupils in order to drive improvement in pupils' progress in this area. Staff are fully aware of the welfare needs of all pupils, including those who are in circumstances that make them more vulnerable. Strong relationships exist with a range of outside agencies in order to support pupils' well-being effectively.

*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?**

The school is led by a committed and dedicated headteacher. Following the federation with another local primary school, a middle management structure has been developed and subject coordinators have been identified to lead on different areas of the curriculum. This is beginning to have a positive impact upon some subject areas as staff utilise opportunities to plan together and draw upon individuals' expertise. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. These are being further developed to include monitoring by subject coordinators to ensure consistency across the federation. Areas of weakness have been identified and plans have been developed to address these. However, these plans are in their infancy and their impact has yet to be realised. The staff team are motivated to seek further improvement and undertake training as a whole federation team in order to learn from each other and develop their skills. The school makes good use of limited accommodation and a small budget. Satisfactory outcomes for children demonstrate the school's satisfactory value for money.

The school is supported by its governing body, whose members show clear commitment to their role. To date, they have focused their attentions on supporting the federation of the two schools but are now beginning to have a more cohesive understanding of the issues faced by the individual schools. With this improving understanding, they are beginning to challenge the school and hold it to account.

The school works hard to keep parents and carers informed of events and the progress their children are making, through regular newsletters, academic reports and parents' evenings. The headteacher operates an 'open-door' policy and parents and carers know they can approach her or any of the staff should they wish to discuss their child. In times

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of difficulty, the school has taken good steps to signpost parents to services which can offer appropriate help and support. The school has developed some strong partnerships with outside agencies and the local community to support pupils' school experience. A good example of this is the volunteers who help in classes to support teachers during lessons. Staff are successfully developing a cohesive relationship with their federated school, sharing resources and expertise to enhance pupils' learning and development experience.

Systems in place mean the pupils are suitably safeguarded. The implementation of a suitable range of policies and regular risk assessments means that pupils are kept safe. The school works hard to promote inclusion. The staff's good understanding of pupils' particular needs means they are fully included in the life of the school and are well supported to integrate successfully with their peers. It is evident that the school is a cohesive community. Great efforts have been made to extend this sense of cohesion across the federation. The school links well with the local community and is very much valued within it. Links with a school in France exist, although contact between pupils is infrequent throughout the year. Pupils are beginning to understand and value difference through opportunities within the curriculum to explore other cultures and religions.

*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>3</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>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage class with skills which are slightly below those typical for their age. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, they have reached a skill level broadly in line with, or just below, expectations. This represents satisfactory progress. Children are beginning to work together, share and take turns. They understand the routines of the school and are beginning to develop the behaviour they need in order to learn successfully.



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Children are given a suitable range of activities which are easy for them to access independently. Staff offer support to promote children's learning, although tight staffing levels limit this on occasion. Children have access to outside learning which leads directly from their classroom. However, although this area is not covered, it is only used when weather conditions allow. The area is small and, although it contains a range of activities, lacks interest to invite children to fully engage in their learning outside. These factors impact adversely upon the progress of children who learn better in an outdoor learning environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator works closely with the Early Years Foundation Stage teacher at the federated school to provide a cohesive curriculum. Children are regularly observed in their play to enable staff to assess their progress and achievements. Information gained from this is used to inform planning for their next steps in learning. Although their progress is tracked against the early learning goals, staff recognise that this now needs to be more refined against the 'development matters' milestones to ensure a full and comprehensive picture of progress and achievement is obtained.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. Typical comments include: 'My child loves school', 'The school has been very helpful in meeting my child's needs' and 'The teachers are very helpful.' A very large majority of respondents confirmed that their child enjoys school and they believe the school keeps their child safe. Inspectors endorse these and the other positive comments made. The negative issues raised were few in number and parents and carers are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with the school. A small percentage of parents and carers raised concerns about the impact the current class structure has on their child's progress. Full consideration was given to this during the inspection. Whilst the school has begun to implement strategies to ensure the progress of each child is monitored, the inspector agrees that more needs to be done in this area, particularly in relation to pupils' progress in mathematics. A few parents and carers raised concerns about the amount of opportunities pupils have to engage in sports activities. Again, this was considered by the inspector. The school ensures physical education is appropriately timetabled. In addition, due to a lack of space in the school, pupils are able to access some sporting activities offered out of school hours at the federated school site. The school offers pupils satisfactory opportunities to engage in physical activity.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dolton Church of England Primary 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 inspector received 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 49 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	50	7	39	1	6	1	6
The school keeps my child safe	14	78	4	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	7	39	9	50	1	6	1	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	33	10	56	2	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	61	4	22	3	17	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	50	7	39	2	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	39	10	56	0	0	1	6
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)	9	50	6	33	1	6	1	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	33	9	50	2	11	1	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	50	5	28	0	0	2	11
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	44	7	39	2	11	1	6
The school is led and managed effectively	8	44	7	39	2	11	1	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	26	4	22	3	17	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.**



11 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Dolton Church of England Primary School, Winkleigh EX19 8QF**

I am writing to say how much I enjoyed visiting your school, seeing all the exciting things you are learning and talking with you in lessons. Thank you to those of you who came to speak with me. I could see how hard you have all been working and how well you are all doing with your reading, writing and mathematics.

I have judged your school to be satisfactory. Your headteacher and all your teachers try to give you interesting things to do in school which you enjoy. You all come to school very regularly and are well behaved. You should be particularly proud of how you help out around the school and help each other. The adults in your school look after you well and they keep a close eye on each of you and make sure you are safe. They also make sure that they help you to be healthy.

I have asked your teachers and governors to do three things to help make your school even better. First, I asked the teachers to make sure that the lessons they plan for you ensure that you will learn something new every day and to keep an eye on each of you to check that you do. Second, I asked them to make sure that you get even better at your work in mathematics. Third, I asked them to make sure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have lots of exciting things to learn outdoors even when it is raining.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard. I hope you continue to enjoy your learning at Dolton Church of England Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Jane Burchall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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