



# Long Ditton St Mary's CofE (Aided) Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 125180  
**Local Authority** Surrey  
**Inspection number** 293216  
**Inspection dates** 15–16 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Margaret Coussins

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>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Sugden Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Long Ditton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Thames Ditton KT7 0AD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8398 1070
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	171	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8398 3720
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Sir George Vallings
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs C Susan Woods
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Long Ditton St Mary's is a smaller than average junior school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, those from minority ethnic groups and those with English as an additional language is above average. Two pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Cohort sizes vary considerably year on year.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Long Ditton St Mary's is a good school where children are happy and are cared for well. Parents are very pleased with what the school offers and, like the children, are proud to be part of the school community. As one parent said, 'During the summer holidays my daughter told me that she couldn't wait to go back to school! How refreshing is that?' Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and lead to confident, well behaved learners who feel valued and want to do well. Pupils' work in the day-to-day decision making within the school and their involvement with communities beyond the school is outstanding and helps to develop their good personal skills. They take their responsibilities very seriously and the extremely active school council works with a real sense that its voice is heard and that pupils can make a difference.

Central to the school's success is the teamwork of all the staff. Care, support and guidance are good. Everyone benefits from the good relationships and staff provide good, consistent role models to ensure pupils have a good awareness of the need to live healthy lifestyles and stay safe. Teachers keep close track on academic progress and give pupils good pointers for improvement when they mark their work. However, pupils are not always clear about targets to improve their work over time or how they can evaluate their own progress. Good teaching and an interesting curriculum make learning enjoyable and these factors, along with pupils' good attitudes and personal skills mean all pupils achieve well, whatever their starting point or background. Many leave school with standards which are well above average. However, even though standards are better than found nationally, pupils do not do as well in mathematics as they do in English and science. Mental arithmetic and shape, space and measure are the areas where pupils' achievement is weaker. The school is aware of this discrepancy and has already put in place strategies to deal with it.

Leadership and management are good. Senior managers, subject leaders and governors are fully involved in evaluating and improving the school's work. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. Issues from the previous inspection report have been dealt with effectively. This is shown by the improvements in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards in English and science, particularly the numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels in English. These successes demonstrate that the capacity to improve further is good.

Pupils' good personal skills, their independence and their good levels of basic skills means they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. One parent with two children at the school echoed a view shared by many other parents by saying. 'Their achievement has been outstanding, but it is their confidence as individuals which is of most note. The school gives every child the chance to perform and contribute to all areas of school life and it is fantastic'.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in mathematics particularly in mental mathematics and shape, space and measure.
- Ensure pupils have targets for their learning and know how well they are doing towards achieving those targets.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The skills pupils have when they start school, and the number in each new intake, varies widely from year to year. Attainment in Year 3 is generally average or above. By the time they leave in Year 6, standards are well above average, which represents a good level of achievement. The school has focused on English, and as a result there has been a big increase in the numbers of pupils who exceed the nationally expected level. Improvements in writing have been particularly notable. The focus is currently on mathematics. Here, the school's analysis shows significant gaps in pupils' skills. These include mental arithmetic and shape, space and measure. More time is now being given to these aspects. All groups of pupils achieve at similar rates. Those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, traveller learners and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported to enable them to achieve as well as others. Achievement in ICT is good and pupils use their ICT skills well in other subjects.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school, generally behave well and respond positively to the wide range of opportunities provided. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is not as evident when they have to sit and listen for too long in some lessons. Attendance is good and the school takes good steps to encourage regular and prompt attendance. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes well to their developing confidence, maturity and independence. Pupils demonstrate good, safe practices around the school and are aware of dangers and risks outside of school and how to keep safe. Pupils show a good awareness of healthy lifestyles, for example by organising 'Fruity Fridays', surveys on healthy packed lunches, and participating enthusiastically in the wide range of physical activities provided. Pupils develop outstanding citizenship qualities through their involvement in the school, church and wider community activities. The twinning with a school in Uganda provides a real and meaningful context in which children develop a range of personal and academic skills.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers work hard to pitch work at different levels to ensure that they challenge pupils of all abilities. Their planning is thorough and ensures that this happens. The organisation of pupils into ability groups for English and mathematics is a successful strategy, which contributes significantly to the standards pupils achieve. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Pupils meet teachers' high expectations of behaviour, hard work and positive attitudes to their learning. These qualities help them do well. Resources, including support given by teaching assistants are used well to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers' use of interactive whiteboards engages pupils and helps them be more motivated in lessons. Overlong introductions, where pupils are not active can, on occasion, slow the pace of learning in lessons. Teachers keep a careful check on the progress pupils make and the recently introduced school tracking programme is helping them to do this even more successfully. As one child said, 'My teacher knows what I can do and what I need most help with'. The school has rightly identified that pupils need more awareness of specific targets so they, as well as teachers know what it is they need to do to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and tailored to successfully meet the needs of all pupils. However, in the past there has been insufficient time given to mental arithmetic in the mathematics curriculum, which has resulted in weaker achievement in this area. The school has a good personal, social and health programme, which contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Provision for ICT and its use in other subjects is good and has improved since the previous inspection. There is a very good range of popular, well attended clubs which broaden pupils' personal experiences and learning, especially in relation to sport, music and drama. The curriculum is enriched with many visits and visitors to school and annual residential trips for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. The computer suite and centrally positioned library support the curriculum and pupils' learning well. Two classrooms are small making teaching some aspects of the curriculum a more onerous job given current class sizes.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils feel secure and confident that there is someone to talk to should the need arise. As one parent commented 'The headteacher and class teachers are very approachable, helpful and supportive'. Rigorous risk assessments and child protection procedures are in place. The good range of play activities and support encourages good behaviour and harmonious relationships at playtimes. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and for traveller learners is very good and enables them to achieve as

well as others. Pupils' work is assessed well, but teachers do not use assessment information effectively to give pupils targets for their learning or to help pupils evaluate their progress towards achieving their targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's accurate analysis of its work has enabled it to move forward on several counts. Since the previous inspection, standards, teaching and learning and the curriculum, as well as leadership and management have improved. The impact of leadership and management has not been as marked in raising achievement in mathematics as it has been in other areas. The headteacher gives good leadership and, with the governing body, has demonstrated that the school is good at evaluating where its strengths lie. It also knows what needs improving and acts effectively to bring this about. This has been shown in the major upgrade in the provision for ICT, which was a difficult decision as it put the school's budget under considerable strain. However, it has resulted in a substantial improvement in the quality of teaching and in pupils' skills. The governing body holds the school to account and fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. School improvement planning is flexible. It ensures that changes due to wide variations in the size of cohorts are effective and do not detract from the overall drive to achieve its goals. The school has good partnerships with the county advisory service, other schools and the local community, which contribute well to pupils' achievement. As a parent commented, 'The staff works like a well oiled machine...all do their jobs very well, often going the extra mile...communication is excellent'.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to let you know how much my colleague and I enjoyed our visit to your school and what we found out. Thank you all for making us so welcome, for talking to us about your work and telling us what you think about your school.

We found out that yours is a good school, and these are the reasons why.

- You enjoy being at the school and get on well with each other and all of the staff. You are hard working and well behaved.
- Your teachers are good role models for you and make sure your lessons and all the other activities and clubs that go on in the school are interesting.
- The standards you achieve and your confidence and independence mean you are very well prepared to move on to your next school. Your writing and ICT skills have improved a lot.
- You do outstanding work in the school community. Your link with the school in Uganda is excellent and we wish you well with this.
- Your headteacher and the entire staff do a good job to make sure that everyone has a chance to succeed.

There are two things we think could be better.

- Improve your achievement in mathematics, particularly mental mathematics, so it matches your achievement in English and science.
- All of you should have targets for learning and be more involved in assessing your own progress towards achieving those targets.

Thank you again for all your help. I hope the results of the packed lunchbox survey were interesting.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead Inspector