



Dorchester Primary School



Prospectus 2023

Achieving Excellence Together in a Caring Community

Welcome

On behalf of our staff, parents and governors, I am delighted to welcome you to Dorchester Primary School.

At Dorchester Primary School, our experienced and dedicated staff work together to create a safe, happy and caring environment, where high quality teaching means that all our children achieve excellence. We place a strong emphasis on ensuring that all children are challenged at the right level for them so that they are motivated and enjoy their learning.

Achieving excellence goes way beyond the academic excellence we strive for every day. We want our children to have 'big hearts', to be empathetic, well-rounded and caring young people who make a positive difference to the lives of others.

Our children learn that their views and opinions are important and valuable. We encourage them to be 'doers' – to take action that makes a difference both within and beyond our school community. We encourage them to recognise themselves as creators of change.

To achieve all this, we place a strong emphasis on our school values and encourage the children think about how to use these values to have a positive impact on their own lives and the lives of those around them.

We provide wide range of opportunities for our children to engage in practical activities as well as exciting trips, visits and cultural experiences. We actively promote children's participation in sport, music and the arts through our curriculum and through our extensive co-curricular clubs programme. We give each child the opportunity to develop as a leader, through our Junior Duke, ambassador, and mentor schemes.

We recognise that parents are key educators in their children's lives and hold regular parent engagement events and workshops to ensure that our parents and carers have the tools they need to support their children. We keep our parents and carers informed about their child's progress regularly. We have an 'open-door' policy and our teachers are happy to arrange meetings with parents to discuss any concerns you may have, or indeed to talk about any aspect of school life. Should parents or carers wish to talk any matters over with me then they are most welcome to do so. I am never too busy to talk to a parent or carer and I, along with other senior leaders at school, make every effort to be available and visible around school.

This prospectus, and our website, will give you lots of information about our school; however there is no substitute for seeing the school in action and talking to our children. We hold regular Open Events during the autumn term and are happy to arrange visits at other times. You can find information about these on our website.

We would love to welcome you and your child to our school community and to be part of this exciting chapter in their lives, supporting them in achieving excellence academically, emotionally and socially.

We look forward to meeting you.

Cathy Bell
Headteacher





About our school



Dorchester Primary is a popular co-educational primary school based in Worcester Park, Surrey. We offer our own nursery provision to give our children the very best start to their education and so we welcome children from the ages of 3-11.

We make the most of the broad age range in our community by embracing opportunities for children across year groups to learn and grow together, through our house system and our mentor and ambassador programmes. This helps our older children to develop their sense of responsibility and pride in their school, and the younger children feel safe, secure and supported by the older children as they build positive relationships with them.

In the main, we serve children from the residential areas that surround our school, including local development, [The Hamptons](#). We also welcome several children from further afield in Cheam, Sutton and beyond. We welcome several families who are new to the UK, which adds great breadth to the diversity in our community; in recent years this has included several families who have moved to the UK under the Hong Kong resettlement scheme and families resettling from the Ukraine.

We are fortunate to have a fantastic team of committed support staff who work with our teachers to provide the best possible learning and development opportunities for our children. Class teachers have the overall responsibility for children in their class; our teachers work closely in their year group teams, supported by our experienced and forward thinking leadership team.

We are passionate about providing our children with a variety of co-curricular opportunities at lunchtime and before and after the school day. These include sports clubs and music clubs, alongside other opportunities such as Yoga, Chess Club and Junior Duke Club. Our aim is to offer something for everyone so that all children can participate, and we offer funding support for children from families on low incomes to ensure equal opportunities for all.

Our Ethos

Our school motto, *'Achieving Excellence Together in a Caring Community'*, underpins all we do at school.

We believe that the nurturing and pastoral care of children is fundamental to them *achieving excellence*, and we want our children to be happy and to know that they are appreciated and valued. Our community is centred around *care*; we care passionately about the children who come to us and want the very best for each and every one of them. Through our school values we help children to learn how to *care for themselves, care about their learning, care for others* and *care for our world*.

We *achieve excellence* by focusing on development of the whole child, enabling them to be the very best that they can be *physically, emotionally, socially* and *spiritually* as well as *academically*. We believe that childhood should be a happy time, and that a child's primary school years should be special; formative and transformative, so much more than a just a 'stepping stone' to secondary education. It is therefore important to us that every child enjoys and gets the most out of every day that they spend with us.

We are a fully inclusive community and welcome children from all backgrounds.

Our Vision

To provide a *stimulating and caring* environment where *high quality teaching* inspires children to *learn and explore, have fun* and *feel good about themselves*. A *close partnership with parents and carers* supports us in achieving the *very best outcomes* for our children. We are committed to *continuous improvement*, and work with our stakeholders to ensure our provision is the best that it can be.

Our Aims

The governors and staff at Dorchester Primary School are fully committed to providing a *safe and secure* environment where children and adults *feel confident, positive* and *thrive*. We prioritise the *mental health and wellbeing* of all members of our community.

We strive for each child to develop *academic and social skills* to help them to become *happy, independent and motivated learners* and *involved contributors* to our community; we want them to understand that they can be *creators of change*.

We create a *community of togetherness* where *everyone belongs*.

We *work closely with parents and carers* and have *open communication*, enabling us to provide the best possible education for every child.

We engender a *close partnership* between staff, parents and the community, which enables our children to *play a positive role in society*.

We provide a *caring and supportive environment* in which all children can *reach their full potential, enjoy success* and, in doing so, form a *positive self-image* and a *sense of self-worth*.



Our Values

Our ethos is underpinned by a set of values, which we use to guide the choices we make.

Our children have opportunities to explore our values through assemblies and teaching across the curriculum, learning about people who demonstrated the value and thinking about how they can apply each value to their own lives.

We value:

- **Responsibility:**

We do what is right. We ask for help when we need it, both in the classroom and in the playground. We take on additional responsibilities with pride and enjoy having leadership roles in our school. We take responsibility for our actions and do what we can to make things right when we make a poor choice.

- **Empathy:**

We learn how to be kind to one another and treat everyone with respect. We try to see things from other peoples' points of view and understand different views and opinions. We recognise when others are facing difficulties and do what we can to support them.

- **Self Belief:**

We know that we are important and that our ideas are valued. Our opinions matter and we can create change, both individually and by working together on causes that are important to us. We understand that we can achieve anything if we stretch ourselves and are committed to it.

- **Perseverance:**

We enjoy being in the 'stretch zone' and don't give up when things get tricky. We don't mind getting things wrong because we know that this helps us to learn and allows us to challenge ourselves. If we get everything right we can already do it - we aren't learning anything.

- **Enquiry:**

We want to find out about new things, and we love to ask questions. We enjoy discussing the 'big questions' that even our teachers can't answer, and exploring the views of others.

- **Creativity:**

We use our imagination and are not afraid to think differently. We believe that it is important to take risks and try new things - it is better to try things that don't work than to never give it a shot.

- **Togetherness:**

Our caring community is inclusive and diverse. We welcome children whatever their backgrounds and have a culture where everyone belongs and no-one feels left out. We know we are all different - some of us are academic, some sporty, some quiet, some loud, some make great leaders, some are very organised....the list goes on. We all have our 'something' and those things make our community special.

- **Respect:**

We show respect to everyone and everything. We are polite and make sure we put others before ourselves. We say 'Good morning' or 'Good afternoon' when we pass others in school and we step back to let others go through doorways first. We respect our school and the property of the school and others. We look after our belongings so we are not wasteful of the earths' resources.



Our School Values

Our Curriculum

At our school, our curriculum takes children anywhere and everywhere; through our curriculum, we want our children to have the confidence to know that they can achieve anything, make a difference in the world and realise their dreams.

Our curriculum is the **real substance** of the education we offer children at Dorchester Primary School. Children get **one opportunity** to learn in school and we owe it to them to make sure they get an education that is **broad, rich** and **deep**.

Of course we make sure our children have the knowledge and skills they need to **succeed academically** in their end of key stage assessments so that they are ready to make the transition to secondary school. More importantly, we want them to develop a **breadth** of knowledge and skills that support their **spiritual, cultural** and **moral** development, acquiring attributes that will **empower** them to **make the world a better place**.

To ensure that our children become **well-rounded, independent** and **profound** learners, our school curriculum is based upon and supported by our school values and our 5 curriculum pillars – **Collaboration, Connectivity, Enquiry, Learners for Life and Ambition and Fairness**. These are the ‘building blocks’ of our curriculum at school and ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of our learners.

We encourage children to make links between all the different areas of learning via our pillar of **connectivity**, using **threads of learning** through each subject, that help the children to understand where they are in a broader learning journey.

We teach the **core subjects** of English, Mathematics and Science and our **foundation subjects** of computing, history, geography, art, design and technology, modern foreign languages, music, religious education and physical education. In addition we have a detailed scheme of work to teach **personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education**.

We place a strong emphasis on the ‘cornerstone’ subjects of English and Maths. We use a range of teaching strategies to suit the needs of all our children and pay particular attention to **stretching our most able children** by, for example, entering the UKMT Junior Maths Challenge from year 5 for our able mathematicians and arranging author visits to further inspire our gifted writers. We also have a **strong focus on computing** to enable our children to develop the skills they need to succeed in today’s interconnected world. We have Chromebooks in school – plenty to ensure that every child can use one when needed - as well as i-pads, desktops and laptops to ensure the children are confident using a range of devices. We also have a set of **Virtual Reality headsets** that our children love using to take them wherever they need to go to support their learning.



Our children benefit from regular Forest School sessions in our ‘Quietopia’ Outdoor Classroom to enable them to learn more about the natural environment. We arrange the timetable so that children have three PE sessions per week so that they can benefit from all the advantages this subject offers – improved physical health, teamwork and sportsmanship

Our Curriculum Pillars



Collaboration

To be successful in life, we need to work together. Humans are social creatures and relationships are fundamental to our wellbeing and our society. No one can healthily exist in isolation for very long and we need each other. The ability to get along with others in a variety of situations is a crucial life skill. At Dorchester Primary School, we strive to collaborate with each other in a range of different teams, as well as as a whole school community.

Connectivity

Profound learning requires the ability to link different areas of learning together and combine it to solve problems. In order for profound learning to take place, we adopt a 'mastery approach', which allows for discussion, questioning, challenge and problem solving, with links at the heart of what we do. In each subject area we have identified threads of learning, across which our children progress throughout their time with us.

Enquiry

All learning at all levels, starts with a question and ends with an answer. This answer may, in turn, lead onto other questions. The great discoveries in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths have all begun with a question. From the time children learn to speak, they ask questions; it is a natural way of learning. Child-led enquiry is central to our curriculum.

Learners for life

To be successful in life, we need to learn how to learn. The stages we go through for learning simple skills and knowledge are the same stages we use for learning more complex things. A key part of learning or practising anything new is the ability to 'play' with a new concept and get things wrong. We provide a safe place in which to learn, to rise to challenges, to 'play' with ideas, to make mistakes and to learn from them. A focus on developing Growth Mindset is a key part of this process as it promotes a positive attitude to learning.

To be independent, successful citizens of the UK, we want our children to be ambitious - ambitious about who they can be and what they can achieve. They need to know that they can achieve anything and everything, irrespective of their background. We want them to develop a strong sense of justice, sharing our view that the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within society must not hold anyone back.

Our curriculum is enhanced by a range of *trips and visits* to further *inspire* our children and complement the learning they undertake in school. These range from discovering more about our local area to residential visits in years 5 and 6. These experiences help the children to put their learning into context and to experience learning in a range of settings.

Remote Learning

Of course we hope that situations where the school needs to remain closed to most children, as during the Covid-19 pandemic, will remain extremely rare. However, it is reassuring to know that we are well set up to switch directly to *live online lesson delivery* should the need arise in the future. We use Google Classroom to facilitate our remote learning programme, which covers *all areas of the curriculum*. Children's work is submitted via Google Classroom during each lesson for their teacher to review, and teachers remain online during sessions to ensure children can access help they need during their independent activities. We also make sure that children in each class can enjoy some social time together online during virtual 'play time' if they are unable to see one another in person.

Sport

We believe that playing sport is *vital for children's fitness* as well as affording the opportunity for children to develop skills in *teamwork* and *sportsmanship*. We partner with some of the best sporting organisations to ensure our children have the best possible teaching in PE and sport. For our youngest children we focus on developing *early ball and hand/eye co-ordination skills*, setting them up to enable them to access a variety of different sports as they get older. We play in the local schools' football and netball leagues, the district athletics and cross country competition, the swimming gala, indoor athletics, rugby tournaments and many more.



We have an *excellent performance record* in competitive sports with our teams standing up well against the competition. Our children take swimming lessons in Year 5; these take place in the wonderful 30m pool at Cheam Leisure Centre. For some of our children this is their first experience of swimming, for others it is an opportunity to further develop their existing skills across a number of different swimming strokes.



Music

We encourage all our children to *participate in musical activities*. Our choirs are particularly active, with children regularly singing in at in-school and external events and taking part in events such as *Young Voices*—a massed choir event held at the O2 Arena.

All children learn to play the ukulele during their time at Dorchester Primary. In addition, we have a *wide range of peripatetic music teachers* offering a range of instrumental lessons; our instrumentalists are encouraged to participate in *playing in assemblies* and regular *recitals* to hone their performance skills.

Play

At our school, play is not something that children do in between learning—*it is a fundamental part of learning*. It is the playground where children have the best opportunities to learn and practise the social and communication skills that are essential for a successful future.

We are currently working on a project to ensure we provide *high quality, sustainable play opportunities* for all children. We are carefully considering our outdoor spaces and providing equipment and toys that offer a rich choice of accessible play experiences for every child. Play has a vital role in children's health, happiness and wellbeing and it creates children who are independent, confident, imaginative, adaptable, social, able to assess risks and lots more. We teach the children how to respect and look after their play areas and teach them how to play with one another in a fun and safe way.

Each year, a group of children in the upper juniors are trained as *Junior Supremos*. These children support play for younger children by organising a variety of playground games, ensuring that children are engaged in effective, high quality play.



Co-curricular Offer

Opportunities continue beyond the taught school day as we run a wide range of co-curricular clubs and activities for your child to enjoy. Clubs are related to *academic learning and learning new skills*, *sport* and *music*; they are run by teachers, support staff or by outside providers.

Clubs run by teachers have a minimal charge; this is to cover any club expenses and to ensure that children attending are committed to the club. Charges vary for clubs run by outside providers – although the school is able to fund some places for children who would otherwise be unable to benefit from these opportunities. Costs and timings for each club are provided prior to the start of each term.

Clubs currently offered include:

- Art Club
- Athletics Club (summer term)
- Basketball Club
- Choir – Juniors/Infants
- Computer Coding Club
- Cricket Club (summer term)
- Drama Club
- Eco Club
- Football Club – Boys/Girls/Mixed Gender
- Junior Duke Club
- Netball Club (Mixed Gender)
- Playball
- Recorder Club
- Running Club
- Spanish Club
- Streetdance
- Singing Club – Infants
- Table Tennis Club
- Yoga Club



Participating in co-curricular clubs can help to boost children's *self-esteem, build their confidence* and *support them in making new friendships* and so we encourage all children to participate in this programme. Children in sports clubs are likely to represent the school in matches in local sports leagues or against other schools, and our choirs and orchestra have regular opportunities to perform both in and out of school.

Homework

We believe that a *positive partnership* between home and school is *vital to support children's learning*. We never want homework to become a chore or a battle and so have developed a policy which balances support for children's learning whilst recognising that children these days can lead busy lives and family time is precious.

The majority of the homework we set is based around *developing basic skills* of reading, reading comprehension, spelling and mental maths. We really value parental support with these core elements of children's learning as it is vital that practice is as frequent as possible. As children progress through the school they are set an increasing amount of written work, appropriate to their age. We provide three pieces of written homework (known as 'Dip and Do' Activities) each week from which we ask the children to select one. Our aim is to make the homework activities *as engaging as possible* and we often get children completing all three, simply because they are motivated by the tasks set and are keen to improve their learning and impress their teacher.

Assessment

When children enter our reception classes, their teachers carry out the statutory baseline assessment to gauge what the children know and can already do so that we can *build on their existing knowledge and skills* effectively. From then on, children's development is continually assessed whilst they are engaging in both learning and play activities.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessments are made in *three prime areas* of learning and *four specific areas* of learning. The prime areas are communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development; the specific areas are literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

In years 1-6, ongoing day to day assessment of children's learning and progress continues, and teachers use this assessment to *inform their subsequent teaching*. This is known as formative assessment. Teachers meet every day after school to discuss children's learning and discuss the best way to address any issues or misconceptions to ensure that *no child is left behind*. More *formal assessments* are made termly when the children sit tests in reading comprehension, spelling and grammar and maths to check what they have learnt and understood. The results of these assessments are shared with parents each term.



Regular assessment ensures that children **make good progress** and that if children are falling behind, or need greater challenge, we can **respond quickly** to that need.

The school participates in the DfE's statutory assessments. Children are assessed in phonics in Year 1, in reading, writing and maths at the end of year 2, undergo the multiplication (times table) check in year 4 and sit end of year 6 SATs in reading, writing, maths and science before they head off to secondary school. Our children have **performed superbly** in these

assessments in recent years, performing **above or well above national averages**. We are incredibly proud of their achievements.

Pastoral Support

Excellent pastoral support is at the core of what we do at Dorchester Primary School. Children are **loved and valued** here, and we do all we can to ensure that our parents and carers feel **welcomed and supported**.

Great pastoral care starts with **building really positive relationships**. Teachers aim to greet each child as they come into school every day, and get to know each child individually—their character traits, their likes and dislikes, their hobbies etc—in order to build a trusting relationship.

There are times when children and/or families need a little **extra or more specialist support**, such as through bereavement or family break up. We have two qualified **Emotional Literacy Support Assistants** in school who are specially trained to support children who need additional help for any reason, using a combination of play therapy, small group or individual programmes or just providing a listening ear. We also have a **Home**



School Link Worker, who meets with families outside of school and children in school to support with any issues or problems. Our Home School Link Worker also organises parenting courses and holds coffee mornings in school for parents to seek informal advice. Several of our staff members are trained as **Drawing and Talking Therapists** – these specialists are able to meet with children who are struggling emotionally or socially and give them the space they need to discuss any worries or concerns at their own pace.



Pastoral care is not something that is only provided by adults at our school. Our children are excellent at **supporting one another** both through organised programmes and by helping one another whenever they see a need. When children join us in reception they are paired up with a Year 6 **'Big Friend'** who will help them to settle in and keep an eye on them at playtime as well as helping out in the classroom, sharing stories, using the computers or creating artwork. We also promote mentoring partnerships between older and younger children in other year groups and train groups of children in Upper Juniors to be **Junior Supremos**, supporting younger children in play and sport.



Friends of Dorchester School (FODS)



Friends of Dorchester School PTA

FODS is our school's Parent Teacher Association. Every parent and carer at school automatically becomes a member of FODS, and as such form such an *important part of our school community*. We have a dedicated committee who oversee the organisation of some wonderful events throughout the year, which not only raise funds for the school but are great fun too. Events include the Summer Fair, the Christmas Bazaar, Quiz Night, Movie Afternoons, Discos and much more.

We use funds raised by FODS events to buy those extras that we would not ordinarily be able to afford from school budgets but which makes learning much better for our children. Recently the FODS have funded the replacement of our outdoor Pavilion and are currently fundraising for a Scrapstore Playpod to enhance playtimes for our children.

All of our parents have the opportunity to get involved with these events – all contributions are welcome. There are always small jobs that need doing such as packing up items for a tombola, as well as event organizing roles – it is a fantastic way to get to know other parents and to support our school.

Dates and times of FODS meetings will be made available to you in the school newsletter– do come along and share your thoughts and ideas. You will be made very welcome.

The Willow Club Wraparound Care



We run a *very popular* 'wrap around care' service known as The Willow Club. Children can be dropped at school from 7:30am and can remain on the school site in our After School Club until 6:30pm. This provides an *invaluable service* for working parents, but is also used by children who simply want to 'hang out' with their friends after school.

We provide a choice of items for a healthy breakfast in the mornings and a substantial snack for children staying after school.

Our holiday club runs for 2-3 weeks in the summer holiday, for around a week at Christmas and Easter and usually for 3 days during half term breaks.

At these clubs, children are able to use our indoor and outdoor play facilities and take part in some organized activities such as physical/sports activities, baking, slime making and crafts as well as enjoying some much needed down time.

Secondary School Destinations

At the end of Year 6, our children move to a range of comprehensive, selective grammar and independent secondary schools.

Our leavers' destinations include:

Blenheim High
Carshalton Boys'
Cheam High School
Coombe Boys'
Glenthorne High
Greenshaw High
Nonsuch High
Overton Grange
Surbiton High
Sutton Grammar
Tiffin and Tiffin Girls'
Wilson's



Each year we hold an information meeting for parents to support with making decisions about transition to secondary school. Towards the end of Year 6 we provide additional sessions for the children to support them in the transition to the next phase of their education. We are also delighted to offer popular 11+ tuition classes for children in Year 4 and Year 5 who will be sitting entrance exams for grammar/independent schools.

Joining Us



We hold regular Open Events throughout the year – you can find details of these on our website.

If you are interested in your child joining us, or if you have any further questions, please give us a call on 0208 330 1144 or contact us via email at office@dorchesterprimary.com.

We will be very happy to help and look forward to hearing from you.