

Ditcheat Primary School

Prospectus

2016 - 2017



www.ditcheatprimary.co.uk

ditcheat@educ.somerset.gov.uk

01749 860329

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Welcome to Ditchheat Primary School



Welcome to Ditchheat Primary School, where our children are at the heart of everything we do. We are a small, rural primary school set in a thriving village community with which we value close links. The family ethos of our school means that every member of staff knows and cares for every child and each child is able to learn, play and develop in a secure, caring, supportive environment. Our children love to look after each other and thrive on taking increasing responsibility for themselves, their learning, their friends and team-mates, and the school environment as they grow and develop.

Every member of our creative staff team is dedicated to providing our children with the very best learning experiences we can. We have high aspirations for every child in our care and our curriculum planning and teaching promote the expectation that every child should be able to make outstanding progress through a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge. We actively promote our children's development as individuals and work hard to provide each child with the skills they need. We aim to provide life-long memories for all of our children of a primary experience that is fun and fulfilling, and which fully prepares them for the next stage in their education.

I am immensely proud to be leading Ditchheat Primary School and would welcome the opportunity to show you around and introduce you to our wonderful children and staff.

Richard Reid

Headteacher

School Information

Address

Ditcheat Primary School

Ditcheat

Shepton Mallet

Somerset

BA4 6RB

Telephone: 01749 860329

Email: ditcheat@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Website: www.ditcheatprimary.co.uk

Pupils on roll: 89

Age Range: 4 - 11 years

School Hours: 8.55am - 12.20pm and 1.20pm - 3.15pm

Our school is maintained by Somerset Education Authority, whose contact details are:

Somerset LEA

Children and Young People's Department

Taunton

Somerset

TA1 4DY

Telephone 01823 355455

About Our School

Ditcheat Primary School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged between 4 and 11 years. The school was established in 1876 and is not affiliated to a particular religious body. Religious Education at the school is Christian based and non-denominational. We are a village school, set in our own grounds and gardens and with strong links with the local and wider community. We were officially recognised by Ofsted as a "good school" in December 2014. You will find up to date information about us on our website, and many of our parents and friends follow our Facebook page for regular updates and photos.

There are four classes at Ditcheat Primary School;

Cherry Class is for children in Reception,

Maple Class is for children in Year 1 and 2,

Holly Class is for children in Year 3 and 4

Willow Class is for children in Year 5 and 6.

We have excellent ICT facilities with laptops and iPads as well as interactive whiteboards in each classroom. Cherry garden is a magical space for our youngest children to explore and is widely used for exciting learning and play opportunities.

We have a wildlife garden with a pond; we use our front lawn for tea parties, summer fetes and Christmas Carol singing; our playground boasts a trim trail, a tyre park, willow arches and arbour, a sandpit, a stage and a quiet seating area as well as plenty of space for football, basketball, netball, tennis and whatever other games and activities our children devise - den-building and dressing up are often very popular!

We run 'Early Birds' club every morning from 8.15 and Ditcheat Extra every afternoon until 5pm, as well as a variety of after school clubs which change on a termly basis. Typical clubs include: football, Spanish, cricket, country dancing, First Aid, yoga, painting, storytelling, singing, science and signing (Somerset Total Communication).



Our School Community

The Governing Body

The overall management of the school is the responsibility of the Governors. They work closely with the Head to appoint staff, ensure that the National Curriculum and school policies are implemented and monitor the budget. Our governors represent parents, the Local Education Authority and the local community.

Governors' committees meet regularly and report back to the full governing body. Minutes of these meetings are available in the school office.

Chair of Governors: Becky Nurse

Vice Chair: Charlotte Dowson

Local Authority Governor: Arthur Llewellyn

Elected Parent Governor: Dan Knott

Elected Parent Governor: Charlotte Dowson

Staff Governor: June Pearce

Co-opted Governors: Anthony Sutcliffe, Liz Gould, Judith Herlihy, Andrew Nicholls & Kate Webber

Associate Governor: Jo Crook

Friends of Ditchheat School (FoDS)

Friends of Ditchheat School, (FoDS) is our school association consisting of parents, staff and friends from the local community. FoDS works very closely with the school to enrich the children's experiences by funding visits within the local area and further afield; paying for visitors to come into school to perform or work with the children; buying equipment for learning and play, and organising and supporting a number of social occasions throughout the year, such as the Christmas lunch, Christmas disco, Easter bingo and summer fair.

Over the last year, FoDS have worked tirelessly raising money for the new school kitchen. They have engaged the whole community in achieving this ambitious project and can be incredibly proud of their fund raising achievements.

Our Staff

Headteacher: Richard Reid

Senior Teacher: Joanna Crook - Willow Class

SENDCo: Joanne Crook - Willow Class

Teachers:- Zoe Milne - Cherry Class
Kinga Draws - Maple Class
Dawn Hunt - Holly Class



Administrator: Maddy Battye

Clerical Assistant: Kate Knowles

Teaching Assistants: June Pearce, Gill Cooper, Chloe Mason, Nicki Green, Jane Bryne and Lucy Christensen.



Lunchtime Supervisors: Mavis Robinson, Nicki Green, Jane Bryne, Kate Knowles and Chloe Mason.

Cook: Ann Cooper

Cleaner: Emma Bone

Our Vision and Aims

At Ditchheat Primary School, all school activity is driven by our philosophy as articulated in our school vision statement:

'Learning Together to Achieve our Best'



Aims of the school

Our school vision statement is supported by our school aims:

- We aim for high quality learning experiences, recognising the need to provide for different learning styles
- We aim to equip all members of our school community to support each other as learners
- We aim for everyone to make progress and feel successful
- We aim to create a happy, safe, caring environment where everyone feels valued
- We aim to foster respect, tolerance and consideration

Partnership with Parents

As parents, you are your child's first and most important educator and at Ditchheat Primary School we value and recognise the vital role you have to play in supporting your child throughout their education. We take pride in the close relationships we build with parents. We are strongly committed to our 'open door' policy and welcome parents and carers into our school to share in their child's learning. We know that our children learn best when parents and schools work together and when both parents and school present a positive attitude to learning. As well as informal chats at the beginning and end of the school day, there are lots of other ways in which we encourage parents and carers to be fully involved in the life of our school and their child's learning and progress.

Parent Consultation Meetings: These are a more formal opportunity for you to find out how your child is doing and are held in the Autumn and Spring terms.

Annual Reports: Every summer your child's class teacher will write a detailed report of their progress and achievements for that school year.

Inspire Sessions: Every term each class has an 'Inspire' session which is an opportunity for parents and carers to spend time in school learning alongside their children. These sessions always focus on one area of the curriculum and are well attended. The feedback we have received from them has always been extremely positive.

Newsletters: These are a useful source of key information. As well as publishing dates of upcoming events, the newsletter is also the place where parents can find information about their child's learning for the week and also their 'talk homework' - a short speaking and listening activity designed to support the children with forming and organising their ideas for their weekly writing task.

Ditchheat Stars: Every Friday we end our school week with 'Ditchheat Stars' Assembly. This is where we award certificates in recognition of excellent effort and achievement in writing, mathematics and reading, as well as awards for kindness, politeness and exceptional behaviour. Parents are very welcome to join us for Ditchheat Stars Assembly.

Our Curriculum

At Ditchheat Primary School, we offer our children a creative curriculum which provides many opportunities to learn and develop skills. While many learning opportunities are based within the classroom, we also fully recognise the value of learning in our outdoor spaces as well as using the local and wider community. We value the experiences children gain from external visits and from visitors to our school.

Our curriculum reflects our understanding that learning is interconnected and that all children have different skills and abilities. We recognise and value that our children love different things and that our children learn in different ways. A variety of teaching methods are used to deliver the curriculum - whole class, small ability-based groups and individual time.

Lessons are carefully planned to build on existing knowledge and experiences to make learning relevant to the children. Children will often be working on the same task but at different levels of difficulty, appropriate to their individual stage of development.

We promote Inclusive Communication through the use of Somerset Total Communication (STC) signs and symbols to support children's learning. We became one of the first schools in the country to achieve a Primary Talk award in 2008, in recognition of our supportive communication environment. In 2012, we became the first school in the country to be re-accredited.

We know children often learn from each other and so regular opportunities are created for older children to join the younger ones to take part in joint activities such as reading, cooking, art and sport.



Key Stages in Primary Education

The years that children spend in primary school are divided into three key stages:

The Early Years Foundation Stage - Reception

Key Stage One - Years 1 and 2

Key Stage Two - Years 3, 4, 5 and 6

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage is a vital part of every child's learning and development. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children begin to develop key learning skills such as listening, speaking, persistence, co-operation and collaboration, creativity and independence. Our children learn these skills through a variety of activities both indoors and outside and we are committed to making the children's experiences both active and purposeful. We match the activities they are given closely to their stage of development, needs and interests and always allow for the children to develop activities in their own way. Our children are also encouraged to develop skills in reading, writing and mathematics; to begin with this is very much approached through play with more structured approaches introduced when each individual child is ready.

The areas which make up the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are as follows:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Key Stages One and Two

The curriculum for Key Stages One and Two is new for September 2014 and is divided into core subjects and foundation subjects. These are as follows:

Core Subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Computing

Foundation Subjects:

- Art and Design
- History
- Geography
- Music
- Physical Education

In addition, children are taught Religious Education, Personal, Social and Health Education and Spanish. There is a copy of our rolling programme which gives an overview of learning for the year included within the appendices to this prospectus.

Developing Reading Skills

One of the most important things that we do at Ditchheat Primary School is to develop reading skills in our children. Throughout their time at our school, we encourage our children not only to develop secure skills in reading but we also aim to engender in our children a love of reading and an understanding of the pleasure and freedom reading can provide.

We begin developing early reading as soon as the children start, by sharing favourite stories and poems and encouraging the children to share their thoughts on the stories and to join in with familiar rhymes and poems. We use the Read, Write, Inc. reading scheme to teach our children phonics and early reading. The scheme is extremely well-structured and provides a great deal of support for parents helping to develop reading skills in their children at home. The sounds the children need to learn in order to read are divided into sets and are designed to allow children to start blending the sounds they have learned into words very quickly, giving them a fantastic sense of achievement and a real understanding of the purpose of the sounds.

Once the children have progressed beyond the reading scheme, we have a fabulous range of reading texts to continue to spark their interest, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Our children work in small groups of approximately 6 children throughout the school to learn, develop and refine their reading skills. Each group works with an adult to guide and support them as they spend 30 minutes each day working on their reading.



Special Educational Needs

We have a strong commitment to inclusive education and aim to involve all children in all aspects of school life. It is our aim to identify children with special educational needs as soon as possible in order to provide the support necessary to meet these needs and allow all children to have access to the National Curriculum. We recognise the importance of working with parents and we consult support agencies where we feel this is appropriate. Children identified as having needs beyond the school's basic entitlement plan will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which will have specific targets to work towards and which will be shared with parents.

In July 2015 we were awarded Dyslexia Friendly Schools Status in recognition of the work we do to meet the needs of all learners. We have particular expertise in working with children with speech and language difficulties, as recognised through our Primary Talk re-accreditation.

Children with Disabilities

We welcome children with disabilities. Provision for them is made in consultation with parents and support services. On-going reviews will aim to ensure that any child with a disability is able to access learning at an appropriate level, while participating fully in school life.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

At Ditchheat we recognise the importance of providing appropriate challenges for children who are exceptionally able. Their particular needs will be addressed through a differentiated curriculum and enrichment activities, as described in our separate Gifted and Talented Pupils Policy.

Equal Opportunities

The promotion of equal opportunities is recognised by all the staff and governors at our school. We aim to ensure that all pupils regardless of race, religion, gender, background or ability, receive a broad and balanced curriculum and have equal opportunities in all aspects of school life.

The Local Offer

More information on the provision we are able to offer to children with any sort of additional need and their families can be found in our Local Offer document which can be viewed on our website. A paper copy is also available on request from the school office.

Starting at Our School

We understand that starting school for the first time can be every bit as daunting as it is exciting and we work hard to ensure that the children (and their mums and dads!) are as happy and settled as they can possibly be. Visits to view our school are always warmly welcomed, as are second and even third visits as we also understand that choosing the right school for your child is a big decision.

Throughout the summer term before the children are due to start school we conduct a thorough induction programme to ensure that your child is very familiar with their new classroom, their teacher and the school before they start. The children make several scheduled visits to school and we also invite our new children and their families to join us on key school events throughout the summer term such as sports day and the summer fete. Our Reception class teacher makes a visit to your child's pre-school or nursery in order to meet with your child in a setting with which he or she is familiar and also to have a chat with your child's key worker. We have an information evening for parents to share key information with you; this is another opportunity for you to ask questions and also a great chance to start getting to know the other new parents! We give all of our new children a photo book to take home with them over the summer holidays so that they can look through it with you and be reminded of key adults and places around the school.

In September, the children have a 'staggered' start to school, beginning with morning only sessions before building up in stages to full days after a few weeks. We pair our new children up with a 'buddy' from Year 6, who keeps a special eye on them during shared times such as playtime and lunchtime. Our Year 6 buddies also come and play with the Reception children and share stories with them to help the bonding process!



Our Uniform

Our uniform consists of:

Girls:

Grey skirt, pinafore dress or trousers
White polo shirt or blouse
School jumper or cardigan
Green and white summer dress
Black school shoes

Boys:

Grey trousers or shorts
White polo shirt or shirt
School jumper
Black school shoes

PE Kit:

School T-shirt
Black shorts
Black tracksuit trousers (for colder weather)
Trainers or daps
Drawstring kit bag

Our uniform is available online from Mapac:

www.mapac.com

If you would like to check sizes, please ask in the school office.

Please ensure that all items of clothing are clearly marked with your child's name so that if they get misplaced we are able to return them.



Our School Day

Morning:

- 8.45 - 8.55** Children arrive at school
- 8.55** Morning Registration
- 9.00 - 9.30** Key Stage Two Reading (KS1 Lesson)
- 9.30 - 10.00** Key Stage One Reading (KS2 Lesson)
- 10.00** Fruit Break
- 10.05 - 11.05** Lesson
- 11.05 - 11.20** Playtime
- 11.20 - 12.20** Lesson

Lunchtime 12.20 - 1.20

We are very lucky to have the most wonderful school cook and she provides hot lunches for most of our children. All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are currently entitled to a hot lunch.

All children eat in the school hall and sit in teams so that our oldest children are able to look after our younger children. When they have finished eating, the children may go outside to play.

Afternoon:

- 1.20 - 1.40** Whole School Assembly (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday)
- 1.40 - 2.40** Lesson
- 2.40 - 2.55** KS1 Playtime (KS2 lessons continue throughout the afternoon)
- 2.55 - 3.15** KS1 Fruit and Storytime
- 3.15** School ends (all children)

Absence from School

If your child is absent from school through illness or for a medical appointment please telephone the school to let us know, so that we can fill in the class registers correctly. If we do not receive a phone call on the first day of absence, we will telephone to check why your child is absent. If your child is going to be away for some time, it is useful to let us know so that work can be sent home if appropriate. Absence for reasons other than medical ones cannot be authorised unless the circumstances are highly exceptional.

Illness

With some infectious illnesses there is a minimum period for which children must be kept away from school. If we feel your child is unwell during the day and is unfit to be in school we will contact you.

If your child has sickness or diarrhoea they must not return to school for 48 hours after the last episode.

Home Learning

At Ditchheat Primary School we firmly believe that our children should be able to spend their time outside of school pursuing their own hobbies and that they should also have plenty of time to relax and have fun. However, we also know that time spent at home reinforcing the learning that is going on at school is very beneficial to the progress our children can make so we work hard to achieve a good balance between our homework expectations and our desire to let our children be children!

We provide a variety of home learning opportunities which are designed to help our children build up key skills and to enable our children to express their own interests and individuality through their learning. Our homework is divided into daily, weekly and half-termly tasks as follows:

Daily Homework: Phonics and reading

Weekly Homework: Spellings (Year 1 - Year 6); a maths task (Year 2 - Year 6); multiplication tables (Year 1 - Year 6)

Half-termly Homework: Every half term your child will bring home a 'Homework Menu' which provides a range of activities for your child to choose from. The activities are all linked to the topic the children's learning in school is based on and will include some research tasks, some literacy based tasks and some creative/craft/construction tasks. We allow 3 or 4 weeks for the children to complete their choice of tasks and set a date when we ask for all completed tasks to be returned to school. We then set up a gallery of the homework and all parents and carers are invited into school to view the wonderful variety of work on display.



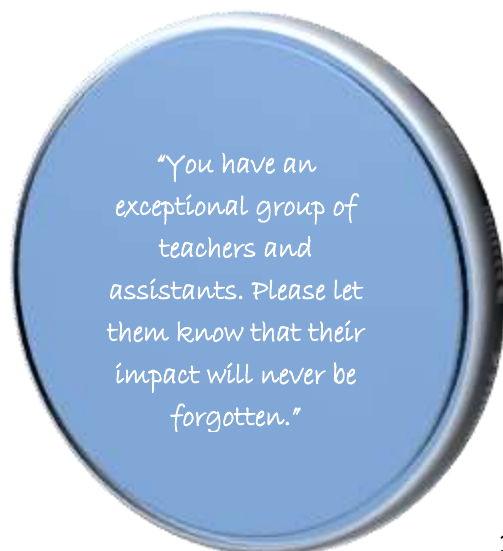
Our Promise to Parents

When your child joins our school we will:

- Value your child as an individual with his or her own strengths, talents and interests
- Provide your child with opportunities to grow and develop and overcome any difficulties he or she may face
 - Encourage your child to make a positive contribution to our school
- Give your child every opportunity to be a successful learner who enjoys learning, makes great progress and achieves
 - Involve you fully in your child's learning journey with us
 - Be open and honest with you about any issues that may arise
- Ensure that when your child is in school he or she is happy and safe
- Encourage your child to have a go, to test the boundaries of their learning and to take safe risks
- Support your child to develop into a confident individual able to live a safe, healthy and fulfilling life



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Our Expectations

When they join our school we expect your child to:

- Become fully involved in school life
 - Be active in their learning
- Play and work alongside others
- Work hard to make progress
- Accept challenges in their learning
- Make the most of their opportunities
- Follow our school rules and agreed class charters
 - Look after our school environment

When your child joins our school, we expect parents and carers to:

- Be fully supportive of your child's learning, at home and at school
- Encourage in your child a positive attitude to school and life-long learning
 - Share responsibility for your child's learning and development
 - Be open and honest with staff about issues if they arise

Essential Information

Emergencies

If your child has an accident or is ill we will contact you as quickly as possible. For this reason it is important that parents fill out the contact form provided when a child starts school, and keep us updated of any changes to contact details. Please make sure we can contact you by ensuring your mobile is on when out.

Severe Weather

In the event of severe weather preventing the school from opening, the decision will be taken as early as possible and information posted on our website and on our Facebook page. There will also be a recorded message on the school telephone.

Medicines

It is important that children who are unwell are kept at home. However, we recognise that occasionally a child may be well enough for school and yet require medication. Any request for medication to be given at school must be made to the school office. You will be required to sign a form stating the dose and time of administration. Inhalers for asthma will be kept in school, after discussion about your child's needs.

Valuables

Money can only be brought into school for a specific purpose and should be given to the teacher as soon as possible after arrival at school. Watches are worn at the child's own risk. We ask that children do not bring toys into school although items of special interest or those related to the current theme may be brought in for the child to show to the class.

Mobile phones are not allowed in school.

Safeguarding

We take our Safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. This means that we have ensured (and will continue to do so) that everyone working in the school has successfully completed the necessary clearances to enable them to work with your children. It also means that we have a staff member who is specifically trained and nominated as the Designated Child Protection Person within school. This person is Richard Reid.

We would always hope to share any concerns we may have about your child with you, at the first opportunity as we hope you do with us. If you have serious and genuine concerns about a child at school, other than your own, you can share them in confidence with us. Part of our legal duty to safeguard your children may also include us needing to consult with and take advice from other agencies such as the Police, or Children's Social Care, should the need arise.

By working closely together with you and our partner agencies, we firmly believe that we will continue to offer a safe learning environment for all our children.

Charging Policy

Our charging policy is available in the school office.

Charges may be made for the following:

- Individual music tuition.
- Ingredients or materials in practical subjects if the children have indicated they wish to keep the finished product.
- Residential visits.
- The exact cost of optional extras i.e those not connected with the National Curriculum.
- Some Clubs.

Voluntary contributions may be invited for some school activities and transport costs. Where this is the case, parents will always be informed at the outset. The activity may not take place if insufficient funds are raised.

Complaints

There are four stages in the complaints procedure:

Stage 1

In the first instance, you should speak to the class teacher to discuss the problem. It is usual for most complaints to be resolved satisfactorily at this stage.

Stage 2

If the situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or the concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, then parents should contact the Head Teacher who will respond to you as soon as possible.

Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with the response from the school and wish to pursue your complaint, you should write to the Clerk to the Governors. The School Governors will investigate your complaint and notify you of the results of their investigation.

Stage 4

If you are still not satisfied when you receive this detailed explanation you may decide to refer your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education. Details of how to proceed can be found on the Department of Education website.