

# Witton Church Walk CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111389
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	356901
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Allan Torr 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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	262
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sarah Merison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kathryn Magiera
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Church Walk Northwich Cheshire CW9 5QQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Ten teachers were observed and 18 lessons. Inspectors held meetings with staff, governors, three groups of pupils and with representatives from the local authority and church diocese. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including pupils' work; school policies and action plans; data showing pupils' attainment and progress; reports, newsletters and letters to parents; and subject leaders' files. Inspectors also considered the 92 questionnaires from parents and carers, 34 from staff and 94 from pupils.

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

- The quality of teaching, particularly of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals, to determine whether they are attaining as high and making as much progress as they can.
- The impact of leadership on the provision in the Nursery and Reception classes and on outcomes for children.
- Whether outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection.

## Information about the school

Witton Church Walk is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. At the time of the inspection, around 10% of pupils were from minority ethnic heritages. Just over 27% of pupils were known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. The proportion of pupils, identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, was above the national average at almost 29%. Most of these pupils have either speech and language difficulties or a specific learning difficulty. The headteacher has been in post for eight months after three years of turbulence in leadership of the school and a large turnover in teachers. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage comprising a full-time Nursery and two Reception classes.

The school provides a range of extended services including professional sports coaching, term-time booster classes, parent support classes, and some specialist support services. The breakfast club and after-school club are both managed independently and were not part of this inspection.

The school was given a notice to improve at the previous inspection because it needed significant improvement particularly to the provision and outcomes in Key Stage 1 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Witton Church Walk Primary is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. Some of its features are good including pupils' attendance, their understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle, and the effectiveness of the school's work with parents and other partners. This turnaround in the school's fortunes is as a result of good leadership and management at all levels. The headteacher alongside the deputy headteacher provides very good leadership. They have established a clear vision and drive for success which is understood by all staff. Morale is high. Changes brought about since the appointment of the substantive headteacher were accurately summed up in the comments made by a teacher, 'I genuinely believe that the appointment of the new headteacher has led to a much happier, well managed and developing school. There have been significant changes in the structure and layout of the building, greater expenditure and training which has led to an overall improvement in both teaching and learning.'

Since the previous inspection the quality of teaching and learning has improved from inadequate to good. Senior leaders' evaluation of the school is very honest and objective. They have identified accurately the areas in which the school needs improvement and have worked effectively with the staff to tackle them. As a result, pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 has risen and their progress which was inadequate is accelerating rapidly and is now satisfactory. The quality of provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage which were inadequate has improved to be satisfactory overall with some good features. This track record of improvement since the previous inspection coupled with the quality of senior leaders' monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning mean that the school's capacity to improve is now good. The school is well placed to make further improvements for pupils so that Witton is a place 'where every door is opened and every gift is unlocked'.

Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 remains below average in English and mathematics and there are still some pupils below the expected level for their age in other year groups. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. There is a new system in place to diagnose and tackle different types of need through small group and one-to-one targeted specialist teaching but this is yet to be fully effective. There is some way still to go to tackle pupils' previous underachievement. This is why teaching and learning is good but pupils' progress is only satisfactory. The recent improvements to teaching are accelerating pupils' progress but have not yet had time to take full effect on pupils' achievement.

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The curriculum is satisfactory overall but there are some good features such as the recent initiative to start each topic or theme off with some first-hand experience often in the form of a class trip. Through the curriculum teachers have enabled pupils to gain a satisfactory understanding of people from different backgrounds and cultures. This understanding, however, is sometimes narrow and not as extensive as it could be. In subjects other than mathematics and English, some of the activities which pupils are asked to complete are not challenging enough and do not enable them to extend or use their basic skills of writing, using information and communication technology (ICT) or mathematical skills.

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

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics so that most pupils in each year group attain the levels expected for their age.
- Ensure the specialist teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities raises their attainment in English and mathematics.
- Improve the curriculum by:
  - enabling pupils to use and apply their skills in relevant and purposeful activities in different subjects
  - enabling pupils to gain a greater awareness of people from different backgrounds and cultures.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

Pupils enjoy school and their lessons. This is reflected in their attendance which is higher than the national average. They are friendly, socialise and behave well showing good levels of respect, courtesy and politeness. They are active at break times and mix well. For example, in one playtime a Reception child led the front of an imaginary train steaming across the grass and play surface followed enthusiastically and biddably by boys and girls from a wide mix of different junior and infant classes.

Pupils, young and old from all genders, abilities, ethnicities and backgrounds have a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. Different groups of pupils take up positions of responsibility in the school and engage with the local community, for example with local church services and with fund-raising for good causes. The active school council changes its membership annually and has a real voice in the school debating issues and influencing the school's provision.

Over time, pupils' achievement has been inadequate. During this inspection, however, it became clear that their progress has accelerated and is now satisfactory due to the improved teaching. Some groups of pupils are now making good progress particularly girls and over half of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Although the quality of teaching is now good, it is taking time to have full effect on ensuring that all pupils make good progress. For example, the groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 are making better progress than their peers in Key Stage 1 and girls make better progress than boys. In the better lessons pupils developed new skills and knowledge; extended their

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vocabulary and applied the skills they knew in open-ended and purposeful activities. In one ICT lesson, for example, pupils used and learnt technical vocabulary such as crop, resize and megabytes and learnt new skills of how to manipulate and use images. In some lessons, the activities and teaching enabled pupils to make rapid and sustained progress. In a Year 2 lesson pupils were mesmerised and captivated by the sprinkling of magic dust onto a block of ice. This inspired them to create and write similes and to extend their understanding by experimenting with alliteration. In other lessons, however, pupils did not learn much more than they already knew and staff missed opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary, skills and understanding.

*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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</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?

During the inspection almost two thirds of lessons were good or better and around 16% were outstanding. This is a much better picture than at the previous inspection but it is taking time to have full impact on enabling all pupils to make good progress and make up the gaps in their learning. All staff have good relationships with pupils and this is used successfully in some classes to provide encouragement, challenge, support and praise to enable pupils to produce their best work. No lesson was judged to be inadequate in the inspection but a few were satisfactory. In these lessons the pace of pupils' learning and acquisition of basic skills was limited. In these lessons teachers sometimes talked for too long giving pupils too little time to do the work or the tasks were too easy and not based

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well enough on what pupils needed to learn next. This links to why the curriculum is at the moment satisfactory rather than good. In some subjects such as history, geography, science and topic there are not enough opportunities for pupils to extend their skills and understanding in relevant or purposeful activities. As a result, their progress slows because their learning is hampered by low-level worksheets or closed tasks. The school has worked well in partnership with outside agencies and organisations to provide enhancement to the curriculum, for example through professional sports teachers and coaches and through visitors such as the fire service and a poet. The curriculum and teaching of art and design are strong. Consequently, pupils produce good work in this subject.

There has been an increase in the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or difficulties. This is a temporary measure to allow staff to make a thorough assessment and put into place the curriculum and specialist teaching to fully address their needs. The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator has made an excellent start in organising interventions and monitoring specialist teaching.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school has used its resources well to improve the quality of provision for pupils. For example, a new community room was established by transferring ICT equipment into classrooms. This has enabled teachers to use ICT more in all lessons as a tool for learning and has enabled parents and community groups to have a designated space for meetings and discussions. The school has worked well with the local diocese. As a result, there has been an improvement in pupils' spiritual development and in their involvement in community events outside of the school. Partnerships with parents are also good and improving. Although parents do not know as well as they could about how much progress their children are making, there have been improvements to the website, to communication and to levels of involvement with parents. Initiatives such as parents' workshops and 'stay and play' are enabling parents to become more aware of how their children learn in school.

There has been a large turnover in governors which means some are relatively new and inexperienced in the role. Although there are still two vacancies, there are plans to fill these soon. Governors have attended training and have become more knowledgeable about, for example, how to interpret data about standards and achievement. They have supported the school well by making some good appointments to strengthen the teaching team and by making some difficult decisions in order to improve the quality of teaching

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and learning. The governing body has ensured safeguarding procedures are good and that there are satisfactory race relations, gender equality and community cohesion policies in place. The community cohesion action plan is not yet fully embedded to ensure the curriculum takes account of all seven strands of equality and diversity. Senior leaders have taken effective action to tackle pupils' barriers to learning and to ensure the curriculum and teaching is accessible by all. However, this aspect is only satisfactory because, although the gap is narrowing, there remain some differences between the outcomes for different groups of pupils.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved significantly in the last year. Inadequate at the last inspection, it is now satisfactory overall and some features are now good such as the curriculum, the care, guidance and support for children and the leadership and management. The headteacher alongside the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and a dedicated team of staff have improved the quality and the use of resources, the outdoor areas and the quality of teaching. This has started to improve children's learning and their progress. In one example, the children's ideas about how to build a boat for baby bear were used skilfully by the teacher. She asked a range of questions and prompts to extend children's understanding, thinking and their skills in high-quality child-initiated play. In the Nursery class, a teaching assistant asked excellent questions to stretch children's vocabulary and understanding by asking them to think how they could safely transport a baby on one of their wheeled toys and how the stethoscope could be used in the baby clinic to listen to heartbeats. Children's progress and their outcomes were inadequate until recently. As a result, there is still a legacy of underachievement which means children's attainment and their progress is taking time to improve. This is why there is at the moment an anomaly where the quality of provision is good but the



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outcomes for children, although improving quickly, remain satisfactory. During the inspection it was clear that children's progress is accelerating. They enjoy coming to school and the activities on offer and they lead a healthy and active lifestyle. They socialise well with each other and different groups of children boys, girls, those who speak English as an additional language and the more able are all making satisfactory progress in the six areas of learning.

*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	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers were complimentary about the school. The majority replying to the questionnaire strongly agreed that their child enjoys school and that staff keep their child safe. The overwhelming majority agreed that the school is well led and managed and some of these commented on the improvement since the appointment of the current headteacher. Approximately 15% of parents and carers disagreed that they were informed about their child's progress and they were supported to help their child to make progress. There have been some recent improvements in these areas over the last few months but inspectors have asked the school to look in particular at these two issues to ensure parents are more frequently informed about how well their child is doing.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Witton Church Walk CofE 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 inspection team received 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 262 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	67	29	32	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	62	67	29	32	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	35	43	47	14	15	3	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	42	39	42	10	11	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	44	48	38	41	8	9	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	49	33	36	13	14	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	52	41	45	1	1	1	1
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)	39	42	41	45	4	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	47	39	42	5	5	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	42	42	46	6	7	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	37	46	50	6	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	49	53	34	37	4	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	59	34	37	3	3	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



15 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Witton Church Walk CofE Primary School, Northwich, CW9 5QQ**

You may remember I came with two other inspectors to make a number of judgements about your school. Thank you to those who met and spoke with us during the two days of the inspection and to those who completed the questionnaire. It was also good speaking to you at playtime and I was impressed to see how well younger and older pupils mix and play together. We have taken your views into account as well as the views of your parents and carers and this is what we decided.

Your school has made significant improvement since it was inspected a year ago and is now a satisfactory school where some things are good. Teaching and the quality of lessons are now good, particularly in Key Stage 2. The quality of the curriculum and care for the youngest children are now good and the teachers who lead and manage your school have done a good job in making improvements in such a short time. The inspection team observed you around school and spoke to you. We saw that you behave well, you know how to lead a healthy lifestyle, you have above average attendance and you feel safe in school.

There are two main things which the school needs to do to improve further. The first is to enable more of you to attain the expected levels for your age in English and mathematics. To do this we have asked the teachers to think about how they can extend your basic skills of reading, writing and calculation across all curriculum subjects and topics. We have also asked them to work closely with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to help them to reach higher standards.

The second aspect of school we have asked the teachers to improve is the curriculum. To do this we have asked the teachers to think of better activities for you to complete so that you are able to use and apply your skills in purposeful ways. We have also asked that you learn more about people who have different backgrounds to yourselves.

I wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr

Her Majesty's Inspector

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