

# Witheridge Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113384
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	357334
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 September 2010–1 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alexander Baxter

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stuart Cole
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steve Duncan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Fore Street Tiverton EX16 8AH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed four teachers. They also attended two assemblies, observed break and lunchtime activities, and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. They looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were evaluated. In addition, questionnaires completed by 32 parents and carers, 44 pupils and nine staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The range of pupils' skills and the effectiveness of teaching and learning in enabling all groups to make good progress.
- The relevance of the curriculum, including in Reception, in ensuring that pupils' differing needs and interests are met.
- The degree to which leaders and managers, at all levels, evaluate the impact of their work to bring about and sustain continuous improvements in pupils' achievements.

## Information about the school

The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and is much higher in some year groups. The main group of needs are related to speech, language and specific learning difficulties. There is also an above-average number of pupils who have a statement of mostly physical and profound needs. There are four mixed-age classes and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class. There is above-average inward and outward movement of pupils across the school. A privately run pre-school operates on the school site and shares some of the school's outdoor facilities. Amongst other awards, the school has gained Healthy School status.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

- Witheridge is a good school. It has improved well since the previous inspection and continues to improve at a good pace. Its strength lies in the consistency of good practice in all parts of the school.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most then progress well throughout the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment levels are broadly average, with good teaching now enabling the most able pupils to more often reach the higher National Curriculum levels of which they are capable, especially in English. Although standards continue to rise, pupils' basic numeracy and vocabulary skill levels are not always high enough. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and an increasing number arriving or returning from other schools also make good progress because of the individual support they receive.
- Pupils are well supported and cared for and, consequently, they behave and attend well. Staff present very considerate role models and are particularly appreciative of the pupils' efforts. As a result, pupils enjoy school and develop very supportive relationships with each other, which enrich learning.
- Much has been done in recent years to develop and improve the consistency of teaching, particularly by strengthening the way teachers assess the pupils' work and use this information to plan activities that will challenge pupils at the right level. Teaching is now typically good and some is outstanding, although the way in which teachers promote pupils' independence in learning and involve pupils in self-evaluation, especially in mathematics, is more variable. Occasionally, in Reception, adults do not give enough support to the activities that children choose for themselves.
- Staff use the school's extensive outdoor facilities to place an effective emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development. As a result, as confirmed by the school's award for promoting healthy living, the pupils experience a good range of physical activities which help them to mix well together, adopt healthy lives and make good contributions to the community. The school works well with parents and outside agencies and community groups, such as the pre-school and church especially, to safeguard pupils' welfare, to welcome those who arrive from other schools and to assist those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The headteacher, staff with responsibilities and the governing body provide a good lead for the school. Their strength, as a team, in monitoring the impact of provision on pupils' learning and in using information to tackle weaknesses and to re-establish pupils' good progress, lies at the heart of its good capacity to sustain improvements.

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This ability to move the school forward is further illustrated by the increasing number of pupils in all classes who are now attaining above national expectations.

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

By the end of the current school year:

- Raise pupils' language and numeracy skills by the end of Year 6 by:
  - promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills more effectively, to help extend their vocabulary and writing skills
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply basic number facts and to devise their own strategies to solve real-life problems.
- Improve the development of the pupils' independent involvement in learning as they move through the school by:
  - ensuring adults in Reception engage with children during their self-chosen activities
  - bringing the pupils' self-evaluation of their work in mathematics in line with the high quality evident in writing.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Inspectors observed that, in lessons, pupils across the range of ability and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those arriving other than at the normal time from other schools, enjoyed their learning and made good progress through the school. The pupils' broadly average attainment by the end of Year 6 represents good achievement from their often below-expected starting points. In particular, in response to high quality oral and written guidance implemented consistently by teachers and teaching assistants, an increasing number of pupils are attaining above national average in writing. The reason for this was evident, for example, in an English lesson in the Year 5 and 6 class, when pupils were matching their own and each other's work against clear and suitably challenging success criteria and recording their evaluations and future learning objectives on 'writing ladders'. There is still some variation in the depth of pupils' vocabulary and knowledge of number, however, and this is constraining their writing and problem-solving skills. Other observations, through talking with pupils, sampling work in books and by evaluating school and national assessments, also showed pupils' more consistent and now good progress through the school. This is reflected in their average levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6, but is also increasingly seen in the rising and often above- average attainment in other year groups across the school.

Pupils enjoy school and, reflecting the school's caring Christian ethos, they say that they feel safe, have lots of friends and feel confident to approach other pupils or staff if they have a problem. The pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in the supportive way that they play and work with each other and in their clear understanding of their increasingly multicultural communities. Pupils attend and behave well. They make good contributions to the school, local and wider communities through their work on the school council, representation in the village annual St John's Fayre and

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their support of a school in The Gambia. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles well, as illustrated by their knowledge of healthy eating and of the importance of exercise and by their enthusiastic participation in a 'Brazilian Football Coaching' session. By the time pupils leave the school, their social awareness, willingness to learn together and good achievement prepare them well for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<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>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers and the capable teaching assistants make good use of assessment to plan interesting lessons which are well matched to pupils' differing individual needs and abilities. Beginnings of sessions are prepared well to make sure that pupils move seamlessly from one activity to another and have the right level of support to remain on task and sustain good progress. In the Year 3 and 4 class, for example, the day commenced with pupils diligently engaged in reading and updating their reading diaries; this was then followed by a welcoming registration session in which pupils recorded their presence by speaking their names in French. Such established routines, during which pupils are supported by very positive relationships and effective management of their behaviour, underpin the consistently good teaching and learning across the school. At times, excellent teaching lifts the pupils' learning to an even higher level, as for example in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, as the teacher, through sharp questioning made supportive connections with number guidance displayed on the pupils' 'working wall'. The

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teachers' current emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary skills, including their understanding of mathematical terms, is having a positive effect, but has not been in place long enough to impact fully.

Pupils make very willing contributions in lessons and are extremely appreciative of each other's efforts. These qualities reflect the consistently good quality of the care, guidance and support they receive from all the adults working in the school. Staff work well with outside agencies to provide the effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which enable them to make the same good progress as their peers. Self-evaluation and the pupils' involvement in 'target setting and getting' are strong features raising standards in English, but are not yet developed as effectively in mathematics.

The school's good curriculum includes an increasing emphasis on using laptop computers and interactive whiteboard presentations to develop their interest and ideas. For example, the joyful interest shown by Year 1 and 2 pupils during their investigations of shapes clearly illustrated their ability to learn well collaboratively and as individuals. In a similar vein, the school's current focus on promoting the pupils' speaking and listening skills as a mechanism to widen their vocabulary is helping accelerate their progress, but needs more time to lift skills to the full. The curriculum is further enriched through use of the school's continually developing but already well-equipped grounds, which promote healthy living through a good range of after-school clubs.

*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	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, with good support from staff and the governing body, has worked effectively to move the school forward. For example, teachers' strengthened planning and good use of improved resources such as laptop computers have lifted pupils' progress from satisfactory to good. The key to this improvement lies in a more complete and now good system of self-evaluation, securely underpinned by accurate assessments of the impact of provision on pupils' achievement. That said, some subject leaders have not yet had time to develop their new roles to the full. Even so, capable leadership, reflected in good teamwork within the staff, supported by an effective, very well-led governing body, continues to plot the future development of the school effectively. As a result, the pupils' welfare is safeguarded well with rigorous vetting procedures, improving quality of teaching and rising attainment. There are good partnerships with other schools, the local community and with parents and carers. These ensure equal opportunity and eliminate discrimination, for example, by enabling all classes

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to have full access to the school's extensive outdoor facilities and to enjoy regular educational visits. The inclusive nature of the school is clearly evident in the way newly arriving pupils are so warmly welcomed into school life. The school promotes community cohesion well. Good local and global dimensions of community are seen in the links with the church, the teaching of French and in the implementation of a new international topic-based curriculum. The school's well-balanced programme of expressive arts, religious and charitable events soundly encompasses the national dimension, as seen in the quality of the school's inclusion of an increasing number of pupils from culturally mixed communities.

*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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make an effective, happy start to their school career in the well-managed, caring surroundings of the Reception and Year 1 class. Children's skills on entry to the school vary from year to year, but are most often below those found nationally. Staff work closely with parents and carers and with the adjacent pre-school and also use assessment to get to know the children really well and to accurately monitor their progress. As a result, children of all abilities make equally good progress. The staff safeguard the children's welfare securely and are particularly good at settling the children into school routines to develop their self-confidence and social skills. Teaching and learning are good because lessons are well planned and enable the children to learn well through practical activities, such as modelling, painting and constructing 'Noah's Ark'. Generally, there is a suitable balance of adult-led activity and those chosen by the children themselves. At times, though, adults do not spend enough time developing new learning from the children's own choices, limiting the advantages of children initiating learning for themselves, especially in the improving outdoor area.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 vast majority of the parents and carers who returned their questionnaires and those who were interviewed were very happy and have full confidence in the work of the school. There were a number of positive comments about the school's friendly, happy ethos, the warm relationships and the care provided by the staff of the school. For example, one parent wrote that, 'My child has blossomed at this school and is very happy and secure.' The small number of parents and carers who expressed disagreement, mainly about how the school deals with misbehaviour and how parents and carers are informed about their children's progress, were followed up as inspection trails during the visit. Inspection evidence shows that pupils behave well in response to good adult support and that staff keep the parents and carers well informed, including about pupils' progress.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Witheridge C of E 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 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 98 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	38	20	63	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	47	17	53	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	9	28	19	59	4	13	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	28	20	63	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	38	18	56	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	34	19	59	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	34	21	66	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	9	28	20	63	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	25	24	75	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	28	13	41	6	19	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	25	19	59	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	31	20	63	0	0	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	34	21	66	0	0	0	0

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

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

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

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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.**



2 October 2010

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Witheridge C of E Primary School, Witheridge EX16 8AH**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and found everything that you said very interesting. We were particularly impressed by how well you work together and how much you value each other's efforts. We agree with you, your headteacher and with most of your parents and carers that Witheridge is a good school that continues to improve.

These are some of the other good things we found:

- You enjoy school, work hard in your lessons and make good progress to reach average attainment levels.
- You behave well and contribute well to the life of the school.
- Teaching is good and the teachers and their assistants work particularly well together to help you to learn and to keep you safe.
- Your headteacher leads the school well. He receives good support from governors and staff. They make sure that you benefit from your time at school.

To help the school to improve we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- Develop your understanding and spoken use of words and numbers in order to improve your writing and problem-solving skills
- Give you more opportunities to take responsibility for your own learning, especially by developing your self-evaluation skills, especially in mathematics, and in Reception, by giving more adult support to children's chosen activities.

You can help to improve your school by continuing to work hard and by checking your work in mathematics as carefully as you do in English. Yours sincerely,

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

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