

Withington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115703
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	379129
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Webb
Headteacher	Angela Reed
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2008
School address	High Street Withington Cheltenham GL54 4BQ
Telephone number	01242 890349
Fax number	01242 890349
Email address	admin@withington.gloucs.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	Withington Pre-School Playgroup
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	20
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	11 June 2008

Age group	2–11
Inspection date(s)	26–27 April 2012
Inspection number	379129



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child’s school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to ‘Subscribe’.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
 Textphone: 0161 618 8524
 E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
 W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed 12 lessons taught by five members of staff, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher. Meetings were held with parents, carers, members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, including the playgroup and the breakfast club, and looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, teachers' planning, assessment information and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaire returns from 19 parents and carers, 8 staff and 12 pupils were analysed.

Information about the school

This is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Almost all of the pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The number of pupils joining the school during the year is higher than usually found. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the main school are taught alongside those from Years 1 and 2. Children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are taught together in one class. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Bristol Standard Quality Improvement, International School Award (bronze), Activemark Healthy Schools Plus and Eco Schools Award.

The school operates a 20-place full-day care playgroup for children from the age of two and a breakfast club. Both of these are managed by the governing body. Currently, twenty-six children attend full or part time depending on parental requirements.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school where pupils flourish, both academically and socially. Pupils’ attainment over time, according to national test results, varies because of the small number of pupils in Years 2 and 6 but is average overall. The school is not yet outstanding as pupils’ progress in writing is lower than in other subjects. Pupils do not write enough in other subjects, the presentation of their written work is not consistently neat and children in the Reception class and in the playgroup are not encouraged sufficiently to ‘mark make’ in the outdoor learning environment.
- Pupils’ achievement is good overall. Learning accelerates in the Key Stage 2 class where the pace of lessons increases. Pupils are also making good progress in mathematics. By the end of Year 2, pupils’ attainment in reading is average and is above average by Year 6. However, some pupils occasionally struggle with understanding the meaning behind an author’s choice of words.
- The learning and progress of children in the playgroup are good. Children’s personal, social and emotional development, both in the playgroup and in the youngest class, is outstanding because of the care and support these children receive.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have excellent relationships with the pupils and plan well to meet their needs. However, teachers’ use of questioning in guided-reading activities is too focused on developing comprehension skills rather than extending their higher-order thinking skills.
- Attendance is high and pupils’ behaviour and safety are outstanding because of excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher manages the performance of staff effectively and leads teaching well. She is supportive and monitors teaching thoroughly but there are too few opportunities for staff to see and share best practice.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils’ progress in writing by:

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

- providing more opportunities for pupils to write extensively in all subjects
 - ensuring that pupils' written work across the school is neatly presented in their exercise books
 - encouraging children in the playgroup and in the Reception class to practise their early writing skills in the outdoor classroom.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
- ensuring that all staff have the opportunity to learn from the best practice in the school
 - developing teachers' questioning skills so pupils can gain a deeper understanding of the author's reasons for choosing specific words and phrases to create meaning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents are delighted with the good progress that their children make, a view that is supported by the inspection findings. Pupils in Key Stage 2 who have transferred from other schools said, 'This school has really helped me to learn. Teachers know my sticking points and help me through them.' Assessment records show that several pupils have improved their reading scores rapidly through the focused interventions they receive.

When children enter the Reception class attainment on entry is variable. In the past, very few were working at the expected levels for their age as not many children transferred from the playgroup. However, from low starting points, children make good progress and attain the levels expected in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. They make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Progress in writing varies as pupils do not write enough in other subjects. Attainment is also variable because of the high number of pupils who join the school in Key Stage 2, but overall it is broadly average. The school is very popular with parents whose children need a small-school environment to help them overcome their barriers to learning. By the time pupils leave, they have attained the skills needed to cope with the next stage of education, particularly in reading where their attainment is above average because of the good teaching of letter sounds and reading skills. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading and are frequent visitors to the 'snug' (library).

Pupils' attain average standards in mathematics by the time they leave school. They make good progress in mental mathematics because of the interventions put in to accelerate progress. Pupils have a good knowledge of calculations and can apply the four rules of number well.

Learning in lessons is good most of the time. Some outstanding examples of learning were observed in the Key Stage 2 class where pupils, working with partners,

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

improved their writing of adverts to entice visitors by looking closely at their choice of persuasive words. In mathematics, all groups of pupils rapidly understood how to multiply decimal numbers. Their improved progress in these 'thinking for ourselves' sessions is attributable to the teachers' and teaching assistants' excellent checking of understanding of mental strategies used to solve number problems. Pupils are expected to think like mathematicians and check that their calculations make sense.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Work is well matched to their needs and their confidence in learning improves through the good support they receive from well-trained teaching assistants. The reading scores of the youngest pupils improved rapidly because they consolidated what they had learned in lessons through well-chosen games. By Year 2, their attainment in reading is average and their skills in reading unfamiliar words are improving.

Pupils are challenged appropriately and, as a result, make good progress. Pupils who join the school during the year often have lower starting points than others. These starting points are quickly assessed, correct support given and consequently they catch up quickly and so make good progress.

Quality of Teaching

Parents are very pleased with the quality of teaching. 'Traditional values, caring and supportive staff who take their profession very seriously,' is how one parent described teaching at the school. Teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge, well-informed support staff and meticulous planning by all staff, who are fully aware of their pupils' learning requirements. Classrooms buzz with excitement as pupils try to find solutions to tasks, such as defining the most scenic routes for visitors to take while visiting London for the Olympics. The teaching of reading is good, but in guided-reading activities, teachers' questions are not sufficiently focused on developing pupils' thinking skills.

Teaching is consistently good in the Key Stage 2 class but varies in its quality in the other class. Teaching is improving because of the headteacher's good monitoring of teaching and learning, with subsequent targets set for improvement. The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is consistently good especially when they are taught by the capable teaching assistants. Several examples of outstanding teaching were seen with the older pupils, who made rapid progress because of the teacher's excellent time management.

In a good English lesson, the younger pupils were given the opportunity to role play characters from *Jack and the Beanstalk*. This contributed to their understanding of the relationship between Jack and the Giant. In an excellent mathematics lesson with older pupils, the teacher helped them to make excellent progress by modelling how to increase and decrease numbers mentally. Teachers introduce elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well by encouraging pupils to cooperate with one another.

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

Pupils love learning because they are taught how to learn. One parent said, 'My child transferred from another school. This school has helped and supported my child and restored her confidence.' The pupil in question is now a competent and confident learner.

Behaviour and Safety

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They behave impeccably and love attending school, as shown by their high levels of attendance and punctuality. Breakfast club is well attended because pupils cannot wait to come and see their friends. As one delighted parent stated, 'My child loves school. The holidays are a nightmare as he is constantly asking when he can go back!' Pupils' outstanding behaviour over time is due to the emphasis placed on the school's values, encompassing 'the fruits of the spirit' (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control), and the excellent opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

By Year 6, pupils are resilient learners who help others and readily accept responsibility around the school. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying, cyber bullying, name calling or racist comments. Pupils are extremely polite, courteous and say that behaviour is excellent all of the time. They show great reverence in acts of collective worship and look after their friends well. The high emphasis on the teaching of bible stories resonates in pupils' everyday life. 'We help our friends just like the good Samaritan,' said one member of the school council. Pupils take delight in all activities and are developing their skills of leadership. For example, the early morning 'wake and shake' activity is led by them.

Parents consider behaviour and safety to be exemplary and inspection findings concur with their views. Pupils who have had behaviour issues in previous schools settle in quickly because of the high level of care and support they receive.

Leadership and Management

The headteacher, ably supported by the governing body, has improved the quality of education since the last inspection, demonstrating strong capacity for further improvement. Standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2 are rising because of good teaching. Attendance has improved and is now high and pupils are consistently punctual. The governing body fulfils its duties well, particularly in ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils. All pupils have access to range of learning opportunities offered and there are no undue variations in the progress made by different groups of pupils. The school is well maintained and safe because of the excellent emphasis placed on safe practices. The arrangements to keep pupils safe and to promote their behaviour are robust. All staff have received child protection training and the school's policies and procedures are meticulously documented. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and regular professional development for staff is focused on pupils' requirements, such as the importance of developing writing opportunities across the curriculum. Teachers make regular up-to-date checks of

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

pupils' progress and are held to account for any dips in attainment.

School development planning identifies all the right priorities and targets are reflected in the performance management of staff, which contributes significantly to improving the quality of teaching and learning. The good learning opportunities offered by a well-structured curriculum are supported by a good range of clubs and activities. The gardening club, run by one of the governors, is very popular and promotes a deep sense of care for the environment. The curriculum is broad, balanced and reflective of pupils' needs and promotes excellent opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about other cultures, faiths and celebrations. Links are established with Germany and Africa so that comparisons of lifestyles can be made.

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The on-site pre-school integrated care is registered for 20 two- to three-year-olds and operates daily from 8.00am to 4.00pm during term time only. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision is good. Children join the playgroup at the age of two and usually remain there until they are old enough to join the Reception Year, both in other schools and in the main school. The pre-school playgroup is led well by a pre-school manager, headteacher and governors. Self-evaluation is good and the playgroup has been endorsed by the successful receipt of the Bristol Standards Quality improvement for birth to five. All staff are committed to providing equality of opportunity.

Arrangements for keeping children safe are good. Parents are very pleased that the uniqueness of each child is valued and that welfare arrangements are good. The introduction of 'WOW' cards creates a very strong relationship between home and school. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They get on very well with one another and make a positive contribution to the setting by valuing one another's differences.

Children's achievement is good. They make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of the positive relationships and trust they have with staff. Provision for helping children achieve and enjoy learning is good. Children make good progress in acquiring an understanding of letters and sounds. They know about healthy eating, what they need to wear outdoors in cold weather and how to keep themselves safe.

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

Staff keep meticulous observations of children’s learning and share this information with parents and carers. Children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, show good improvement in all areas of learning. Children make good progress from low starting points and thoroughly enjoy learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 for the registered provision	2

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Withington Church of England Primary School, Cheltenham, GL54 4BQ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school and thank you for taking the time to tell me, both in discussions and through your questionnaires, how much you enjoy learning and how much you respect and like your teachers. I found that your school gives you a good quality of education.

These are some of the things that I liked most.

- You achieve well in lessons because of the hard work and commitment you put in.
- You are polite, exceptionally well behaved and friendly, and are good ambassadors for your school.
- Your attendance is high, you are punctual and show positive attitudes to learning.
- You are safe in school and get on very well with all of your friends.
- Your teachers take good care of you and teach you well.
- Your headteacher leads the whole school community well and is committed to improving the standard of learning within the school.
- You understand and respond to your school's values very well.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governing body to do the following things to make the school even better.

- Make sure that you make faster progress in your writing by giving you more opportunities to write in different subjects. You can help by ensuring that your written work is neatly presented.
- Ensure that teachers observe one another to learn from the best practice.
- Provide more opportunities for the youngest pupils to write more in the outside classroom.

All of you can help by always doing your very best and continuing to behave well.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**