

Withycombe Raleigh Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113355
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	338152
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	David Edwards

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	451
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nickie Mallett
Headteacher	Stephen Powley
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and observed 15 teachers, and held meetings with the headteacher, the chair of governors and other governor representatives, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school documentation including evidence from the school's self-evaluation process, including staff, pupil's and parent's questionnaires.

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

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in securing improved outcomes for all pupils in the light of significant staff changes
- whether teaching throughout the school is sufficiently challenging to secure and maintain all pupils' high achievement, particularly in English
- how well improvements to the assessment and monitoring of pupils' learning are having the desired impact on raising pupils' achievements.

Information about the school

This large school accepts pupils from the village and surrounding area. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, but an above average proportion have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Withycombe Raleigh is an outstanding school. Despite significant changes to leadership and management since the last inspection, the school has retained its focus on providing an inclusive and high-quality education for pupils. Leaders and managers at all levels have securely maintained and built upon the school's previously outstanding performance in all key areas. As a result of the excellent learning culture and strong inclusive ethos within the school, the majority of pupils achieve exceptionally high standards and their learning and progress are good.

The school's work is rigorously monitored by senior leaders, and outcomes are communicated regularly to governors so that they are enabled to make a strong contribution to the work and direction of the school. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons very much and appreciate the ways teachers work hard to make learning fun. The impressive range of extra-curricular clubs and amazing school grounds make a significant contribution to the all-round learning experiences of pupils.

Children get off to an excellent start to the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the outstanding provision that has been carefully planned to engage children's interests and support them to make very good progress in their learning. As a result, children are very well prepared to continue their learning in Key Stage 1.

Teaching throughout the school is usually good, and some lessons are excellent. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is extensive and ensures that pupils, especially the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are appropriately challenged to do their best. The only relative weakness is that teachers' marking and feedback do not fully support pupils in understanding how they can improve their work. Assessment information is now used by teachers to identify pupils' attainment as well as to measure how much progress they are making. Support staff are highly valued by the school and well trained. They work closely with teachers to provide very effective support for all pupils.

In the short time since his appointment, the headteacher has worked closely with senior leaders and governors to develop a very clear understanding of the school's many strengths and areas for improvement. His ambition and insight to lead the school towards securing even higher achievements for pupils are demonstrated by the improved processes for managing the performance of staff through professional development, and the high level of morale evident within the school. All leaders ensure that school improvement plans are accurately focused on improving learning outcomes for pupils. The school's capacity for further improvement is excellent.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Give pupils a greater understanding of how to improve their work by ensuring that high quality marking and feedback are implemented consistently throughout the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they enjoy very positive relationships with adults. They are proud of their school and regard it as a community. Pupils are highly motivated and engage enthusiastically in lessons, demonstrating a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them.

Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They play well together, and say that incidents of bullying are rare and they know who to talk to if they have concerns. Pupils' understanding of how to use information and communication technology safely is particularly well developed. Pupils speak confidently about what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle. Strategies to support pupils in attending school are thoroughly implemented so that attendance remains above average.

Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment had remained above average but had steadily fallen, particularly in writing. The rigorous analysis of pupils' test results has helped teachers to identify more accurately pupils' individual learning needs. Consequently, national test results for 2010 demonstrate a significant improvement in English and mathematics. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that pupils' attainment is now significantly above average and overall achievement throughout the school is outstanding.

Pupils' basic skills for learning are particularly well developed and practised across the curriculum. Pupils show excellent concentration in lessons and are committed to succeed. The early identification of pupils' learning needs and the consistent support for all groups of learners are notable strengths of the school. More able pupils, those with particular gifts and talents, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities often make excellent progress because support is very well organised and matched to their individual learning needs. As a result, pupils identified as needing additional support often perform in line with national expectations.

Pupils are enabled to contribute very positively to the school and wider community. Through the creative use of the local environment, visits to places of interest and participation in national competitions and festivals, pupils gain a good appreciation of cultural diversity within Britain.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan stimulating lessons that provide appropriate challenge for pupils. Good relationships between teachers and support staff ensure that pupils engage positively with their work. Pupils appreciate the effort teachers put into planning their lessons. One pupil summed up the views of the majority by saying, 'Teachers think of new ways in which we can learn and we have lots of really good clubs!' However, the use of marking to guide pupils and help them understand how they could improve their work is not consistently good in all classes.

The school learning environment is stunning and constantly being improved. Every aspect of the grounds surrounding the school has been utilised to provide high quality learning opportunities for pupils.

The curriculum is innovative and designed to engage pupils fully in learning. The school has developed very effective links with extended services and partners in order to provide extensively for pupils and their families. Recent improvements to the accommodation have allowed the school to develop further as a centre for community support and education.

Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Teaching assistants work very closely with small groups or individuals and contribute most effectively to the assessment of pupils' learning. The recent improvements to the way the school assesses pupils' learning are having the desired impact on raising pupils' achievements. This is because assessment information is used very well by teachers to measure the progress pupils are making and identify what they need to do next to support pupils when planning lessons.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children start school with skills and abilities that are in line with national expectations but often display strengths in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy and weaknesses in emotional development. They do so well across all the areas of learning because teaching is of the highest quality and centred on the needs of the individual child. Trusting and supportive relationships are quickly made between the school, children and their parents and carers.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has shown enormous enthusiasm and commitment to her role and has been very effective in moulding new staff to work as a team over the past year. She demonstrates a secure knowledge of how children learn

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best and is highly reflective and ambitious for further improvements within the setting. The improved outcomes seen in children's writing skills and emotional development for 2010 are a result of the focused cooperation of all adults.

Good communications with parents and carers ensure high levels of satisfaction and include improved opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to the recording of their children's achievements at home through, for example, the use of 'wow' slips.

The learning environment is welcoming, both inside and out, and activities are carefully thought through to engage and support children's learning. For example, improvements in opportunities for children to write, particularly for boys, have been integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

Detailed assessments result in teachers developing a comprehensive understanding of children's strengths and next steps in learning. The process is not yet sufficiently streamlined and leaders are aware that observations of children's learning are occasionally duplicated unnecessarily.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the school. There were many positive comments about how much their children enjoy school. One parent summed up the views of the majority by writing, 'This is a fantastic school; we feel our children are privileged to attend. There are some truly exceptional teachers who seem to be able to bring out the best in every single child.'

In essence the findings of the inspectors reflected the views of parents. The small number of parents who raised concerns would like to see further improvements to the way the school communicates with them. In particular for parents who; may wish to discuss their child's special educational needs, or would like additional ways of understanding how well their child is progressing in school, or want to know how unacceptable behaviour, when it does occur, is dealt with.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Withycombe Raleigh 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 140 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 451 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	64	43	32	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	97	72	36	27	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	56	42	62	46	14	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	51	58	43	7	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	80	50	50	37	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	49	55	41	13	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	66	49	64	48	2	2	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)	62	46	64	48	3	2	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	57	43	71	53	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	35	69	52	11	8	5	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	36	62	46	14	10	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	55	41	67	50	6	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	55	55	41	4	3	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 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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Withycombe Raleigh C of E Primary School, Exmouth EX8 3BA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were particularly impressed with your very good behaviour and your enthusiasm to learn in lessons. We have decided that yours is an outstanding school. That means that your teachers and all those who work in the school support you in your learning very well. Not only do you clearly enjoy your learning, but you make good progress and you achieve highly in English and mathematics by the time you leave school at the end of Year 6. The support and guidance you enjoy are exceptional because your headteacher, staff and governors do all they can to provide you with fantastic learning experiences. I was not surprised therefore to find that your attendance is good. Well done, keep it up! Those of you we spoke with told us the school is a safe place, and that you learn a lot about staying healthy through regular exercise and eating a healthy diet. We noticed that you work well together in lessons and have plenty of opportunity to support and extend your learning using your amazing school grounds that have been carefully filled with activities and experiences. A particular strength of your school is the way those of you who sometimes find learning challenging are given really good support so that many of you make fantastic progress in all you do.

There is always room for improvement, so we have asked your headteacher to make sure that when teachers mark your work and provide you with feedback, they always make sure you understand exactly what it is you need to do to improve. In that way I am sure even more of you will be able to achieve your very best.

Finally, I would like to say how brilliant and professional the Year 6 'Stomp' group was in assembly. The other inspectors and I will remember that performance for a long time to come! I hope all of you, in time, take up the many wonderful opportunities on offer to you in your school. You and your teachers have all worked very hard this year so I hope you all have an enjoyable summer holiday. I wish you well for your futures.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards

Her Majesty's Inspector

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