

# Witnesham Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124618
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	380936
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jo Boast
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Hubbard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	High Road Witnesham Ipswich IP6 9EX
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed five teachers teaching nine lessons and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books and scrutinised a range of documentation, including safeguarding and other policy documents, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also took into account the 58 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's work to improve pupils' progress, especially in literacy for boys across the school and more-able pupils at Key Stage 1.
- Whether the impact of actions taken to improve outcomes for pupils have led to sustained improvement.
- How effectively the curriculum contributes to pupils' enjoyment and their use of key skills across different subject areas.

## Information about the school

In this smaller-than-average primary school, pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The school serves the local community and neighbouring villages. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is smaller than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than in other schools. An average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school holds a number of awards, including the National Healthy School Award. The school works in collaboration with Otley Primary School. Although the headteacher leads and manages both schools, each school has its own governing body.

**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

In this good school, care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Partnerships to promote learning and well-being are outstanding and the school has many links with its local community and through collaboration with another local school. The school is set in exceptionally large wooded grounds, which are used well for children to learn about the natural environment and to use their own initiative to solve problems and cooperate with others. The library and learning resource area has recently been extended. Highly effective partnerships and recent improvements to the environment, coupled with the energy and drive of staff to make use of the outdoor environment, have opened up a wide range of learning opportunities. They provide pupils with activities that would not otherwise be accessible in a small village school and contribute to pupils' excellent understanding of how to live healthily.

Outcomes for all pupils are good. Teaching is good and pupils know their targets and how to improve their work. The curriculum engages pupils in learning and is well enriched. A very large majority of pupils take part in extra-curricular activities. Pupils of all abilities make good progress across the school and leave Year 6 with above-average attainment. This reflects good achievement given pupils' starting points in the early Years Foundation Stage, which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the close well-targeted support they receive from skilful teaching assistants. Attendance is above average for all pupils.

Boys' attainment in writing and the attainment of the more-able pupils in writing at Key Stage 1 have been relative areas of underperformance, but are steadily improving. This is because of the strong focus the school has given to this important skill. Even so, standards in writing across the school for all pupils continue to lag a little behind those reached in reading and mathematics. Some pupils' skills in handwriting, grammar and punctuation are not systematically built on across the curriculum. Although the curriculum is effective, the opportunities pupils have to develop their speaking and listening skills in all their subjects are not sufficiently planned for in subjects other than English.

Since the school was last inspected many aspects have improved. These include the quality of care, guidance and support provided, the extent to which pupils feel safe as well as their understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles, all of which are outstanding. Stimulating activities, for example through the excellent partnerships

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forged by the school, provide pupils with opportunities to make a very positive contribution in both the local and wider community. Through these activities and their lessons, pupils develop a good understanding of young people from local backgrounds and communities. However, the school recognises that still lacking is pupils' understanding of the similarities, as well as the differences, between their own culture and that of others.

Leadership and management at all levels are good. The headteacher articulates her vision clearly. Areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. The governing body are both challenging and supportive, ensuring the school is kept on track. The school's monitoring and evaluation are rigorous and areas for development are fully understood. The progress of pupils is tracked regularly and accurately. The maintenance of good achievement in recent years and improvements to the learning environment and aspects of the curriculum demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Raise attainment, especially in writing by:
  - ensuring that pupils' skills in handwriting, grammar and punctuation are built on in a systematic way
  - ensuring that teachers identify and plan every possible opportunity to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills in all subjects, to the extent currently seen in English.
- Extend pupils' knowledge of cultures, religions and beliefs other than their own by providing a wide range of opportunities for them to become more aware of how people from other cultures and religions live their lives.

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

**2**

Pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. They are extremely knowledgeable about the benefits of regular exercise and a healthy diet. The award of Healthy School Status is indicative of the school's commitment to encouraging this aspect of pupils' personal development. Pupils like the wide range of activities on offer, which have a positive effect on their learning. This is reflected in the enthusiasm they show for learning. In one lesson observed, pupils were seen cooperating particularly well with each other researching information on the internet. This showed their strong information and communication technology (ICT) skills to good effect. In another lesson, they were bursting to give information they had discovered about Martin Luther King.

Pupils make best progress in reading and mathematics and reach above-average attainment in the national tests and their day-to-day work. As a result of changes to the curriculum and a focus on the teaching of writing, increasingly all pupils are

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writing accurately and convincingly. While they are encouraged to use a wide range of punctuation, grammar and vocabulary in their writing, in subjects other than English, teachers are not consistently reinforcing these expectations. Teachers’ planning to promote speaking and listening skills across the curriculum is inconsistent. Senior leaders have developed more robust strategies to track the progress of different groups as well as individuals, and provide appropriate intervention support. The school works very well with other agencies to improve pupils’ progress. Consequently, gifted and talented pupils and those who find learning difficult make good, and some make exceptional, progress.

Pupils have a keen understanding of right and wrong and of their rights and responsibilities within the community. They talk of the importance of helping others. Although their sense of community and their contribution to the wider community are impressive, pupils’ understanding of people living in communities different to their own is more limited. Consequently, pupils’ multicultural awareness is a weaker aspect of their personal development. Along with above-average attendance, good ICT skills and above-average literacy and numeracy skills, pupils are well prepared for their 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>	2
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>1</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</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>

**How effective is the provision?**

Relationships in all classes seen were positive, resulting in pupils who confidently ask and answer questions. The vast majority of teachers are good at sharing with pupils

<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

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exactly what they are expected to do in lessons. They use good questioning techniques to challenge pupils and these help them to make sense of their learning. Good use is made of interesting resources, such as pictures, video and film in English lessons, to inspire and engage pupils’ interest, especially that of boys, and this ensures they are actively engaged. There are many planned opportunities to enable pupils to use their imagination and develop their creative-writing skills across the curriculum. However, pupils do not have sufficient planned speaking and listening activities to help them develop their ideas for writing. Teachers’ marking is usually thorough and helpful. Very often ‘next steps’ are given and time provided in lessons to make changes. This is helping pupils to reflect much more on their learning. In the few lessons where teaching is no more than satisfactory, learning and progress are held back because the pace of lessons is slow and teachers talk too much, which limits the time pupils are actively learning.

Following changes to the curriculum, the school is making writing more purposeful and interesting to pupils. For example, in the summer term, a beach scene was created in the school grounds and provided a rich source of stimulation, which resulted in pupils enjoying and understanding their learning more. There is good provision for developing ICT skills. Pupils’ research skills in ICT, which were highlighted as an area for development at the previous inspection, have greatly improved. The use of ICT to enrich the curriculum gives pupils access to a wider variety of learning resources. Learning support assistants work well with teachers and provide good proactive support so that all pupils have full access to the good range of learning opportunities provided. Extensive partnerships have resulted in a curriculum that provides excellent enrichment for pupils, supports their understanding of healthy living and extends their experiences. There is also provision for modern foreign languages and instrumental tuition. Visits are used extremely well to support pupils’ learning.

This is an outstandingly caring and supportive school. There are rigorous systems to keep pupils safe and excellent programmes to promote their personal, social and emotional development. The school knows its pupils and context well and looks to get the best from each individual. Parents, carers and pupils have high levels of confidence in the levels of care provided. Very close work with families and exemplary relationships with a wide range of agencies build up warm and trusting relationships. As a result of the well-targeted support provided by the school, pupils, particularly those who are potentially vulnerable, make the best of the wide range of opportunities provided.

*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>

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**The effectiveness of care, guidance and support**

**1**

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads the school effectively and responsibility is shared well among the teaching staff. Assessment data are carefully monitored and used in progress reviews to plan interventions and strategies to support pupils who may be falling behind. Self-evaluation is effective in helping to drive improvement. The governing body plays a key part in both strategic planning and monitoring. The school complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding. All related procedures are well managed and there is a thorough on-going review of their effectiveness. The inclusive ethos of the school promotes equality of opportunity and access to educational entitlement effectively. Consequently, pupils of all abilities achieve equally well. An excellent range of partnerships enriches the curriculum and has a positive impact on pupils’ learning and well-being. Leaders, including the governing body, are keen to put the school at the heart of the local community. The school promotes community cohesion effectively through the work it does with the local and wider communities. However, pupils’ understanding of the diverse nature of life in Britain is underdeveloped. Parents and carers are regarded as partners and links with them are good as exemplified in the recent camping weekend held in the school grounds for the school community.

*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>1</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 start school with a range of skills, which vary from year to year because of the small number of children involved. Children get off to a good start and make

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good progress in all areas of learning from their average starting points. They are well taught with a range of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. However, on a few occasions, teaching is not always matched appropriately to the needs of the more-able children.

Teachers plan good opportunities for children to develop independence as well as learning to share and cooperate with each other. This was seen when three children worked together to replant the tubs in the outdoor area while explaining to each other what they were planting and why.

Very positive relationships ensure children feel safe and secure and settle extremely quickly. Staff have good systems for gathering evidence from parents and carers and other providers. Arrangements to promote children’s welfare are good. The indoor environment, although cramped, enables children to access all areas of learning. However, the small, restricted area for outdoor learning, although improved since the previous inspection, is less effective because its size and position prevent the same quality of provision being offered. Leadership and management are good, based on a shared sense of purpose and good teamwork.

*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**

Many more questionnaire returns were received than is usual in primary schools. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers were of the view that their children enjoy school and that they were happy with their children’s experiences. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about the way the school manages pupils’ behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be good overall. A very small minority of parents and carers have concerns about the account taken of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that the school has regular consultations with parents and carers and is willing to liaise with and accommodate their wishes wherever possible. The inspectors judge that the school works very well with parents and carers, many of whom made positive comments about the school. Comments included, ‘The school encourages the children to become happy, confident and independent learners in an enjoyable and secure environment.’ Inspectors fully endorse these positive views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Winesham 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 94 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	64	21	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	76	14	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	35	60	21	36	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	53	23	40	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	55	25	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	28	48	27	47	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	64	20	34	1	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)	30	52	24	41	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	26	45	30	52	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	53	21	36	1	2	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	50	23	40	5	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	62	18	31	4	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	40	69	16	28	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



17 October 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Witnesham Primary School, Ipswich, IP6 9EX**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. I thought you would like to know what the inspectors thought about your school and how it could improve even more.

We think that Witnesham is a good school. It has some outstanding features. We were impressed that nearly every one of you in the school is involved in at least one extra activity, with many of you taking part in more than this. You told us how much you love the grounds, watching the wild life in the nature area, camping and 'Welly Wednesdays'.

As a result of all this, you achieve well in your work and outstandingly in your contribution to the community and in your understanding of how to live healthily. We were impressed by your good behaviour and to see how well you enjoy your lessons and work well together. You are taught well by your teachers and you enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities. All of the good things the school has to offer are made possible because the people who lead your school, such as the headteacher, other staff and the governors work hard to give you the best education possible.

There are two areas for improvement that would be really useful to focus upon. Although you do well in reading and mathematics, you need more help to improve your writing skills. We have asked the school to give you more opportunities to use a wider range of punctuation, grammar and vocabulary and practise your speaking and listening skills in all your subjects. We have also asked the school to provide you with more opportunities to learn about what life is like for people who live in places different from your own.

You can help by continuing to attend well, working hard, and enjoying yourselves.

With very best wishes for your future

Yours sincerely,

Susan Thomas-Pounce  
Lead Inspector

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