

Witton Church Walk CE Aided Nursery & Primary School
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*'Where Every Door is Opened
and Every Gift Unlocked'*

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28th March 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you are well.

As you may be aware, in February of this year our school was visited by the schools' inspectorate, Ofsted.

This was a full two-day inspection where every aspect of life at Witton Church Walk CofE Nursery and Primary School was reviewed, discussed and evaluated. It was also our first inspection since 2017, when we were rated as a Good school.

During this time, Ofsted has launched a new Education Inspection Framework which is much broader and more detailed than it previously was and, rightly, puts a much greater focus on the culture and student experience at a school.

The report we received back from Ofsted was, in large part, extremely positive and confirmed that there are many aspects of the school that retain their Good status, including *Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development and Early Years Provision*.

As you will see from the report, the inspectors said that "pupils are proud members of this happy and nurturing school" and "enjoy warm and caring relationships with staff". One pupil summed up the views of many by saying, "There's always someone here for you, everyone is welcome, everyone can be themselves."

Inspectors found that "pupils benefit from a wide range of activities, visitors and visits to broaden their horizons" and "pupils proudly take on a variety of leadership roles...this helps them to become responsible and active citizens". The report continues to say that "Leaders have high ambitions and expectations for pupils' learning" and that leaders and staff "have collaborated to design a connected and engaging curriculum from the Nursery class to the end of Year 6."

We're also proud that the report highlights how we "act quickly to investigate and deal with any bullying issues effectively" and "work hard to make sure that pupils with SEND are identified quickly."



There were, however, some additional complexities that we also feel it is important to share with you.

During this process, the inspectors felt that in a very small minority of non-core subject areas teachers had not had sufficient training and that pupils do not have a broad enough understanding of what was being taught in those areas. In addition, while they praise governors for working tirelessly for the school, they also conclude that they have not held the school to account enough.

As a result, *Quality of Education* and *Leadership and Management* were both graded as Requires Improvement. These are what are known as Limiting Judgements because the school's outcomes in these areas determine the overall grade. As such, our school is now graded as Requires Improvement.

As a school we are incredibly open to any feedback that we feel will benefit the school. Some of the comments that the inspectors have made are hugely helpful and we will most definitely act on them. We did, however, have some concerns with the conduct of the inspection and approach that was taken. There were also other findings on the day that we fundamentally disagreed with. Through the Ofsted complaints process we have already challenged these, and Ofsted has already made a number of changes to the draft report as they confirmed there was not the evidence on which to make some of the assumptions that they did.

As a school we could continue with this challenge to get the grade that we believe is fair and accurate, and mirrors the grading that many other external organisations have given the school for the education we provide to our children daily. The reality is that this would take a significant amount of time and financial resources, and we just don't think that is the right thing to do for our school at this time. We have decided the best thing is to accept this judgement and focus on what matters most – **'to be there for our community and most importantly the happiness, wellbeing and education of all the children in our care so we can continue to support them in their journey through school and watch them flourish.'**

A copy of the report is available on the school website for you to view. If you have any questions, then please do get in touch and I will do all that I can to answer them.

I wholly appreciate that there will be some people who are disappointed with the outcome, and I hope that we do not come across as being completely dismissive of this process. Where we can enhance what we can do, we have done and will always listen and act – but that has to be based on evidence and the needs of our children, staff and community.

Kind Regards,
Mrs Kathryn Magiera
Head Teacher

