

# Victoria Park Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106328
<b>Local Authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	355932
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 April 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robert Jones

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>	5–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sharon Freeman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss D Vrlec
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Henshaw Street Stretford, Manchester Lancashire M32 8BU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, observed the work of eight teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress and child protection records. The inspection team received and analysed 41 questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as a number of questionnaires completed by staff.

- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How effectively teachers use school assessment data to challenge the different abilities in the classroom through effective questioning and matching work to ability.
- The accuracy of the school's assessments in writing and in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How well the curriculum meets the needs of pupils at the early stages of speaking English.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized infant school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. A greater proportion of pupils than average are from minority ethnic groups and more pupils than average speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school holds various awards, including Healthy School Status, Eco school bronze award and the Investors in People award.

**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

This is a good school. There are significant areas of the school's work that are outstanding. Since the last inspection, attainment has risen to a point where it is now high. This, combined with the outstanding learning and progress of pupils, means that achievement is also outstanding. Pupils gain an excellent understanding of the importance of keeping fit and healthy.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, although some remaining inconsistencies are preventing its overall quality from rising to outstanding. Writing is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils begin each day by practising their handwriting skills and, in every subject, there are good opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills. These, combined with excellent support if pupils fall behind with their work are the reasons why attainment has risen sharply since the last inspection. Since the last inspection, the school has been recording the progress of different groups of pupils more closely. The system in the main school and in the Early Years Foundation Stage, however, is cumbersome which makes it difficult for school leaders to track the progress of groups of pupils easily and efficiently.

While school leaders have been highly successful in raising achievement, their plans to improve attendance have had limited effect. Although the level of persistent absence has fallen and the rate of attendance shows some improvement, attendance remains low, with rising numbers of pupils not being punctual for school in the mornings. The school does not utilise its good partnership with parents and carers to best effect when it comes to promoting good attendance and punctuality. Not enough is done to raise parents' awareness of the importance of their children attending school regularly right from an early age.

The quality of self-evaluation is accurate and effective. Middle leaders monitor their subject areas regularly and have ensured standards continue to rise in each subject. School leaders have enabled teachers to use data effectively to set challenging targets and plan work that is appropriately challenging for all abilities. Attainment has risen year-on-year. Inspection evidence indicates that it is poised to rise further still, which is an indicator of the school's good capacity to sustain its improvement.

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

- Improve attendance so it is at least average by:
  - working more closely with parents and carers and a greater range of outside agencies to promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
  - linking the rewards system more closely to good attendance

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- regularly reporting issues of attendance to the governing body so that they are better able to hold the school to account
- establishing the good routines of regular attendance while children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so it becomes outstanding by:
  - ensuring pupils are fully involved in their own learning through collaborative group work and solving problems in teams rather than being directed by the teacher
  - expanding the opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through discussions and problem solving in groups
  - questioning children more effectively in the Reception and Nursery classes so they answer in full sentences and develop their speaking skills.
- Simplify the methods used to record and summarise pupils' progress, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, to enable school leaders and the governing body to efficiently track the performance of groups of pupils.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

In lessons, pupils apply themselves diligently to their work. Children enjoy writing, making outstanding progress in this aspect of their work because the topics are stimulating and linked to practical activities. In one lesson, Year 1 pupils enthusiastically wrote long sequences of text describing an egg blowing activity they had done the previous day. Occasionally, when the pace of learning is not so quick or when pupils are not so well engaged in their learning, they make satisfactory rather than good progress. Because most lessons are engaging, relationships in the classroom are positive and behaviour is good.

Pupils enjoy school and their achievement is outstanding. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are a little below those expected of their age. They make overall outstanding progress so that when they leave in Year 2, their attainment is high. The literacy and numeracy work in Year 2 seen by inspectors confirms that it is of high quality. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress as a result of the first-class support they receive, often on a one-to-one basis, from dedicated teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language similarly make outstanding progress. The curriculum and additional support is well tailored to meet their needs.

Too many pupils have low attendance. While there is a strong ethos of making a good effort and achieving highly with celebrations of success and rewards linked to achievement, there is not the same emphasis on promoting, celebrating and rewarding good attendance. The result is that pupils and their parents and carers do not always attach high importance to regular attendance or punctuality. High attainment is preparing pupils well for the future, but their low attendance means that the overall development of skills what will contribute to their future economic well-being is satisfactory. However, inspectors found that the high-quality care, guidance and support afforded to pupils who have low attendance meant that they are making at least satisfactory and often good progress.

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Pupils' awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles is outstanding. The playground is a hive of vigorous physical activity as pupils play with hula hoops, walk on stilts or use the adventure playground. Many take advantage of the healthy options on offer at lunchtime. There are good opportunities for pupils to make positive contributions, such as becoming a playground leader and delivering harvest festival baskets to senior members of the local community.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<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>1</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>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<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?

In the best lessons, teachers show great enthusiasm, which in turn enthuses pupils and fires their curiosity to learn. In these lessons, pupils are given good opportunities to demonstrate their learning and learn through working in teams. Where teaching is less effective, teachers sometimes talk for too long. This does not give pupils enough opportunities to be so involved in their own learning or to develop their speaking and listening skills in lessons by engaging in problem-solving activities or discussions. Teachers mark pupils work accurately and give pupils helpful advice on how to improve their work.

A themed curriculum is enhanced by visits to bring learning alive to pupils. For example, a visit to a local stately home took place to gain an insight into domestic service when studying a topic on the Victorians. Physical education is given high prominence in the curriculum, enhanced by 'Swoosh', visiting dance and drama instructors, who help pupils to gain an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles.

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The outstanding achievement is largely attributable to the care, guidance and support systems which are exemplary in many respects. Talented teaching assistants inject support precisely where it is needed, both in the classroom and on a one-to-one basis. This ensures all pupils receive customised support for their needs. However, the school has so far been unable to have sufficient impact on raising attendance and punctuality; therefore, care, guidance and support are good rather than outstanding.

*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?

School leaders have embedded ambition and driven improvements well. This is particularly evident in the rapid improvements in pupils' writing skills. Teachers use data effectively to ensure all abilities are challenged well and they are adept at frequently revising pupils' targets so pupils reach high standards. School leaders keep detailed records of individual pupil's progress, but there is no simple system to ensure they, and the governing body have an overview of how different groups of pupils are progressing through summarising the data held. Similarly, there is a lack of rigour in reporting attendance-related issues to the governing body. This means the governing body have not had a complete enough picture of the levels of attendance and punctuality to enable it to hold the school fully to account on these matters. The school works well with parents and carers and a range of outside agencies which has contributed to the good and often outstanding progress pupils make. However, the school's work with parents and carers and outside agencies has so far been limited in improving attendance.

The governing body has a good understanding of the school's plans for development, and systems for challenging and supporting school leaders on the key areas for development are robust and thorough. Safeguarding is good. The site is safe and secure and governors, through their professional experience, have a particularly detailed overview of safeguarding issues.

Equal opportunities are promoted well. This is particularly evident in the outstanding progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Any perceived discrimination is not tolerated and is dealt with decisively. This has led to pupils feeling very safe in school. Community cohesion is promoted well. Teachers have visited the Punjab which has enabled them to help pupils to appreciate and understand other cultures and religions. There are good opportunities for pupils to link with local community as part of the Intergen project which links senior members of the community with pupils, with activities such as cake decorating and knitting.

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*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 good progress, to begin Year 1 with skills that are average for their age. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and good support is provided to ensure their needs are met. The outdoor area is particularly strong in supporting children's learning, with safe, imaginative equipment to stimulate children's curiosity. Children quickly develop in confidence due to the many opportunities for collaborative play. Communication, language and literacy are developed well overall, although on occasions there are missed opportunities to question children so they develop their speaking skills by answering in full sentences. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes quickly learn to take on responsibilities such as tidying up after themselves after play activities. Relationships are positive and behaviour is good.

Children's 'learning journeys' are detailed and show how their development across all areas of learning is carefully assessed and tracked. However, as in the main school, the tracking system is overly complex. This places limitations on how senior leaders and the governing body can keep an overview of the progress of groups of children. Safeguarding is afforded the highest priority, with risk assessments fully in place for all equipment and outdoor areas. There are good links with parents and carers who are fully involved in their children's learning, for example through 'stay and play' sessions and special projects that take place during school holidays. Attendance for children who are not yet of statutory school age is low, and they are therefore not developing the good habits of regular attendance as they become older.



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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 overwhelming majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school's work. Many of their comments in the questionnaire focused on the friendly and welcoming nature of the school, the good quality of teaching and how quickly the school deals with any concerns they may have. The inspection findings endorse these very positive responses.

A very small minority of parents and carers do not feel their children are making enough progress. Inspectors visited all the classrooms, scrutinised pupils' work and analysed data relating to pupils' progress. They found pupils make outstanding progress during their time in school, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Victoria Park Infant 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 212 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	85	5	12	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	29	71	11	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	56	16	39	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	63	12	29	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	76	8	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	63	15	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	51	18	44	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)	24	59	14	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	59	16	39	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	51	16	39	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	54	17	41	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	66	13	32	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	68	13	32	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 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 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.

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.**



26 April 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Victoria Park Infant School, Manchester, M32 8BU**

Three big cheers are in order, because I am pleased to say that you go to a good school. Your achievement is outstanding. What this really means is that we were very impressed with the high standards you reach in reading, writing and mathematics. Those of you who need extra help make excellent progress because very caring adults know just how much help to give you. You certainly know all about how to keep fit and healthy. I especially enjoyed watching the 'Swoosh' session which was very energetic. You told us how kind everybody was in the school and how you feel very safe.

There are always improvements to be made, so I have asked your headteacher and staff to do three things. First, to improve your attendance so that it is as good as most other schools. You can really help here by talking to your parents and carers about what your school is doing to help ensure all of you attend school on time and regularly. Second, to make sure all your lessons are interesting, that you are kept very busy learning and that you have time to talk about your work with people in your class. Third, to make sure the paperwork which tells your school leaders and governors how much progress you are making is more simple and easier to use.

With very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Robert Jones

Lead inspector

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