

Inspection of a good school: Light Oaks Junior School

Lancaster Road, Salford, Greater Manchester M6 8LU

Inspection dates:

8–9 January 2020

Outcome

Light Oaks Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Light Oaks is a school where pupils feel happy, safe and well cared for. Parents and carers feel welcomed. Pupils told me that behaviour is good, and that adults are kind. Pupils also said that bullying hardly ever happens. If it does, it is always dealt with quickly. Pupils are respectful to each other and adults. They are rarely absent from school because they do not want to miss out.

Pupils are curious and cooperative. They enjoy learning because teachers and teaching assistants make lessons interesting. Pupils listen carefully and behave well in class. They try their hardest and take pride in their work.

All staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. They ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to be successful. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in all aspects of school life. They achieve as well as their peers in a wide range of subjects.

Pupils regularly visit local places of interest. They enjoy visiting Chester, as part of their learning about the Romans, and museums in Manchester and Liverpool. Pupils love sports. They are excellent ambassadors for the school and are known locally for their success in football, netball, basketball and swimming competitions.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Senior leaders describe Light Oaks Junior School as an 'inclusive school'. This is a very apt description. All pupils have the same access to a well-planned curriculum that helps them to learn well across all of the subjects in the national curriculum. Leaders want the best for all pupils. Those who need help with their learning are identified quickly. The support that pupils receive helps them to catch up to their peers.

Comprehensive curriculum plans are in place for all subjects. This helps to ensure that teachers know exactly what pupils need to learn and by when. However, in computing,

design technology and geography, the procedures for assessing what pupils know and can do are not fully developed. In these subjects the curriculum is not delivered as effectively as it could be.

Teachers use the curriculum plans well to shape pupils' learning. The activities that they provide help pupils to develop their knowledge in a wide range of subjects. When I discussed history with Year 6 pupils, they told me a lot about life in Victorian England. Younger pupils talked with authority about Egyptian and Mayan civilizations.

The science curriculum supports pupils' learning and development well. For example, pupils in Year 4 have a good understanding of how the digestive system works. The science work that pupils completed in different year groups helped Year 6 pupils understand that accuracy in measuring and recording findings are essential when engaging in scientific investigations.

The reading curriculum enables pupils to become confident and competent readers. Pupils read widely and often and are familiar with the work of different authors. Those I spoke with told me that they enjoy comedy, adventure, horror and science fiction books and poetry. Some pupils are avid readers, proud to have read the complete works of authors such as J.K. Rowling.

Pupils achieve well. They achieved particularly well in 2019. At the end of Year 6, pupils' progress was well above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Pupils with SEND make the same gains in their learning as other pupils because the curriculum is tailored to their specific needs. Teaching assistants are especially well trained to support pupils with moderate learning difficulties and speech language and communication difficulties.

The school's curriculum extends beyond developing pupils academically. For example, pupils enjoy undertaking roles that develop their leadership skills as house captains, school councillors and 'sports crew' members. Pupils take part in various extra-curricular activities. They regularly attend netball, football, hockey, gymnastics, art and science clubs.

Staff feel valued. They told me that senior leaders are considerate of their work-life balance. Those new to teaching said that the mentoring support that they receive is helping to improve their teaching practice. Staff appreciate the many opportunities available for them to plan with and learn from their peers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors responsible for safeguarding are trained well. They are highly vigilant when it comes to pupils' welfare. The school has effective systems in place for passing on and recording safeguarding concerns.

Pupils said that they always feel safe in school. Staff are alert to any possible signs of neglect or abuse and know exactly what to do if they are worried about a pupil. Leaders make careful checks on all adults who work in the school to make sure that none pose a threat to pupils. Teachers help pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Senior leaders and governors have ensured that in almost all subjects, the curriculum carefully maps out what pupils need to learn and when. Leaders know where the curriculum is strongest and have a clear understanding of which subjects require more work. For example, they know that in some subjects assessment procedures are not fully developed. Leaders should ensure that their plans to develop procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in these subjects are implemented to improve the delivery of the curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Light Oaks Junior School to be good on 3–4 October 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	105884
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10122069
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sharon Hughes
Headteacher	Zandra Wilkinson
Website	www.lightoaksjuniorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2016

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has employed several new staff, including six teachers, two of whom are newly qualified, and nine teaching assistants.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and senior leaders responsible for the curriculum, special educational needs, safeguarding and the welfare of pupils.
- I met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement partner.
- I took account of 51 free-text messages and 49 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, during the inspection. I also considered responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 17 members of staff and 63 pupils.
- I focused deeply on reading, science and history. In each subject, I met with the subject leaders and teachers. I visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about their learning.

- I met with pupils, teachers and other staff and talked about pupils' safety, personal development and behaviour. I checked the school's records of the suitability of staff to work with children. I also talked with parents about matters relating to safety and scrutinised the school's safeguarding policy and related policies and documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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