

# Inspection of a good school: Light Oaks Infant School

Lancaster Road, Lancaster Rd, Salford, Greater Manchester M6 8LU

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

## Outcome

Light Oaks Infant School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and children in the early years are happy and feel safe at school. They enjoy good relationships with one another and they make plenty of friends. Pupils said that staff listen carefully to any concerns that they have. They explained that staff resolve any issues of bullying quickly.

Pupils engage well with the staff who teach and support them. Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Overall, pupils and children in the early years achieve well. Starting in the Nursery, and continuing throughout their time at the school, pupils become enthusiastic learners, confident readers and proficient mathematicians.

When meeting with visitors, pupils are polite and welcoming. Pupils also listen carefully to instructions from staff. Pupils, including children in the early years, cooperate well together in classroom activities and in their play. They behave sensibly. Some older pupils' concerns about behaviour are mostly about occasional high levels of noise. However, this noise is because pupils are learning so enthusiastically.

Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular activities, including singing, gardening and a variety of sports. Opportunities for pupils to learn through sessions in the school's woodland area are especially popular. Pupils said that they enjoy spotting various insects and birds.

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

Overall, leaders have ensured that the curriculum matches the needs and interests of pupils in key stage 1 and of children in the early years. They have successfully revised the structure of the curriculum. Leaders have also established the majority of the curriculum content that is to be taught. In the main, leaders' changes to the curriculum have ensured that staff are clear in most subjects about what information to teach to pupils and in what order. Added to this, leaders make effective use of ongoing staff training, and advice from

external experts, to ensure that staff continually improve their knowledge of the curriculum.

Despite these positive changes to the curriculum, in a very small number of subject areas leaders are still in the process of finalising the essential knowledge, including vocabulary, that staff should teach to children in the early years and to pupils in key stage 1. Nevertheless, most pupils in key stage 1, and children in the early years, learn well.

Most staff use leaders' assessment systems well. In the main, staff act quickly when children and pupils need extra help to recap information or to deepen their understanding of topics or concepts. In addition, leaders are successfully helping teachers to address the gaps in pupils' learning caused by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, on occasions, some staff do not use the agreed content of the school's curriculum as the basis for checking what pupils know and remember. This means that some teachers have less certainty that pupils are remembering the breadth of knowledge that they should.

Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders and staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately and in a timely manner.

Pupils enjoy reading and leaders successfully prioritise reading. Older pupils said that staff encourage them to read widely. Pupils value their special bookmarks on which they tally their completed reads. Staff in the early years focus effectively on teaching children to listen and talk, as well as to love stories, rhymes and poems.

Most pupils quickly gain the skills and knowledge that they need to master the phonics code. Leaders and staff assess pupils' phonic knowledge often and act on this information to refine their teaching activities. Staff give valuable extra support to pupils who struggle to keep up with the school's early reading curriculum. Leaders ensure that all staff are confident and able to teach phonics accurately.

Staff can focus their time and energy on teaching pupils new knowledge because low-level disruption by pupils is rare.

Leaders make certain that pupils are well prepared to contribute to British society. For example, older pupils raised funds to help pay for the very popular Year 2 disco. Pupils are taught about the monarchy and enjoyed learning about The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Through their wider learning, pupils know the importance of healthy eating, including the benefits of eating lots of fruit. Parents and carers praise the staff's work to teach pupils kindness and respect, as well as helping pupils begin to understand sensitive world issues, such as war.

Leaders and governors check that the workload of staff is manageable and reasonable. Staff enjoy working at the school. Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of how to improve the quality of education further. For example, leaders are carefully revising the curriculum in mathematics in the Nursery to link more fully with their chosen new mathematics curriculum in the rest of the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that pupils are taught to act safely, such as near roads or stretches of water. They make certain that children in the early years, and pupils in key stage 1, have a secure understanding of online safety and of issues such as stranger danger.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. They understand the safeguarding issues that may affect pupils' lives at the school and elsewhere in the local area. Leaders and staff are vigilant for any changes in pupils' appearance, comments or behaviour, which may suggest they are unhappy or at risk of harm. Leaders link appropriately with other agencies to safeguard pupils, when required.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects, leaders have not fully identified all the essential knowledge, including vocabulary, that they want staff to teach children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1. Leaders should finalise their curriculum thinking in these remaining subjects. This will help pupils to gain the key knowledge that leaders want them to know and remember.
- Sometimes, teachers do not use leaders' assessment systems to check what pupils understand and remember of the content outlined in the school's curriculum. They rely on alternative information and/or assessment systems. Leaders should ensure that teachers use the school's curriculum as the vehicle for assessing pupils' learning. This is to ensure that pupils have remembered all of the essential knowledge that they should.

## 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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2012 .

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105894
<b>Local authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200066
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	305
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	David Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lisa Thelwell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lightoaksinfantsalford.com">www.lightoaksinfantsalford.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons jointly with leaders, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils. The inspector also listened to some pupils read to staff.
- The inspector met with senior leaders throughout the inspection, including to discuss safeguarding, behaviour, the provision for pupils with SEND and how staff support pupils' wider personal development.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including about safeguarding.
- The inspector held a meeting with the chair of governors and one other governor. He also spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector met with staff and asked about their work, including their workload. The inspector considered responses from staff to an online Ofsted survey.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils to discuss their learning and safety and to hear their views about the school. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The inspector considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. He also considered a letter to Ofsted from one family.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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