

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **LIGHT OAKS JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Lancaster Road, Salford

LEA area: Salford

Unique reference number: 105884

Headteacher: Susan Cross

Reporting inspector: Malcolm Greenhalgh  
10422

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2000

Inspection number: 192214

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lancaster Road Salford Manchester
Postcode:	M6 8LU
Telephone number:	0161 789 1070
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr GWA Jackson
Date of previous inspection:	19 November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is an above average sized community junior school for pupils aged between seven and eleven years of age. There are 341 pupils on roll with slightly more boys than girls in each year group. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (approximately six per cent) is below the national average. There are eight pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds - a smaller proportion than found in other metropolitan schools. All have English as an additional language. There are 89 pupils on the special needs register (26 per cent), an above average proportion, four of whom have statements of special educational needs and receive additional support from the local education authority. The present Year 6 has an even higher percentage (33 per cent). The attainment on entry fluctuates but is broadly in line with the national average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

#### **School effectiveness**

The school is a very effective school with all pupils achieving well, particularly in English and mathematics. Standards in these subjects have been consistently high since the last inspection. The school is managed effectively which is a major reason for why the school is so successful. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The school is keen to improve standards further through more effective lesson planning and assessments of the progress pupils make. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics.
- Good teaching helps to ensure that the academic and social needs of the pupils are met. This leads to the pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and very good behaviour.
- The school is very well led and managed and the staff works effectively as a team.
- High levels of care are provided for all pupils enabling them to make very good progress in their personal development.
- There are very effective links with parents and this has a positive effect on the progress made by the pupils.

#### **What could be improved**

- Not all teachers' planning, nor the teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements, reach the high standards demonstrated by some teachers.
- Co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics are not involved enough to ensure standards in their subjects are as high as they could be.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and is keen to improve further. The key weaknesses found then have been dealt with successfully. The quality of teaching and learning, the assessment of pupils' progress, the monitoring of standards by key personnel and the provision for those pupils with special educational needs have all improved significantly. The school has also raised standards in English and mathematics at a faster rate than seen nationally. Standards in science have also improved but not at a fast enough rate to stay well ahead of other schools. The school has also maintained and improved the good care it takes of its pupils, the provision offered for pupils' personal development and the effective links it has with parents.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A	A	A
Mathematics	B	A	A	A
Science	B	A	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school's performance in English and mathematics has improved steadily since 1997. Pupils achieve well and performance is better than that of schools of a similar kind. Standards in science have also improved. However, improvements in 1999 in science were less than that found nationally therefore reducing the gap between the school's performance and that of other schools. The standards reached by the present Year 6 are not as high as in past years. This is mainly because this particular year group has a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs. In comparison to their attainment on entry to the school, Year 6 pupils achieve well performing better than expected. The school has consistently adjusted its own achievement targets for this group as the pupils have moved through the school. The targets are very challenging and are likely to be achieved in mathematics and science. In English, because of the nature of the pupils' special educational needs, it is much less likely that the targets are to be met. Pupils' achievements in mathematics and science are strong across all aspects of the subjects. In English, some pupils are achieving well above the national standard in their writing, which is extremely well planned by the pupils and improved through conscientious editing. For some pupils, basic writing skills are a weakness, particularly punctuation, spelling and the lack of colourful language to enrich their work.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to do well. They respond well to the activities they are given. They settle quickly and work at a good pace. They are willing to discuss things openly, such as bullying, and to become involved in the general running and upkeep of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. In lessons, pupils remain on task and listen attentively. There is orderly movement around the school. No pupils have been suspended or expelled from the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils work well with each other and have very good relationships with the teachers. They concentrate well and work independently. Pupils carry out their duties effectively and efficiently.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are improving and unauthorised absence is below average. Punctuality is good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teachers are effective in meeting the needs of the pupils, including the most able and those with special educational needs, enabling pupils to make good progress. Teaching is particularly strong in Year 6. The introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies has been successful. Teachers' planning and the evaluation of lessons are well detailed enabling teachers to build effectively on what the pupils are learning. Further improvements are needed in some lessons to ensure all pupils are challenged for the duration of the whole lesson, for example, the introductory tasks for the numeracy session which are not always sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils. The setting of pupils for English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 is very effective in raising the teachers' expectations for these pupils as well as ensuring the tasks are well matched for the different groups. The best teaching is characterised by teachers clearly sharing the learning goals for the lessons, target setting for individual pupils through effective marking, and open-ended questions to stimulate thinking and to invite pupils to put forward their own ideas. Classroom assistants are used effectively to enhance the pupils' learning experiences and they are fully involved in planning the work and assessing pupils' achievements. The marking of pupils' work is not consistently applied throughout the school with some teachers not using this opportunity to assess individual work and to provide written advice to individual pupils on how they can improve their own work further.

Out of the lessons observed during the inspection, 25 per cent of lessons were very good, 40 per cent good, 30 per cent satisfactory and 5 per cent (one lesson) unsatisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad coverage of subjects. There is particular emphasis on the teaching of the basic skills of English and mathematics. The curriculum is enriched through a comprehensive personal and social development teaching programme.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. The quality of planning for individual pupils is good, enabling targets to be focused on pupils' individual needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The needs of these pupils are assessed effectively. Additional support is provided when this is deemed necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. This is a strong feature of the school. Spirituality is promoted effectively through religious education and across other areas of the curriculum. Teachers are consistent in their approach to moral and social issues and these are effectively promoted through the school's personal and social education programme. Local culture is promoted successfully through visits and the topics covered by the school in areas of the curriculum, such as geography. The school provides a rich variety of experiences to provide pupils with a good understanding of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a key strength of the school. The staff provides an excellent role model. Issues about the pupils' welfare, health and safety are covered effectively during whole-class discussions.

Relationships with parents are strengths of the school. There are good levels of communication through the school and the parent/teacher organisation, and parents contribute effectively to school improvements, such as the school grounds.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school is well led. The headteacher has a clear agenda for improvement and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and all other members of staff. All work together effectively as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors fulfil their responsibilities and ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements. Key governors are well informed and take an active part in assessing the progress made by the school. All governors are very supportive of the work the school does.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school conducts a thorough analysis of its performance against the performance of other schools. It looks at strengths and weaknesses in the standards achieved by the pupils and produces action plans to overcome them. This is especially evident in English, mathematics and science, although analysis of performance is also very evident in religious education and information technology.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is well matched to those things identified by the school that are in need of improvement. The school provides additional opportunities for pupils beyond the normal curriculum, for example French and music. The school takes good account of competitive tendering procedures with a view to providing the best deal for its pupils. Good account is taken of the parents' views, such as the home/school agreement and homework.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school and make good progress</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• Homework is set at the right level</li> <li>• There is a good standard of teaching</li> <li>• They are comfortable approaching the school</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on the pupils' progress</li> <li>• The range of interesting activities</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the positive comments expressed by parents. However, they disagree with their negative comments. The school provides a good range of information on how well pupils are doing; the written reports to parents are especially informative. The school provides a satisfactory range of curricular and extra-curricular activities, similar to that found in many schools. The normal curriculum is enhanced through a comprehensive personal and social education programme.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics**

1. The school has performed very well in English and mathematics in each year following the previous inspection. In 1999, this trend continued and performances in the Year 6 national assessments showed school performance to be well above both the national averages and the averages found in similar schools. Good proportions of pupils achieved above the nationally expected Level 4 in both subjects with three pupils achieving Level 6 in mathematics, an unusual and very high standard. The present Year 6 is unlikely to perform as highly as in previous years. This is mainly because there is a higher than normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school has been well aware of the ability of this year group. An analysis of their performance on entry to the school shows below average attainment. As a result of this analysis the school has set challenging targets for the pupils. These have been revised upwardly over time because the pupils have achieved well and have progressed at a faster rate than was initially expected. The pupils are on-line to meet these targets in mathematics but are likely to fall slightly short of them in English. When judging their performance against their levels of attainment on entry to the school the pupils have, however, achieved well in both subjects.
2. Writing, reading, speaking and listening skills develop well as soon as the pupils enter school. In Year 3, pupils discuss an author's style of writing with interest and use expressive words well drawing on a sensitive awareness of their own feelings. They clearly define the sequence of the story and expand on simple sentences to explain its meaning by making good use of adjectives and phrases that help to emphasise the sentiments of the story very well. For example, one pupil wrote 'Tom was REALLY scared!', when expressing the feelings of a boy whose fishing boat was being encircled by a shark. In Year 4, pupils grasp a good understanding of what an acrostic poem is and how the style can be used to give clear links between the word and the sentences created from it. In one lesson, pupils use the acrostic poem effectively to produce lively and interesting sentences in an organised and imaginative way to bring the different seasons alive. In Year 5, pupils explore in more detail the persuasive nature of language, for example an above average ability class studied the use of language in advertising. The pupils' good understanding of the text enabled them to enter interesting discussions on the use of persuasive writing to lure in the customer.
3. Looking through the Year 6 pupils' books reveals some outstanding progress in the pupils' ability to adapt particular styles of language use to their own ideas. In recent ghost stories and colour poems, pupils demonstrate very good writing techniques. Their grammatical structures are very secure and they use sentence constructions skilfully to express their understanding of complicated text, for instance, distinguishing dialogue from narration, or identifying words that express the different types of characters in the story. The ability of Year 6 pupils to discuss ideas openly and in a sensible and mature fashion was clearly demonstrated during the inspection when they were at the early stages of producing their own puppet shows for demanding and critical Year 4 pupils. Pupils were making good progress in their use of effective language to sustain the interest and imagination of an audience.
4. In mathematics, pupils achieve well across all aspects of the subject. They apply their good understanding of number computation to practical situations. They have a good understanding of the different units used to measure length, capacity and mass, distinguish the differences between 2-D and 3-D shapes and collect and

analyse data to help them to communicate their findings to others. In Year 3, pupils make some good gains in their understanding of direction and how to locate features on a map using co-ordinates. More able pupils acquire the ability to locate features using four digit co-ordinates. The setting of pupils for mathematics in Years 5 and 6, enables them to be challenged effectively and lessons are planned well to ensure they make good progress over time. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils were tackling the differences between mean, mode and median. Pupils have a sound understanding of the differences and are able to calculate averages and identify 'rogue' data. For the present Year 6, the most able pupils are well challenged and achieve levels above the national average with a few attaining highly. These pupils, in particular, have good problem-solving skills and are highly motivated. In lessons covering algebraic equations the pupils demonstrate a high level of skill to set problems for others to solve. These problems involve decimal points and fractions rather than just whole numbers, such as finding the value of 'n' using an equation  $10n - 32 = 64$ .

5. The least able pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school in English and mathematics; most targets set for individual pupils are language based. In lessons, the work is well matched to the pupils' abilities ensuring that they are effectively challenged with work that they find achievable. Special needs pupils have a clear understanding of their difficulties and this helps them to be clear about what they need to do to achieve well. The pupils' individual education programmes are especially focused on word recognition tasks and this enables the pupils to make good progress in their ability to read text across all aspects of the curriculum. In lessons, teachers are well aware of the pupils' needs. Special tasks are allocated to them. In Year 6 mathematics lessons, for example, they solve simple algebraic problems such as  $4n - 6$  knowing the value of 'n'. In Year 3, special needs pupils follow simple rules to locate features on easy to follow maps. Some pupils that receive additional literacy support from specialist teachers do well in small groups away from the classrooms.

**Good teaching helps to ensure the academic and social needs of the pupils are met. This leads to the pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and very good behaviour**

6. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good overall. Teaching was particularly strong in Year 6 where five out of the seven lessons seen were very good.
7. The main strength of the teaching throughout the school is the fact that the teachers know the pupils extremely well and develop very good working relationships with them. The teachers assess the achievements of pupils on a daily and weekly basis in a detailed way, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. These assessments enable teachers to group pupils effectively and to alter planned work depending on the pupils' abilities and achievements. This pattern of grouping is further developed in Years 5 and 6 where pupils are split by ability into three classes for English and mathematics. The effect of this is to ensure that all pupils achieve well. This in turn lifts the pupils' own self-esteem and gives them confidence to tackle challenging work.
8. The school has improved the quality of planning and assessment since the last inspection to enable teachers to plan work for the different abilities of pupils in their classes. This is particularly so in English and mathematics where the literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced effectively throughout the school and teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the areas of the curriculum they are teaching. The school has produced planning formats that all teachers follow, not only in literacy and numeracy but across all areas of the

curriculum. The best practice clearly identifies learning objectives for the pupils and differing tasks and activities suited to the varying abilities in the class. An example of such good practice was seen during a Year 4 literacy lesson when the teacher set tasks at different degrees of difficulty for the different groups of pupils in the class. The teacher's expectations were shared with the pupils who then had a good understanding of what they had to do. The more able pupils were expected to produce more complex sentences to bring alive their descriptions of the seasons. The teacher provided good support throughout the lesson to ensure all pupils met the different challenges. As a result, the pupils settled quickly to the task and worked hard throughout the lesson to improve the quality of their ideas and the words that they used. At the end of the lesson, pupils of all abilities were keen to share their work, confident that their comments would be well received by the teacher and the other pupils.

9. Teachers also use the planning effectively to evaluate the quality of the lesson and to see how well the pupils improve their knowledge and understanding of the subject. In the most useful instances where this occurs, there are clear notes on the planning sheets indicating a thoughtful approach by the teacher on how individuals and groups of pupils have coped with the activities. The comments are used to alter planning so that pupils either have the opportunity to consolidate and repeat some activities or, in some instances, accelerate the pupils' learning because they have coped better than expected and need more difficult challenges. This matching of work to pupils' abilities leads to pupils enjoying their work and being keen and interested in the specific challenges with which they are faced. They concentrate hard to meet their lesson targets and behaviour is of a very good standard because they are well focused on their work rather than disrupting others.
10. Other key strengths in the teaching include the very good use of open-ended questioning to help the teacher to assess what the pupils have remembered from previous lessons to ensure that the starting point planned for is appropriate. An example of this was seen during a Year 6 science lesson where the teacher was setting up an investigation into the differences between Smarties and cheaper alternatives. The teacher used questioning effectively to establish the pupils' understanding of how to set up an experiment and to find out how they would ensure that the tests were well controlled to ensure accurate measurements of results. Pupils were stimulated by this approach and tackled the investigation with enthusiasm.
11. The quality of marking at the school varies in quality but where it is at its best it is used effectively to reassure pupils that they are doing well and to highlight points for improvement. This helps to ensure that the pupils' self-esteem is strengthened and, at the same time, pupils know what they need to do to improve the quality of their own work. The best marking follows the school's guidelines on linking comments to the initial learning objectives for that particular piece of work. The style of how this is presented to pupils varies. In one Year 3 class, the teacher makes detailed comments setting individual targets for each pupil. The nature of the comments are made very clear through the use of circles in which positive comments are made and boxes in which areas for improvement are identified.

### **The school is very well led and managed and the staff works effectively as a team**

12. The headteacher has a clear agenda for school improvement. She is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and teaching staff. All work very well as a team and are fully committed to raising the academic and social standards achieved by the pupils. This commitment is identified clearly in the school's improvement plan, which is a detailed document highlighting targets that the school is setting

itself in a wide range of subjects, with a particular focus on English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. The plan also includes the improvement of assessment, special educational needs, behaviour, home-school links, links with the community and the development of the school environment to reinforce its commitment to the importance of developing the whole child rather than simply focusing on raising academic standards.

13. The success of working as a team can be seen in the way the school has developed planning and assessment and how the literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced. These developments have helped the school to continue improving academic and social standards that are already high. Weaknesses identified in the previous report, such as the provision for those pupils with special educational needs and the involvement of non-teaching staff have been dealt with successfully as a result of the school's efforts to improve. The special educational needs co-ordinator is receiving good training and is a major influence on the good improvements made in the quality of pupils' individual education programmes and the involvement by the non-teaching assistants in the planning and assessment of the pupils' progress. The non-teaching assistants themselves feel a real sense of improvement in their working partnership with class teachers and how their role is valued. Regular discussions take place and the focus is on assessing the progress the pupils have made and what they need to do next to continue a good rate of improvement.
14. All year groups work closely together to plan work for the coming term and also meet regularly during the week to assess how well the lessons are going. This constant discussion and review ensures all teachers are supported well and that the strengths of individual teachers are used effectively. This is particularly so for the planning of subjects when one member of the year group team takes responsibility for the planning to be then shared and used by all the teachers. Where a lead is taken in such a way the teacher is also there to provide support throughout the teaching of the topic. Co-ordinators also take an important role during planning and offer advice and support in an ongoing way. Teachers are keen to use each other's knowledge to help develop their own understanding of the subjects. This has been especially evident in the development of information technology. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and has been able to use this expertise to support a greater use of information technology by all teachers across a wide range of different subjects. This has led to significant improvement in staff confidence in the last few years. Good in-built assessment procedures that identify key coverage and attainment levels have been a major factor in helping to improve the rate of progress pupils make throughout the school.
15. The governing body has played an important role in key areas of the school, such as finance and special educational needs. Key governors are well informed and take an active role in assessing the progress the school is making. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has therefore been able to improve the school, confident that the governors are monitoring progress effectively. The school has made satisfactory progress in improving the involvement of English and mathematics co-ordinators as well as the senior management team in monitoring how successful the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has been. The evaluations resulting from the monitoring have enabled the school to develop the delivery of the strategies and to improve further the standards pupils achieve. Other co-ordinators are not yet involved fully in monitoring their own subjects.

16. A main strength of leadership is the way it looks at the school's performance against the performance of other schools and against the expectations the school has for the performance of individual and groups of pupils. A careful analysis is made of test results so that weaknesses can be identified and dealt with. The detailed information gained from the assessments means that pupils can be grouped differently for different aspects of their work enabling them to work with others who have similar strengths and weaknesses. This kind of grouping also enables teachers to plan effectively to meet the needs of particular groups of pupils. The setting of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is also a benefit that has evolved as a result of this analysis. The school has also identified key points for improvements in science and in the attainment of boys in writing, and much work has begun to develop strategies for improvements in these areas.
17. The governing body is conscious that the school needs to provide good value for money and that pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Finances are used wisely to ensure particular aims are met. At present, the school has a significant amount of money that it is not spending. However, the school is keen to keep the present staffing structure in place despite a fall in the year group size entering into the school next year. The money has therefore been earmarked for some time to fund this unusually small year group as it moves through the school. This is a good example of using monies effectively to ensure a good provision is maintained for those pupils entering the school from the neighbouring infant school. It is also clear in the school improvement plan that the governors have agreed to use funds to develop those areas the school has prioritised, such as for mathematics and information technology. The governors also consult with parents to help ensure that the school is providing the right sort of service for their children. This is especially the case, recently, for the development of the home/school agreement and the homework policy.

**High levels of care are provided for all pupils enabling them to make very good progress in their personal development**

18. This was a key strength in the last inspection and one that parents and the school remain proud. The school does much to ensure that the pupils are happy in school and that their academic and social needs are met. A key aspect of the school's caring attitude and approach includes the excellent role models provided by the staff of the school. Other key aspects include the promotion of the pupils' personal and social development through a comprehensive programme delivered throughout the school; effective procedures to improve attendance; good monitoring of the pupils' behaviour; and a consistent approach to discipline. The outcome of these key aspects is that pupils make very good progress in the way they approach their studies and the relationships they develop with other pupils and adults. Parents strongly agree that the school does much to develop pupils' maturity. During school time, pupils work effectively together in lessons and are keen to ensure that their fellow pupils get on well at break and lunchtimes. A good example of this is the bullying workshop run by the Year 5 pupils. Successful initiatives like this ensure that bullying is kept to a minimum. Although behaviour is often very good the school is aware that more can be done to prevent incidents and has identified this area as a priority for school improvement. The school provides many good opportunities for pupils to become involved in managing the school. There are monitoring tasks allocated to pupils, such as keeping a check on the toilets during break and lunch times, and the pupils accept the responsibility for these tasks very well. In addition to these tasks, pupils are always keen to help keep the school tidy as was seen when two older girls stopped to replace books to their rightful place in the library.

19. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. This is chiefly through a comprehensive religious education programme and the school's personal and social education programme. However, the teachers are also active in promoting development across the curriculum, such as providing opportunities for the children to discuss the motives driving the characters in a book and how the different characters relate to each other. A major part of the school's provision is group time, known as 'circle time', when pupils have the opportunity to discuss and share important issues and feelings with the rest of the class within a secure environment controlled by the class teacher.
20. The school is very conscious of the important role it plays in the development of pupils' understanding of not only their local culture but the cultures of different groups of pupils in society. Pupils are taught formally about other religions such as Judaism, Buddhism and Islam and compare their beliefs to those that Christians have. The development of the richness of things offered by these different cultures is used across different areas of the curriculum. An example of this is the use in assembly of music from different cultures and in dance lessons enabling pupils to interpret the music in their own way and to explore their feelings. In geography and history, the school makes regular visits to local places of interest to develop the pupils' awareness of the area's past and present activities.

**There are very effective links with parents and this has a positive effect on the progress made by the pupils**

21. This is a strong feature that the school has done well to maintain and expand upon since the last inspection. It has done much to involve parents, for example consulting with them about homework, and this initiative has had a beneficial effect on how parents view the school. Parents agree that their children get the right amount of homework and that it is well matched to suit their children's needs. They are also very comfortable approaching school to discuss any problems or to make suggestions about how things can be improved.
22. The quality and quantity of information that goes to parents enables them to be kept very well informed about the school and their children's progress. The very good end of year reports contain detailed information about what the pupils know, understand and can do. They also set realistic individual targets for pupils to aspire to. Parents receive regular information about topics of study to be covered during the term and the school intends to further develop this service through the use of the school's website. The school offers parents two formal meetings a year to discuss their child's progress. In addition, they are encouraged to come into school at any time to discuss matters of concern. The school runs curriculum evenings for parents to give them a greater understanding of new initiatives, such as the literacy and numeracy strategies. There are informative newsletters that go out regularly from the school and from the parents, teacher and friends organisation. Through the activities of this organisation substantial funds are raised to enhance the quality and quantity of resources in the school for the pupils to use. The biggest contribution has probably been the development of the outside resource areas. This is a long-term project to improve the facilities for pupils to use at break times as well as during lessons. These improvements include a nature area and quiet areas for pupils to use at break-times.
23. Parents also make an effective contribution to pupils' learning through helping their children with homework. The most significant contribution is in Years 3 and 4 where parents help their children to read more fluently. Parents throughout the school also support other homework activities in mathematics and with research projects. The

school also uses the expertise of some parents during lesson time. This has included support for Year 5 in developing their computer skills, music and sound workshops and recounting their experiences of life around Salford docks and sharing these with pupils during local history studies.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Not all teachers' planning, nor the teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements, reach the high standards demonstrated by some teachers**

24. The quality of planning and the assessments made of the pupils' achievements by some teachers is of a high standard. However, despite all teachers using the same planning format and the school's clearly written policy statement on feedback to pupils, not all planning meets this standard. In some instances, the planning of activities for different groups of pupils is not completed for all parts of the lesson, and in other instances the objectives for the higher attaining pupils are not clearly different to those set for other pupils. As a result, there are a few occasions when some pupils are not challenged sufficiently and do not make satisfactory progress. During the inspection, one lesson was graded unsatisfactory, but other lessons that were graded satisfactory overall contained parts of the lesson when pupils were not challenged effectively.
25. In mathematics lessons, there are occasions when the introductory part of the lesson that is given over to developing pupils' mental agility does not challenge the more able pupils. In this part of the lesson, all pupils are given the same activity and although the more able pupils are likely to complete more calculations they are all of the same degree of difficulty. The planning does not identify different objectives for the pupils and therefore teachers are not searching in their questioning. The adverse effect on pupils' learning can also be seen in that the lower attaining pupils know that others in the class are succeeding much more than they are. Planning is weakest when the overall learning objective for the whole class is broken down into activities to match the different abilities of the pupils rather than the expected learning processes and outcomes. The lack of clarity with regards to outcomes then leads to few comments that relate to the pupils' learning and how this may have differed between pupils from different ability groups. In the unsatisfactory literacy lesson, this lack of clarity led to the teacher missing opportunities to challenge and develop the pupils' learning. Pupils lost interest and became restless. Time was then wasted dealing with behaviour problems rather than teaching the pupils.
26. The marking of pupils' work varies in the quality of the feedback given to pupils. Although some teachers' marking is of a high quality other teachers provide very little in the way of written guidance on how well pupils have done on particular pieces of work. In some instances, marking is simply a series of ticks dispersed with basic comments on presentation and words of encouragement. Where this occurs it is of little value to the pupils and gives them no indication of what it is about their work that is good nor what needs to be focused on for them to improve further.

### **Co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics are not involved enough to ensure standards in their subjects are as high as they could be.**

27. The school has quite rightly concentrated on developing standards in literacy and numeracy. The outcome of this level of concentration is that the co-ordination of other subjects has been focused on balance rather than what pupils have achieved. The school has recognised this and has put in place a programme for development in each subject ready for the introduction of the new National Curriculum.



28. The role of the co-ordinator in other subjects is, at present, restricted to working with colleagues in their year groups to help prepare a series of lessons in their specialist subjects, and supporting other colleagues when they seek help and guidance. There is no effective systematic monitoring of planning and outcomes to enable co-ordinators to assess whether teachers are successful in their efforts to ensure, in particular, that the most able pupils in each of the subjects are being challenged sufficiently to achieve well above average. Preparations and plans are, however, in the process of being made so that at the start of the autumn term all co-ordinators will be expected to monitor planning and to conduct lesson observations in other subjects.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

29. To ensure a greater consistency of high quality teaching across all areas of the curriculum the headteacher, teachers and governors should:
- (1) Ensure that the quality of planning and the assessments of pupils' achievements reach the high standards demonstrated by some teachers by:
    - (a) Improving planning in such a way that it is clear what different abilities of pupils are expected to achieve and how their learning links to the levels of achievement identified in the National Curriculum;
    - (b) Improving the quality of assessment so that evaluations are clearly linked to the different achievement expectations for pupils of differing ability;
    - (c) Improving the quality of written feedback to pupils so that it is clear what the pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve.
  - (2) Involve all co-ordinators in a systematic monitoring of standards in their subject throughout the school by:
    - (a) Checking all teachers' planning to ensure that there is a clear distinction between what the teachers expect pupils of differing ability to achieve, and that there is a direct link between this achievement and that expected in the National Curriculum;
    - (b) Checking the work produced by pupils of differing ability to ensure that they are achieving as well as can be expected;
    - (c) Supporting teachers by providing well-focused training and exemplars of good practice;
    - (d) Monitoring the quality of teaching in lessons where this is seen as necessary to ensure teaching reaches the high quality achieved by other teachers in the school.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23	45	27	5	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	341
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		89

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

## Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	41	42	83

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	31	34
	Girls	40	37	37
	Total	72	68	71
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87	82	86
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	31	33
	Girls	38	38	39
	Total	66	69	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80	83	87
	National	68	69	72

## Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	333
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

## Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	28.4

### Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124.5

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a

Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	482,844
Total expenditure	485,426
Expenditure per pupil	1,423
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,522
Balance carried forward to next year	33,940

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	341
Number of questionnaires returned	52

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	40	2	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	40	48	6	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	54	2	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	56	6	0	6
The teaching is good.	52	38	6	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	35	19	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	40	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	38	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	60	6	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	60	35	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	52	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	40	35	8	4

### Other issues raised by parents

At the meeting attended by 14 parents/carers, overwhelming support was given for the school. They felt that setting in Years 5 and 6 in mathematics and English was very beneficial, that the headteacher and staff are approachable and respond well to suggestions and concerns, the information provided on the progress pupils make was good and that there was good involvement of pupils in various aspects of school life.