



# Whittaker Moss Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 105781  
**LEA** Rochdale  
**Inspection number** 277408  
**Inspection dates** 13 September 2005 to 14 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Rosemary Eaton CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	off Elmsfield Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Norden
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 5UY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 342342
<b>Number on roll</b>	286	<b>Fax number</b>	01706 342342
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Councillor Stott
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Lowes

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 13 September 2005 - 14 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277408
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Most of the school's children belong to economically advantaged families living in privately owned housing near to or in the village of Norden, which is on the western edge of Rochdale. Far fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals and the number with learning difficulties or disabilities is also lower than in many schools. Currently, around one in ten pupils are from minority ethnic groups, over half of these having Pakistani heritage. There are two pupils in the early stages of learning English and none in public care.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Whittaker Moss is an outstanding school. The inspectors disagreed with the school's stated judgement that its overall effectiveness is 'good'. In fact, the headteacher and senior staff have an extremely accurate picture of the school, but were reluctant to suggest that its effectiveness is outstanding. Pupils make outstandingly good progress during their time in the school, reaching exceptionally and consistently high standards by the time they leave. They get off to an extremely good start in the nursery and reception years because all their learning and social needs are provided for outstandingly well. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching and the curriculum is exemplary. Because the care, guidance and support offered are equally exceptional, pupils have every opportunity to develop into well-rounded, secure and confident children. They take full advantage of their time in school and their personal development and behaviour are exemplary. The school knows every pupil extremely well and responds sensitively and promptly to meet their needs, so that they all have equal opportunities to thrive. Very high expectations are evident in all aspects of its life and work, stemming from the outstanding nature of the school's leadership and management. It provides outstanding value for money. Since the previous inspection in 1999, considerable improvements have been made. There is little doubt that the school is capable of sustaining and building on its current considerable success. It enjoys the full confidence of parents who recognise their children's good fortune in coming to such a great school. Lessons are fun, children and adults get on together really well, and smiles are the currency of the day, every day.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

There are no significant issues, but the senior management and governors may wish to consider how all subject leaders and class teachers could be involved in analysing the data collected about pupils' performance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Throughout the school, pupils achieve exceptionally high standards, reaching the very challenging targets set by teachers. Because they get off to such an impressive start in the Foundation Stage, pupils begin Year 1 well ahead of the expected standards. Their extremely positive attitudes to learning and well-developed basic skills mean that they are very well placed to make progress as they move up through the school. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

A similarly positive picture is seen in the end of Year 6 national tests. For the past five years, pupils have scored much better than average in English, mathematics and science. For instance, far more pupils than average reach the higher Level 5 and in 2004 the science results were particularly striking.

When their Year 2 and Year 6 test results are compared, it is very clear that pupils make outstandingly good progress, regardless of their abilities and any learning difficulties or disabilities. The school is acutely aware of the potential for particular groups of pupils to be at a disadvantage; for example, in classes where boys significantly outnumber girls, those pupils whose birthdays fall in the summer term, or those who are in the early stages of learning English. In response, very careful and successful steps are taken to ensure that the progress of these pupils is equally as good as that of others.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils love coming to school - they arrive early, eager to start the day. Their attitudes to work and their behaviour are of the highest order as they mirror first-class examples shown by adults. From their first day in the nursery, children establish trusting relationships with remarkable speed. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them and delight in doing their very best. Their attendance is well above average and this is one reason why they make such outstanding progress. They acquire attitudes, habits and skills that will stand them in good stead when they enter the workplace.

Pupils make huge strides in terms of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and blossom into well-rounded, confident individuals. They learn to think of others and to show compassion through a range of charitable work. They enjoy each other's company, working and playing together happily, and are keen to make a positive contribution to the school community through their impressive support of the school council, which is a true catalyst for change in the school. Pupils absorb huge quantities of information on healthy lifestyles and try hard to put this into practice as part of their daily routines.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

All teachers have extremely high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement and these are made clear as soon as children join the nursery. Because the school so successfully achieves this consistency, pupils have no difficulty transferring each year from class to class, without interruption to their learning and achievement. This is very clearly reflected in the outstanding progress occurring in lessons during the inspection, despite pupils having been with their new teachers for only one week. Teachers make full use of the wealth of accurate assessment information gathered, in order to match activities to what pupils have already learned and challenge each one to work hard and make maximum progress. Teaching assistants work very closely in partnership with teachers, often enabling pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities to take an active part in lessons and make extremely good progress, on a par with others.

Teachers encourage and expect pupils to be independent. This consistent focus equips them very well for learning during their time in school and for their transition to secondary school at the end of Year 6. Additionally, teachers confidently use their detailed knowledge of the curriculum in order to offer exciting activities, such as science investigations or tasks involving the interactive whiteboards. They can rely on pupils being immensely interested and also to demonstrate a sense of responsibility well ahead of what might be expected of children of their age.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is planned extremely effectively to ensure that each child will enjoy and achieve. A particular strength is the way in which the needs of all pupils - including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, particular gifts and talents, or for whom English is not their first language - are fully met. Work in the classroom is complemented by lots of opportunities to take part in other activities, such as dance clubs, football, and music. The school makes outstanding efforts to give all children the chance to benefit from all it offers - such as the Year 6 annual residential visit to the Lake District. As well as adding to their enjoyment of learning, these rich experiences encourage pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. There is an excellent emphasis on helping pupils to stay fit and enjoy competitive sport. Extremely strong links with a local secondary school contribute to the Year 6 pupils' smooth transition; for instance, enabling them to get accustomed to having different teachers for various subjects.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Deep-seated, family values are at the heart of the headteacher's vision for this school. Parents praise all aspects of its work but remark particularly upon the levels of care shown to all children, whatever their needs. Child protection issues are handled with sensitivity; health and safety routines are secure and understood by pupils. They feel safe and happy in school. A pupil who transferred to secondary school commented, 'A teacher was there for me because my mam and dad split up'. Highly effective induction programmes build upon the good start parents give their children. Staff instil a reassuring sense of well-being in even the youngest children as they systematically introduce them to the demanding expectations required of all pupils. For instance, children are taught to care for their belongings during their first day in the nursery. By the time pupils leave school, this relentless drive produces independent learners. They have a clear understanding of their targets and how they can improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Central to the school's outstanding success is the headteacher's clear aim to nurture very high achieving, but reflective, learners. The determination to provide the very

best possible quality of education for all pupils permeates all aspects of the school's work and is shared by the dedicated team of staff and governors. A particularly strong feature is the network of systems to collect information about how well pupils are achieving and the quality of teaching. As a result, the senior staff have an exceptionally accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of the school's work, although the judgements provided prior to the inspection were modest in view of the overwhelming weight of evidence. Currently, the senior team take most of the responsibility for analysing assessment information, relishing this task. Other class teachers and subject leaders are provided with the data, conclusions and targets for improvement, but have not yet had opportunities to develop their skills to contribute to this aspect of the school's evaluation of pupils' performance.

The constant process of review and evaluation includes regular consultation with parents, pupils and governors, with many examples of developments that have taken place in consequence. Governors are playing an increasingly active role in finding out about the school's performance at first hand, in order to take on more responsibility for ensuring that its current success is sustained and advanced. The school has moved on significantly since its previous inspection and is in an extremely strong position to continue to develop and refine even further the outstanding education it provides.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly to your school. We really enjoyed watching you learn, talking about your school with you and your teachers, and attending the infant assembly.

What we liked most about your school

- You are so polite and friendly to each other, in the classrooms and when playing outside. It was a great pleasure to be with you.
- You all work hard, have fun, and do your very best at all times. You enjoy your lessons and activities and tackle everything you do with great enthusiasm.
- Your headteacher runs the school extremely well. He enjoys talking to you, listens to what you say, and works very hard to make changes and keep improving the school.
- Those of you who need a little extra help are given it in the right sort of way, so everyone learns and gets on as well as they can.
- Teachers and helpers know the things that are working best and what needs to be done to make your school even better.
- Your parents think that you go to an outstanding school. We agree with them.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- To make sure that you continue to learn so very well, enjoy all the things the school offers you, and are helped to stay healthy and safe.