



# Light Oaks Junior School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 105884  
**LEA** Salford  
**Inspection number** 277434  
**Inspection dates** 19 June 2006 to 20 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Marie Cordey 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>	Lancaster Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Salford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		Lancashire M6 8LU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7891070
<b>Number on roll</b>	342	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 7878932
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Jackie Flynn
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 November 2002	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs L Howard

<b>Age group</b> 7 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 19 June 2006 - 20 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277434
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a larger than average school in an area of mixed housing, situated in a suburb of Salford. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is lower than usually found. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has gained the Eco Schools bronze award and the International School Award.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Light Oaks is a caring school that provides a satisfactory standard of education and satisfactory value for money. The headteacher is committed to providing a nurturing, learning environment and this is reflected in new strategies designed to raise achievement. Pupils make satisfactory progress and this reflects the trend of satisfactory achievement over the past three years. Pupils join the school in Year 3 with standards that are typically above average and these are maintained through to Year 6 as a result of satisfactory teaching. Standards in English are a strength; mathematics and science are not as high and pupils' skills in problem-solving and investigation require improvement. Previously, there has been some under-performance of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; action taken by the school to tackle this has paid off and these pupils now achieve as expected. However, there are still a small number of pupils who are not challenged sufficiently to attain the high standards of which they are capable and this is a concern for some parents. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall; the strength is in pupils' good behaviour.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school identifies its strengths and areas for development, but systems for monitoring are insufficiently robust and, therefore, it overestimates the effectiveness of its provision in terms of how well pupils achieve. All aspects of the school's provision are satisfactory rather than good as judged by the school. Pupils are well cared for; guidance in their learning is satisfactory. The marking of pupils' work is usually thorough and detailed, but assessment information is not used consistently to target improvement. The headteacher, staff and governors work together closely and have the capacity to make further improvement. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve systems for checking how well the school is doing and take action to raise achievement.
- Provide more challenge for higher attaining pupils to enable them to reach their potential.
- Improve pupils' problem solving skills in mathematics and their investigative skills in science.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter the school with standards that are above average and make satisfactory progress throughout the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are above average; performance in English is better than in mathematics and science. The school's records show Year 6 pupils are on course to meet their targets. Pupils' achievement has been satisfactory overall for the past 3 years, although there has been some under-performance of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and some higher attaining pupils. A change in the

organisation and management of special educational needs has resulted in a much clearer identification of pupils' individual needs and these pupils now make satisfactory progress. However, some higher attaining pupils still under perform because lessons are not always planned to provide them with the right level of challenge. Pupils enjoy reading and basic calculations; they are more skilled in these aspects than in investigative work in science and problem-solving in mathematics. Standards in writing have improved by using real life situations as a stimulus to fire pupils' imagination, as seen in the sophisticated vocabulary and creativity in pupils' work related to the World Cup football tournament.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are satisfactory and include some good elements. Pupils mostly enjoy school, particularly when lessons are fun. Attendance is broadly average and is affected by a few pupils who take holidays in term time. Although a small number of pupils said they had been bullied, they are confident about who to turn to for help if they need it. Behaviour is good and pupils are confident, courteous and eloquent. They enjoy the outdoor facilities, such as 'Fitbods' activities and the reading and play areas. There are some opportunities for pupils to take on responsible roles within the school community and they have helped to improve the school grounds by creating a peaceful garden with benches and murals. Pupils contribute to school development, and the school councillors feel that they have made a difference. They would now like more to be done to improve the environment in the canteen. They make a positive contribution to the wider community through, for instance, supporting charitable causes and singing at the local hospital. Pupils show an awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, but this is not helped by the lack of healthy choices for pupils in Year 5 and 6 by the time they go for their lunch. Pupils are developing an understanding of themselves and others through the satisfactory provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is good development in the skills and knowledge pupils need for their future well-being, and awareness of other cultures is effectively developed through international links and the study of other cultures and faiths.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with examples of good practice. In the good lessons, pupils enjoy learning. They are well motivated by interesting activities that are clearly matched to their learning needs and they make good progress. There is an enthusiasm and commitment on the part of both pupils and teachers who enjoy working together. In less effective lessons, some of the learning activities do not engage pupils' interests and progress is slower. Effective use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to help pupils learn. For example,

the interactive whiteboard was used well to support the teaching of French in Year 3. Lesson planning in English provides for excitement and the consistent involvement of pupils in their learning. This is not always the case in mathematics and science lessons. Teachers are beginning to make much better use of assessment information to provide targets to share with the pupils about what they need to do next to improve. However, some higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Teaching assistants provide sensitive support to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to make satisfactory progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It gives a strong focus to literacy and numeracy; the school is currently developing the curriculum to give a greater emphasis to developing pupils' creativity and to provide more opportunities for cooperation and group work. Good links with international schools support good French teaching. Strategies to improve the planning of work for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have been successful. The school is now beginning to use this good practice to match work more closely to the needs of higher attaining pupils. Not enough emphasis is given to developing pupils' investigative skills in science and problem solving skills in mathematics. The personal, health and citizenship education programme helps pupils to take care of themselves and others. A broad range of enrichment activities includes visits and visitors that are welcomed and enjoyed by the pupils. The school is rightly proud of gaining the Eco Schools Bronze award and the International School award.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory with some good features. Pupils are guided satisfactorily in their learning. Work is usually well marked and pupils are given pointers for improvement, although they are not yet fully involved in assessing their own learning. Clearer identification and support have improved the provision for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable pupils, so that they now make satisfactory progress. Child protection procedures and risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed to safeguard pupils. Healthy lifestyles are promoted, especially in physical education. Good arrangements are in place to help settle pupils into Year 3 and make a smooth transfer to the secondary school of their choice. Effective partnerships with external agencies support pupils' needs, especially the most vulnerable.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is a committed leader whose vision for improving the school is shared by governors and the staff. Leaders are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and these

are reflected in their priorities for improvement. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work, although satisfactory, are not rigorous enough and, as a result, managers are too positive in their judgement about the school's effectiveness. They do not sufficiently link aspects of its work to pupils' achievement. Recent successful initiatives have improved the standards and achievement of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Parents are supportive and value the school, although a third of respondents to the questionnaire had concerns that were particularly linked to the progress their children make. The priorities for development to improve progress reflect these concerns and the school is acting upon them. These include a more systematic use of assessment information by teachers to guide pupils' learning. A strength in the leadership is in the care and concern for pupils. The governing body is very supportive of the school, yet is not afraid to challenge and question the school's performance.

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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>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	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>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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 to your school. You were very polite and thoughtful. The things we particularly liked were:

- the good standards in your work, particularly in English
- your good behaviour
- the good opportunities for you to learn French
- pupils who have special learning needs have improved their progress.

We have asked your headteacher and the staff to make your school better and we think they can best do this by:

- giving you more opportunities to help you improve your investigation skills in science and problem solving skills in mathematics
- making sure that the leaders check more closely all aspects of the school's work
- providing work that challenges all pupils in lessons.