



# Irlam Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 105898  
**LEA** Salford  
**Inspection number** 277438  
**Inspection dates** 17 May 2006 to 18 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Graham Martin 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>	Liverpool Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Irlam
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M44 6NA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7752015
<b>Number on roll</b>	382	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 7760313
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr K Wood
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs V Ruddy

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17 May 2006 - 18 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277438
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Almost all of the pupils attending this larger than average school are of white British heritage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school provides nursery education for up to 52 children. The range of skills on entry to the school is wide but, on average, they are as expected for children of their age. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2004. It has established a number of local and wider partnerships, including one with a school in Ghana.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. It provides well for its pupils, giving good value for money. Inspection findings largely agree with the school's own evaluation, although its support and guidance of pupils and leadership still have a little way to go to meet its own judgement of outstanding. However, its rapid improvement is sustainable because good leadership and teamwork give it outstanding capacity to improve.

Pupils enter the school with skills expected for children of their age. They achieve well and standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. Outstanding provision helps to prepare pupils for transfer to Key Stage 3. The headteacher's clearly stated vision for improvement leads the school very well. Good delegation of responsibilities and strong partnerships give everyone ownership of the school's work. Pupils enjoy school. Their attendance is good and they behave well. Positive attitudes aid their learning and they enjoy contributing to their school's success. The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good, successfully promoting their physical health and emotional well-being. A good curriculum engages pupils' interests, mostly meeting their needs well, although some lessons in Key Stage 1 are too long to sustain pupils' interest. This is a good school. It provides well for its pupils, giving good value for money. Inspection findings largely agree with the school's own evaluation, although its support and guidance of pupils and leadership still have a little way to go to meet its own judgement of outstanding. However, its rapid improvement is sustainable because good leadership and teamwork give it outstanding capacity to improve.

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### What the school should do to improve further

- Review the Key Stage 1 timetable to make the curriculum more appealing for younger pupils.

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching assistants.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enter the school with broadly average skills and leave with standards above the national average. Inspection evidence shows that achievement is good. It continues to improve, as seen in the good work to set learning targets for pupils in Year 3 who did not achieve as well as they could in the Year 2 tests. Achievement for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good so that most reach the goals set for their learning by age five, with some children exceeding these goals. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1; inspection evidence shows that the Year 2 pupils this year are on target to reach at least the expected standards. National tests results in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2005 show that challenging targets were met, with pupils achieving above the national average in science and well above average in mathematics. Standards of reading are above average. The quality of writing in the current Year 6 shows higher standards than seen in previous years' test results, confirming the impact of the school's good work to improve writing. Good individual support from adults helps pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress towards their learning targets so that all pupils achieve equally well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They clearly enjoy school, as seen in their above average attendance. Pupils are cheerful and helpful. Their behaviour both in lessons and around the school is good. The school's 'playground pals' ensure that less confident pupils are well supported by others.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning, as seen in a mathematics lesson when pupils in Year 3 excitedly identified the points of the compass. From an early age pupils willingly accept responsibilities; for example, as monitors, prefects and team captains. These opportunities contribute well to pupils' social development and their sense of belonging to a community. School councillors represent their classes well and recognise that the school values their views. The improvement to school meals is evidence of this.

Pupils show a positive commitment to staying healthy and safe. Good opportunities are provided for their health and fitness through extensive sporting opportunities and a clear focus on healthy eating. This has resulted in the school's achievement of the 'Healthy Schools Award'. Good opportunities for spiritual and personal growth are provided through the curriculum and in assemblies, resulting in good spiritual, moral and social development. A good level of cultural awareness results from regular celebrations of festivals of other world faiths, international links and activities such as the annual 'Curriculum Enrichment Week'.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils make good progress because teaching is frequently good and sometimes outstanding. Staff encourage independent learning, an evident strength in the whole teaching and learning process. Sometimes, though, lessons in Key Stage 1 are too long, reducing the quality of teaching and learning for the younger children, as seen in an overlong history lesson.

Children in the Foundation Stage learn quickly through carefully structured play activities. Routines are very well established so that children know what is expected of them. There are well planned adult-led activities but independence among the young children is also very evident. Children's learning is carefully assessed and recorded throughout lessons by all staff.

In Years 1 to 6 teachers manage classes well, matching learning tasks to pupils' needs precisely. In an outstanding lesson pupils made exceptional progress because the teacher clearly explained how they should use their knowledge to achieve the task. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to bring teaching alive and make learning exciting. Staff and pupils work well together to use technology to illustrate their questions and answers. Teaching assistants work skilfully with small groups, although they are occasionally under used during whole-class teaching.

Assessment has improved tremendously since the last inspection; pupils have very clear targets to work towards and these are regularly reviewed. The teachers know the pupils well, target questions carefully and make good use of praise. Children, too, appraise both their own and their friend's work well, leading to good self-awareness of their progress.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Pupils experience a range of interesting activities, which effectively meet their needs. However, some lessons for younger pupils in Key Stage 1 are too long for them to sustain concentration, leading occasionally to pupils losing interest in their work. Pupils' basic skills are developed very well in the Foundation Stage and this ensures that children get off to a good start. Provision for ICT is much improved, reflecting the school's investment in new resources and leading to improved learning. Good personal and social education, including health education, equips pupils well for life beyond school. The school very effectively extends pupils' skills and creativity through good links with the community, interesting out-of-school activities and visits and visitors. These provide well for their future economic well-being. For example, French has been introduced to all pupils in Key Stage 2. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to make the same good progress as others. The extensive range of well attended extra-curricular

activities enriches pupils' learning and provides well for their physical and emotional well-being.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support given to pupils is good. The school successfully takes great care to ensure that pupils are happy, content and ready to learn. Staff know pupils well and relationships among them are exceptionally good. Pupils trust the staff, confident that there is always someone they can turn to for help for personal or academic needs. All around the school adults use praise well to reinforce positive attitudes so that politeness and consideration for others is widespread. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and nearly all take the view that their children are extremely well cared for.

The school encourages pupils to think carefully about healthy eating and exercise, successfully promoting a healthy lifestyle and leading to 'Healthy School' status. Drugs awareness, keeping clean and staying fit are all well promoted. For example, there are numerous extra-curricular activities in the lunch hour and after school, such as rugby, cross-country and Tae-Kwondo. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place, and possible risks to health and safety are assessed carefully.

Transition arrangements between key stages are an outstanding feature of this school so that pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education. This was very well demonstrated during a Year 6 to Year 7 transition literacy lesson when pupils were encouraged to write recipe poems about settling into secondary school. Lines like 'Take a drop of kindness, then a whole pupil, leave to simmer and pour in a jug of hardwork' illustrated beautifully pupils' confidence about moving positively to Year 7.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Despite significant improvements to leadership and management it is not yet quite outstanding, which the school claims. However, the headteacher's leadership provides very good vision, commitment and direction, empowering key staff; so, cooperation is good and management is strong. As a result, the school has improved very well since its last inspection and has outstanding capacity to sustain this improvement. Sharing the school's vision extensively has promoted good partnerships with parents and the wider community, benefiting learners. Parents value highly the school's commitment to their children's learning and personal development, as seen in comments like 'my daughter's good progress is due to the school's excellent teaching and values.' The school regularly seeks parents' and pupils' views, which are overwhelmingly positive. It acts well on suggestions; such as how to make challenging mathematics lessons fun so that pupils enjoy learning. The headteacher's clear understanding of the school's needs has improved teaching and learning, for example by increasing the number of adults working with pupils. Together,

staff have set out a clear plan to achieve collectively agreed improvements. By developing the skills of staff very well, the headteacher ensures that all know their part in checking the school's effectiveness and taking appropriate action. Teaching, learning and assessment have improved as a result, but some aspects of the Key Stage 1 curriculum require further improvement. Governors make a good contribution to the school's work. Their clear understanding of their role, prudent use of resources and positive support for the headteacher's high aspirations enables governors to guide and challenge the school effectively.



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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>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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>	2	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	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	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>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	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>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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**

As you know, a team of inspectors visited your school recently to find out if your school is giving you the education that you should receive. First of all, thank you very much for the warm welcome that you gave us and the wonderful politeness and cheerfulness you showed us throughout both days of the inspection. We are pleased to say that we decided that you have a good school. The things that we thought were particularly good were:

- the many improvements that your headteacher and the deputy headteacher have managed to bring about
- the good teaching that helps you to learn well
- the independence shown by you all throughout your lessons
- the help you receive to prepare you for moving to secondary education
- the way you all enjoy coming to school and learning: your attendance is good compared to other schools
- the way the school cares for you all equally well; your school is doing a good job in teaching you to be healthy and keep safe.

This is what we have asked your school to do now so that it will be even better:

- to make some of the lessons for younger children a little shorter so that their attention does not wander near the end of these lessons
- to find better ways for the teaching assistants to work more effectively with the teachers.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We all hope that you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Irlam Primary School a great place to be.