



# Victoria Park Junior School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106327  
**LEA** Trafford  
**Inspection number** 277532  
**Inspection dates** 26 April 2006 to 27 April 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Paul Bamber CfBT Lead Inspector

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Davyhulme Road East
<b>School category</b>	Community		Stretford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M32 0XZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 912 5005
<b>Number on roll</b>	243	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 865 3469
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr M Stevenson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs K Sutherland

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This junior school serves an area that is more economically deprived than the average. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including statements, is slightly higher than average. Much higher than average proportions of pupils are from a minority ethnic group and speak English as an additional language.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school's view that it is an effective school offering good value for money. Standards are above average and pupils' achievement has been satisfactory and is now improving. Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and the effective support provided for the most vulnerable pupils helps them cope well with all aspects of school life. However, in a small number of lessons teachers do not expect enough of the pupils. Consequently, they do not always achieve their full potential. The good curriculum meets the needs of pupils effectively, increases their enjoyment of learning and ensures they develop an excellent awareness of healthy lifestyles. A high level of care and support is provided for pupils, but they are not guided sufficiently on how to improve their work. Leadership, management and governance are good. The school is largely accurate in its view of its performance. However, senior managers and subject coordinators do not use assessment information rigorously enough to ensure all pupils make good progress. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive, citing the many improvements made over the last few years. Very productive links with outside agencies and the community contribute well to pupils' personal development and ensure that they are well cared for and fully safeguarded. The school is in a good position to improve further.

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

- Senior managers and subject coordinators should use assessment information more effectively to enable all pupils to make good progress.
- Ensure that all teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' attainment in lessons and of their progress over time.
- Ensure that pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, pupils' achievement and standards are now good, having improved well over the last year as a result of effective management and good teaching. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching and more effective interventions to help those pupils who are in danger of falling behind have led to rising standards and higher achievement. After very disappointing results in mathematics in the 2004 national tests, senior managers, ably supported by the governors, took swift and effective action to raise standards in the subject. These strategies resulted in Year 6 pupils reaching above average standards in English, mathematics and science in the 2005 national tests, with a particularly good improvement in mathematics. The school has compelling evidence that shows average standards are affected adversely because of pupils leaving or joining the school between Years 3 and 6. Further evidence also indicates that those pupils who remain in the school from Year 3 to 6 consistently achieve well. Recent challenging performance targets have been met and those for

2006 and 2007 indicate the school's determination to improve standards further. Many vulnerable pupils, those from minority ethnic groups, and those who learn English as an additional language achieve well. However, the school has correctly identified that girls of average ability and boys of below average ability are groups that have been achieving less well. The school has taken decisive action which is helping to raise their achievement.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. Behaviour is good because pupils know what is expected of them and the staff apply the code of conduct consistently. Spiritual, moral and social development are good with the result that pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, and work together harmoniously. Pupils understand and respect the customs and faiths of other cultures as a result of initiatives such as 'black history week' and visitors to school, including those representing minority ethnic groups. Pupils report that bullying is rare but when it happens, the school is quick to deal with it. They are confident in approaching a member of staff with problems, should the need arise. Pupils develop good awareness of staying safe and an exemplary understanding of healthy lifestyles. This is reflected in the achievement of Gold Activemark and Healthy Schools awards. The pupils contribute well to the community; for example, by becoming play leaders or by helping younger pupils with their reading. They learn that their opinions are important through the school council, which has brought about improvements to the seating and social areas in the playground. Members of the school council said 'We are really proud of that!'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The best teaching is exemplified by rigorous planning and assessment which ensures that pupils learn well and make good progress. Teachers use resources creatively to help pupils understand new ideas effectively. Lively teaching with good pace ensures that pupils are interested in their work. In these good lessons, teachers involve pupils in practical activities and enable them to contribute to their own and others' learning. Throughout the school, very good relationships ensure that pupils concentrate, work hard and enjoy learning. In a small minority of lessons, teachers' expectations are not high enough and pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable. Sometimes teachers do not rigorously use assessments of where pupils are in their work to set work that fully matches their needs. Vulnerable pupils are well supported in lessons by effective teaching assistants. This also applies to pupils who use English as an additional language, enabling them to make good gains in their learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work varies in quality, with some good examples of helpful comments and

suggestions for improvement. However, other teachers offer limited comment or advice. Effective use of group discussions helps pupils to improve their thinking skills and their spoken language and to develop their self-confidence.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is modest in its own judgement of its provision. Inspectors judge the curriculum to be good. It meets statutory requirements and the needs of most of the pupils. The school pays particular attention to the teaching of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), but acknowledges that it could do rather more to help pupils use these skills as a tool for learning in other subject areas. The curriculum is complemented well by other activities, for example, a poetry fortnight and an annual science week. Pupils greatly enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities at lunchtime and after school, particularly in sports and the arts. Educational visits to places of interest such as museums and theatres enrich pupils' learning and extend their cultural awareness. Pupils excitedly reported the visit to their school of three international footballers who successfully promoted regular exercise and racial harmony.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school judges this aspect to be good and inspectors agree. The care and welfare of the pupils is taken very seriously and staff work hard to make sure every child is safe, happy and ready to learn. Child protection and health and safety procedures are comprehensive, reviewed regularly and understood by all staff. The school works closely with a wide range of external agencies to successfully support vulnerable pupils. Consequently, pupils work in a secure and safe environment. Parents appreciate the lengths to which the school goes to care for their children and provide a safe environment. 'It is just like a big family', was a parent's opinion. The monitoring and support of pupils' academic progress are satisfactory and improving. However, there is still more to do to ensure that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of leadership and management is good. The leadership of the headteacher and other members of the senior management team is consistently good. Many management systems are effective, for example, those to improve teaching and learning. However, the strategies to ensure that all pupils make good progress, such as tracking their achievement, need to be applied more rigorously and further refined. Staff, governors, parents and other close partners all testify to the many improvements made in the school since the previous inspection. Pupils and staff highlight particularly the significant improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes, staff morale and in the increasingly close cooperation between the school and parents. These have all

contributed significantly to a positive ethos and improving achievement. More recently, effective action has been taken to raise standards in mathematics, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. The school acknowledges that subject coordinators, whilst satisfactorily carrying out their responsibilities, should do even more to ensure that rigorous assessments of performance, both of pupils' achievements and of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects, are carried out. Successful links have been forged with the school's close partners in neighbouring schools, with sporting organisations and with the local community. All of these enhance pupils' experiences of the wider world and their learning.

Governance is good. Governors have fully supported the headteacher in taking tough action to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to implement rigorous performance management procedures. It is such action that demonstrates the school's capacity to improve.

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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	NA	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	1	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	3	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**

Thank you for making us welcome during the days we spent in your school. We really appreciated the way in which you chatted to us and let us know so many interesting things about your school. We would like to share with you those things we thought were really good about your school and those things we felt it could do better.

What we liked most about your school:

- you are doing well in your work
- you are polite, well behaved and seem to enjoy school
- you have good teachers and all the adults in the school really look after you
- the school provides many interesting activities both during and after school
- the school is well run.

These are the things that we feel would make it even better:

- the school could help you make even better progress in your work
- teachers need to expect and encourage you to reach the highest possible standards in every lesson
- ensure that you understand what you need to do to improve.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to enjoy school and do well with your work and carry on trying really hard.