

# Higher Openshaw Community School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105471
<b>Local Authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	287233
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Wall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	248
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Wright
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J McAllister
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2002
<b>School address</b>	Saunton Road Higher Openshaw Manchester M11 1AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 2233549
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 2318319

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves an area of extremely challenging social and economic circumstances near the centre of Manchester. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups are broadly average but growing rapidly. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those with statements of special educational needs is broadly average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school during the school year is very high, particularly in the early years.

## 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 with some outstanding features. The headteacher, ably supported by a very committed and hard working team of teachers and support staff, has done an excellent job in creating a learning environment which is ideally suited to the needs of the pupils in this challenging urban area. Everything the school does is based on respect for the pupils and a desire to give each one the best start possible. From excellent care for the ageing buildings to the establishment of high expectations for learning and behaviour the overall effect is of an institution which knows exactly what its pupils need and deserve. Parents are unanimous in praising the school. 'I am so pleased my children go to Higher Openshaw. I know they are well looked after and are expected to behave themselves. They are making good progress because the teachers really care about them.' The school has made good progress since the last inspection and offers good value for money.

Good teaching results in pupils making good progress overall. Children join the Nursery with skill levels well below those normally expected, especially in their language skills. During the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and writing but make good progress in mathematics. The high number of pupils who join the school other than at the usual times, often with very low language skills, adversely affects standards in literacy. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. Achievement in mathematics is good and outstanding in science. Standards in these subjects are broadly average and well above average respectively because teachers have particularly good subject knowledge and levels of confidence in these areas. In English standards are below average representing satisfactory achievement. This reflects the legacy of pupils' weak language development earlier in the school. The school is not complacent, however, and is constantly seeking new ways to improve literacy, including taking part in a local authority intensive literacy programme.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding as are the care, guidance and support the school offers. Behaviour is excellent. Relationships are of the highest order. Pupils are polite and respectful. They are welcoming to strangers and demonstrate great pride in their school. 'I love it here. The teachers show us respect, so we treat them with respect. We behave in lessons because that's what's expected and because we want to learn.' Pupils really enjoy being at school. Many show social skills and levels of confidence which belie their age. They know how important it is to eat healthy foods and many join in the wide range of sporting opportunities with real enjoyment and enthusiasm. They feel safe in school and trust adults to deal with problems effectively and quickly. Procedures for child protection and safety are firmly established. Older pupils enjoy caring for younger ones by acting as reading partners, for example. The school council is effective. It has brought about improvements to playground facilities, for example. Pupils are gaining firm foundations for future success by developing a good grasp of basic skills and positive attitudes to work and learning.

Because pupils are taught well they generally make good progress. Lessons are prepared in detail and contain a good variety of activities to keep pupils motivated and interested. The quality of marking is inconsistent, however, in indicating to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. A good taught curriculum meets the needs of the learners. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good enabling them to make comparable progress to other pupils. The range of enrichment activities including trips out and sporting opportunities, for example, is outstanding and adds significantly to pupils' enjoyment and positive attitudes.

Leadership and management are outstanding because they have created such a positive learning environment in an area of very significant challenge. The school is valued highly in its local community. It responds to challenges with optimism and a 'can do' approach to bring about improvement. As a consequence it has outstanding capacity to improve even further.

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

- Raise standards and achievement in English throughout the school.
- Ensure marking consistently informs pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well overall. A good and appropriate range of activities in the Foundation Stage gets children off to a good start, particularly in their acquisition of social and language skills. By the end of Year 2 pupils make satisfactory progress overall and attain standards in reading and writing that are below average. Standards in mathematics are closer to average. In Key Stage 2 teachers' assured teaching of mathematics and science means pupils' achievement is respectively good and outstanding in these areas. Teachers are very keen to improve pupils' achievement in English where standards are consistently below average and sometimes well below average. Despite concerted efforts, however, they are hampered in their work by the higher than usual number of pupils who join the school in Years 3 to 6, often with lower than average literacy skills. The school regularly meets its targets. In mathematics and science it regularly exceeds them. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make progress in line with other pupils.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils know right from wrong. Regular trips out to places of educational interest and regular visitors to school broaden their cultural understanding and tolerance for others. A baffled look came across one boy's face when asked if there were any racist incidents in the school. 'Why should there be? We all get on with each other whatever our colour or where we come from.' Pupils are grateful for the high expectations set by the school. 'Our headteacher is strict but he's fair, so we know all the time where we stand and what's expected.' Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy being there as seen in above average levels of attendance. 'I love it here. I'm going to miss it so much when I go to high school.' summed up pupils' feelings nicely.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is generally good. It is well planned and purposeful and promotes good learning. Relationships are strong and help make pupils confident and positive learners. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to add variety and interest to lessons. Tasks are usually well suited to the ability levels of the pupils, although very occasionally the level of challenge is not quite right for all of them. Teachers write positive comments to motivate pupils to learn, but do not always inform them how to improve their work. Teachers

are supported very effectively by able teaching assistants who work well with lower attaining pupils to help them achieve as well as others in the class.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It meets pupils' needs by providing a solid framework for learning. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very skilfully managed to make sure these pupils' needs are identified early and appropriate support is provided by the dedicated learning mentor. ICT is a growing strength of the school. Pupils are becoming increasingly skilled in using computers to present their work and for independent research. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the outstanding range of enrichment activities that contribute well to their personal development. Visiting speakers, regular educational trips, including residential, and a wide variety of sports are all popular and well attended.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school cares for its pupils outstandingly well. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. 'I was bullied when I was in Year 4. I told my teacher and it stopped straight away. It has never happened again.' Very orderly and secure daily routines give pupils a secure framework in which to live and learn. Health and safety procedures are firmly embedded. Transition into the Nursery is handled very effectively so that children settle in with the minimum of stress. Very effective liaison with local high schools also ensures that older pupils are confident about the next step in their education. Support and guidance for pupils' academic development are robust. Procedures allow the progress of individual pupils to be tracked so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and rectified.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher inspires exceptional levels of teamwork and dedication among adults working in the school. There is a relentless focus on improvement. Very good procedures for evaluating the school's effectiveness include the views of parents and pupils. They enable the school to identify accurately its strengths and areas where it could do better, such as raising achievement and standards in English. Subject managers carry out their responsibilities with enthusiasm and constantly seek improvement. Excellent leadership and management throughout the school have brought about an environment in which pupils flourish as individuals and develop very high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Governors fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously. They are knowledgeable and supportive of the school.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

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



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Inspection of Higher Openshaw Community School, Manchester M11 1AJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and talking to many of you. What you told me helped me greatly to reach my judgements about your school.

You will be pleased to hear that I think you go to a good school which has many outstanding strengths. Chief among these is how well the school cares for you and how well you develop into really likeable and respectful young people. I was really impressed with how well you behave - well done! Your headteacher and all the adults in school are working very hard to make sure that you get the best possible start to your education that they can provide. I was very impressed with the progress you make in mathematics and science. In English your progress is not so strong, so I am asking your teachers to do everything they can to make sure you do better. I am sure you will work hard with your teachers to make sure this happens. Your teachers work very hard to make sure your lessons are interesting and make you think. They mark your work regularly, but I am asking them to make sure that the comments they put in your books indicate clearly what you need to do to improve your work. Your headteacher is proud of every one of you and wants you all to do as well as you possibly can. I am confident that you will help him and your teachers in making sure that Higher Openshaw goes from strength to strength in future.

I wish you all the very best for the future.