



# Wharton Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 105897  
**Local Authority** Salford  
**Inspection number** 287357  
**Inspection dates** 1–2 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Colin Smith

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 address</b>	Rothwell Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Little Hulton, Worsley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Salford M38 9XA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7904473
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	225	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 7998611
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Lesley Hopwood-Ryan
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Daniel Norkus
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 February 2002		

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<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 1–2 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 287357
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is average in size. Although pupils are from a wide range of backgrounds, much of the area served by the school is disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The vast majority of pupils are White British heritage. A small but increasing number of pupils are African, Pakistani, Caribbean or mixed heritage. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been absent during the last eighteen months, meaning that the school has often been without its permanent leadership.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness and value for money provided are satisfactory. The absence of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has slowed the pace of school improvement. Nevertheless, the satisfactory leadership and management provided by other leaders in school, with good support from governors, have kept the school on a steady course. As a result, standards have been maintained and pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Most importantly, the high quality care provided has ensured that the most vulnerable pupils are supported and safeguarded very successfully. Parents say that all staff, and particularly the leaning mentor, 'go above and beyond the call of duty' in providing additional family support. Within this positive ethos, pupils' personal development is good. They learn to make informed choices, develop understanding and respect for others, adopt healthy and safe lifestyles and make a valuable contribution to the school and wider community. This places them in a strong position to make the most of their future education.

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. Although most pupils reach the standards expected of them in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, some of the more able pupils do not fulfil their potential. This is why standards overall are below average throughout the school. The progress made by more able pupils is often less than that made by others. This is because the activities provided for them in a fair proportion of lessons are not sufficiently challenging to move their learning on quickly enough. In English, although pupils make good progress in reading, their progress in writing is much slower, particularly that of boys. This is receiving attention, but pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to plan, edit and write at length in all classes. Teaching and the curriculum provided are satisfactory but are not as effective in meeting the needs of the more able pupils as well as other groups. Although pupils thoroughly enjoy school, many boys still show a reluctance to write, particularly when presented with a test.

Staff and governors keep a close eye on the work of the school. They are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the accuracy of their self-evaluation is borne out by the inspection findings. The return of the deputy headteacher and imminent return of the headteacher has kick-started action to tackle the weaknesses and raise standards. The capacity to improve is satisfactory and improving. This is evident in the way the progress made by pupils from Years 2 to 6 is now being carefully tracked. Where progress falters, decisive action is increasingly being taken to put pupils back on track. However, key staff are still not in a position to measure progress effectively and intervene where necessary from the Nursery to Year 2.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide consistently challenging tasks for the more able pupils to raise their achievement.
- Raise pupils' achievement in writing to match their achievement in reading.
- Analyse assessments rigorously throughout the school to ensure that all pupils, especially boys, make good progress in every year group.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with low attainment, particularly in language and mathematics. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception year, although standards are still below expected overall, three quarters of the children are working within the goals set for their age. Progress is mainly satisfactory in both infant and junior classes, but accelerates in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is stronger and booster classes make a difference. Although most pupils achieve the levels expected of them in English, mathematics and science, some of the more able pupils do not fulfil their potential. This is why the 2005 Year 6 national tests show that standards are below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The 2006 results show a similar picture, although the school's results are getting closer to national averages. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory and improving as increasing numbers of support staff are recruited. Pupils achieve well in reading because of the intensive regular group reading sessions. Progress in writing is much slower. Although more interesting topics and approaches are being introduced, the time spent on grammatical exercises, in some classes, limits opportunities for pupils to practise and improve by writing at length. The attainment and achievement of boys is lower than that of girls. This is very marked in writing, which many boys still do not enjoy.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A parent of a minority ethnic background family remarked how well her child had settled in, because other children were sensitive and respectful towards other cultures. Pupils are well behaved, friendly and cooperative. They are aware of healthy, safe and purposeful lifestyles and attendance is average. These are significant achievements in view of the difficulties many pupils face out of school. As one pupil commented, 'School makes me feel happy and safe because no one is bullied.' They enjoy most subjects and activities. In the words of one pupil, 'Lessons are interesting and trips help us to learn more in a fun way'. Pupils' pride in school is reflected in the good presentation of work. They are eager to take on extra responsibilities, such as devising rules, helping younger and newly arrived pupils to settle and prepare for the new school council. Such activities enhance their understanding of what it means to be part of a community. They respond very enthusiastically to the golden raffle and tea party tickets, which celebrate and reward good citizenship.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children to settle quickly and learn independently. Pupils are well managed in all classes. This ensures a good climate for learning in which children can give of their best. By explaining what the lesson is about and marking work constructively, teachers help pupils to understand how well they are learning. New and complex ideas are explained successfully using projection screens. The visual images stimulate pupils' interest in learning and enhance their understanding. The use of assessment to measure how well pupils are learning is satisfactory. Regular, accurate assessments are made. However, the extent to which the information is used to provide challenging activities, well matched to pupils' different learning needs, is better in some classes than others. Year 5 provides a model of good practice in this respect. Consequently, in this class, all pupils make good progress. In other year groups, lesson plans do not always include specific activities for the more able pupils. In other instances, extra activities are provided to stretch pupils' learning. These are not completed because pupils have to work, unnecessarily, through less demanding activities first.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum has been reshaped to focus on the key skills the pupils need for their future education. This is partly why the majority achieves the levels expected of them in English, mathematics and science. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are being increasingly well catered for. Additional support from classroom assistants is raising their confidence and achievement. The school is now turning its attention towards the needs of the able, gifted and talented pupils. Many additional activities are being introduced, particularly in mathematics, to boost their achievement. However, the challenge provided is not always sufficient to meet their learning needs. Pupils benefit from a full range of activities. They particularly enjoy practical activities such as investigations in science, learning through visits in history and working with artists. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has vastly improved since the previous inspection. The very strong thread of personal, social and health education and citizenship makes a significant contribution to pupils' good personal development.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided are good and better than the school believes, because of recent improvements in the quality of academic support provided for them. Child protection, health and safety, and safe staff recruitment procedures are all in place. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is sensitively nurtured. In

particular, the most vulnerable pupils, under the wing of the learning mentor, are safeguarded and extremely well supported. The barriers to learning are being removed successfully. The marking of pupils' work has significantly improved. Pupils say they can't wait to open their books to see what teachers have written. They thoroughly enjoy writing replies, such as, 'I really appreciate your comments and will try to improve my spelling'. Pupils in Year 5 know exactly what they need to do to move from one level to the next. This effective target-setting is increasingly being extended to other classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Prior to the absences of senior managers, standards had been rising and are higher now in mathematics and science than at the time of the last inspection. However, the implementation of strategies to raise achievement further has been delayed over the last eighteen months. Only very recently have teachers' lesson plans been reviewed to ensure that all pupils are provided for, particularly the more able ones. In lessons, this is still inconsistent. However, reading standards are improving because regular guided reading sessions are provided. The school has kept on an even keel because of the work of subject leaders, particularly the assessment coordinator who sets a very good example of how best to improve the rate of pupils' progress. Checking and improving how well the school is doing is satisfactory. Making teachers accountable for the progress pupils make in their classes has sharpened the process. However, key staff are still not able to put their finger on exactly how much progress groups of pupils have made, such as boys, or the most able ones, from the Nursery to the end of Year 6. This is partly why boys are not achieving as well as girls. Governors support the school well through regular visits and have had to take difficult decisions to reduce the school's budget as pupil numbers have fallen.

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## 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

Thank you for making us welcome and answering our questions. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit.

The absence of your headteacher and deputy headteacher has made it harder for the school to run as smoothly as it normally does. However, your teachers and support staff have made sure that your learning has not been seriously affected. Your school is satisfactory and we can see signs of improvement now that the deputy headteacher has returned.

There are many good things about your school. Young children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. We noticed immediately how well you are cared for and looked after. This is why the school is a happy one and most of your parents agree. You are interested and try hard in lessons and your behaviour is good. We know how hard you have tried to improve attendance.

Your reading is good. Most of you make at least satisfactory progress and reach Level 4 in English, mathematics and science and ICT is improving all the time.

To help your school to be even better, we want your teachers to:

- make sure that the more able pupils are given challenging work in every lesson to help them to reach higher levels. You can help by trying to finish your work quickly then you can do the extension activities
- improve your writing, especially boys, to help standards in writing to catch up with reading. You can help by checking your spelling and using more interesting words
- compare the assessments of your work from Nursery to the end of Year 6. This will show how well you are doing and help teachers to increase your progress if it slows down. You can help by working hard to reach the targets your teachers set for you.