

# Littlemoor Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105642
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	324247
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jim Crouch

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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 (total)	278
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss A Collier
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Claire Kelly
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Littlemoor Lane Oldham Lancashire OL4 2RR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 624 4188
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 624 3160

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the form of Nursery and Reception classes. In addition, Spring Meadows Children's Centre is located on the school site and is managed by the school's governing body. It was inspected as part of this inspection. The school is situated close to the centre of Oldham and serves a community that experiences some social disadvantage. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number that are at an early stage of learning English is well below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. A small proportion of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The school holds the Activemark Award. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2007.

## 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 is inclusive, promotes equality well, and has a real sense of community spirit which embraces the staff, pupils, parents and governors. It is highly valued by parents.

Children join the school with skills and abilities that are below and sometimes well below those expected for their age. In recent years there has been some disruption to learning, owing mainly to changes in staffing. This resulted in a decline in standards at Key Stage 2, although overall achievement remained broadly satisfactory. Leaders have since identified areas of underperformance and put into place improvements in teaching and learning and the levels of support for targeted pupils. As a result, pupils are now making good progress across Years 1 to 6 and achieve well, particularly at Key Stage 1 where standards are now above average. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are making up lost ground. By the end of Year 6, standards are now broadly average. However, attainment in English is lower than in mathematics and science, mainly because some more able pupils do not attain the higher levels.

Teaching is good overall. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that all pupils are involved and take an active part in lessons. Pupils are eager to learn, persevere well with activities and respond positively to encouragement. However, in some lessons the work does not provide a good level of challenge for the more able. As a result, progress is not always as good as it might be. Recent improvements in the curriculum mean that it meets the needs and interests of all pupils. It makes good provision to raise standards of literacy and numeracy and to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. However, the relatively limited access to computers means that pupils' information and technology (ICT) skills are not as good as they could be. Theme weeks, a good range of sporting, musical and creative experiences and many school visits increase pupils' enjoyment of school and enrich their all-round learning. Pupils are well cared for, but the marking of their work is not consistent in informing them what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve.

Behaviour is good and attendance is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe and care well for each other. They show good safety awareness and are developing healthy lifestyles by choosing to eat fruit at break-times and joining in the good range of sporting activities provided by the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with, for example, assemblies and circle time being used well to encourage them to reflect on how they can contribute to improving the lives of others. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated into the school because of the good interpersonal relationships that exist. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as being a house captain and contribute to school improvement, particularly through the work of the school council. They show good community awareness, for example by working on local environment projects and holding charity fundraising activities.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and governors have created a supportive school where staff work well together. There is an agreed vision for the school and a well-planned approach to developing the confidence and competence of teachers and teaching assistants. This means that increasingly good use is made of the school's resources. The headteacher and children's centre manager work closely together to ensure that the many education and health services on offer to parents and the community meet local needs. As a result, the school works well with parents and outside organisations to promote the well-being of all pupils. It has successfully addressed issues raised in the last inspection and, under the purposeful leadership of the headteacher, has good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good with some outstanding features. The headteacher, children's centre manager and Early Years Foundation Stage leader have, with good support from the governing body, established a management structure that enables close cooperation and ensures the good progress and outstanding welfare and personal development of children. This cooperation results in a seamless transition between the children's centre and the Nursery. Leadership and management are good and all staff play an active role in improving provision and monitoring progress. Good links with families and support agencies are established at an early stage through a range of interventions and strategies developed by the staff in the children's centre. As a result, all significant partners are able to contribute to supporting children and matters causing concern are quickly addressed. Good arrangements for assessing children indicate that their skills and abilities are below and in some cases well below those expected for their age on entry to the Nursery, particularly in literacy and social development. Good teaching, continuous assessment, and outstanding care and support enable children to make good progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, so that by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage most are working securely within the early learning goals. Children work and play in a caring, safe and stimulating environment. The indoor areas are interesting and provide good opportunities for personal development and the development of basic skills through a well-planned curriculum. However, as the school recognises, the outside provision is not of the same standard and is in need of further development and plan to improve it. Clear routines provide structure and stability. Consequently, children quickly develop confidence and a degree of independence and display good attitudes to learning. Parents are very supportive and say how much they appreciate the work of the staff.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities in lessons for the more able pupils at Key Stage 2 to reach higher standards, particularly in English.
- Ensure that marking more consistently informs pupils of what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve pupils' skills in ICT.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average.

As a consequence of successful actions taken by the headteacher standards on entry to Year 1 have improved and are now broadly average. The majority of pupils in the school are now making good progress and achieving well and standards at both key stages are rising. This is particularly evident at Key Stage 1, where pupils now reach above average standards at the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading is average owing mainly to fewer pupils achieving the higher levels. Standards at Key Stage 2 are now broadly average. Older pupils are making up for their weaker performance in previous years and are making good progress towards meeting their challenging end-of-key-stage targets. However, attainment in English is lower than in mathematics and science because of weaknesses in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils make good progress because lessons and support arrangements are well matched to their needs.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils mature well and quickly develop into thoughtful and self-confident learners. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They can easily put themselves in someone else's shoes and see things from a different point of view. Their awareness of their own culture is good, but their awareness of the rich diversity of traditions and beliefs in our modern society is less well developed. The majority of pupils attend well. However, the persistent absence of a small number of pupils means that, despite the school's good support for these pupils and their families, overall attendance remains close to the national average. Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. They choose to eat healthy options at lunchtime and the 'shake and wake' each morning is thoroughly enjoyed by pupils and staff. Pupils know how to stay safe as illustrated by their sensible behaviour in the snow-covered playground. They say that bullying is not a problem, but if they feel worried about anything they know that they can turn to members of staff or use the 'worry box' in school. Their contribution to the school community is good. For example, the school council has made significant contributions to the new rewards system. Broadly average literacy and numeracy skills mean that pupils make satisfactory progress in their preparation for the future. They value the chances they have to learn about the world of work and money matters.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers are confident. They use their good subject knowledge well to make lessons informative and enjoyable and thus engage and motivate pupils. Learning is frequently put into everyday contexts. For example, in a numeracy lesson, pupils work in groups with a set budget to plan a family holiday, furnish a house, or go online to buy food, in order to raise their understanding of the cost of living. Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of praise and rewards and pupils are keen to contribute to lessons because they know their ideas will be valued. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to work independently, in pairs and groups to develop their ideas and share learning. Teachers make good use of technology such as interactive whiteboards to bring lessons to life. Teaching assistants provide effective support in class and are skilled in working with individuals. Most lessons make good provision for meeting the needs of different learners. However, in some an over emphasis on reinforcing basic skills and knowledge means that the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and do not progress as well as they might, especially in English.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets the needs, interests and aspirations of all pupils. There is good provision for teaching literacy and numeracy. The new topic-based approach to teaching other subjects provides good opportunities for pupils to reinforce and extend these core skills in contexts they find interesting and challenging. For example, pupils made good progress in art and design, design and technology, and literacy as they engaged in a variety of activities during their lesson on the topic of Australia. However, the limited availability of computers means that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop and use ICT skills to enhance their learning. The programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good. For example, the Life

Education Caravan visits the school regularly and supports safety and drugs education effectively. Visits to art galleries, theatres and museums support pupils' good understanding of their own cultural heritage. Pupils' learning is enriched in many ways. All Year 5 pupils are taught to play a musical instrument and there is good range of extra-curricular activities including football, judo, stage design and drama.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents recognise and value the high levels of care and support provided for all pupils and in particular those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They say that the constant support their children receive helps them achieve well. All staff are very conscious of their duty of care and current government safeguarding requirements are met. The good links with parents developed by the children's centre are maintained throughout the school. This is evident in the work of the learning mentor in improving the attendance and behaviour of pupils facing particular difficulties. The school makes good use of rewards to improve attendance and to celebrate good progress and these are much valued by pupils. Pupils are aware of their learning targets in English and mathematics and in some lessons have opportunities to evaluate their own progress. Marking usually celebrates good work, but is not used consistently across the school to inform pupils of what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and governing body have a clear vision for the school. They have created a strong sense of common purpose among staff, who feel well supported and fully involved in the life of the school. A well-managed programme of professional development means that all staff are increasing their capacity to take on further responsibilities. The headteacher has successfully restructured the leadership and management of the school. All leaders have clearly defined roles and are expected to provide direction and training for staff in their areas of responsibility. Monitoring of the work of the school is thorough and involves all leaders and managers and the governing body. As a result, there is an agreed understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement. The school improvement plan indicates clearly the planned actions for improvement and arrangements for self-evaluation. The governing body is very involved in the life of the school. It is well informed and has demonstrated the capacity to challenge and support effectively. The school has the confidence and support of parents, who are keen to play an active role in their children's education. The outreach work of the children's centre and activities such as the summer school are clear indicators of the school's commitment to supporting the local community. The school is in the early stages of developing links to the wider community, for example through the recently established video conference link with a school with a different ethnic profile. Littlemoor Primary currently makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Littlemoor Primary School, Oldham, OL4 2RR

As you know, three inspectors came to your school recently to find out how well you are learning. Everyone made us feel welcome and helped us to find out about your school. We found that your school gives you a good education. We were particularly impressed by your thoughtful behaviour and your keenness to do well in lessons.

You all make a good contribution to the life of the school and clearly know how to live healthily. You show good awareness of the needs of others in many ways, including through your charity work. The staff and governors have worked hard to help you enjoy your education by developing a good curriculum with lots of extra activities and visits. We found that your school looks after you well and that, because the teaching is good, you make good progress.

There are three important things that could be better. We have asked the school to make sure that when teachers mark your work they let you know what you have done well and what you need to do to improve. We have also asked them to make sure that the older pupils who find learning easy reach higher standards, particularly in English. Finally, we have asked them to make sure that you improve your ICT skills.

Of course, you also have an important part to play in helping your school to carry on improving. You can do this by continuing to be as positive about learning as you are now and by trying to improve all aspects of your work.