

# Pictor School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 106390                 |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Trafford               |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 324389                 |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 31 March –1 April 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Saleem Hussain         |

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>  | Special   |
| <b>School category</b>   | Community special                               |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>   | 2–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>  | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>  |   |
| School (total)   | 100   |
| 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>   | Dr S Chouksey                                   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Mrs J Spruce                                    |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 26 April 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>  | Grove Lane<br>Timperley<br>Cheshire<br>WA15 6PH |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 0161 912 3082                                   |
| <b>Fax number</b>  | 0161 904 7967                                   |

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|--------------------------|------------------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is designated for mild to moderate learning difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational need. Learning difficulties and/or disabilities include physical, speech and language, medical, profound and multiple learning difficulties and behavioural difficulties. The major need being met at present is autism. Overall, the severity and complexity of learning difficulties and/or disabilities have increased since the last inspection.

The socio-economic background of pupils is broadly average. The proportion of minority ethnic pupils is above the national average, as is the number with English as an additional language. The school has achieved the Primary Quality Mark, Financial Management Standard in Schools, Activemark and the National Healthy Schools Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This outstanding school provides excellent value for money. Representative views from parents include, 'Pictor school is a special place, full of special people, doing special things for my son, every day'. Though standards are low owing to the complex nature and extent of pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achievement is outstanding. Progress is excellent across the school because the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers develop very strong relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour extremely well. They have an intimate understanding of pupils' learning difficulties and structure the lessons in a way that engages pupils fully. Stimulating presentation of work captures pupils' interest and so they enjoy working very hard.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils quickly come to terms with their difficulties and develop very high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Several pupils were seen to play leading roles during a 'wake up and shake up' session and a very spiritually uplifting assembly included a pupil leading on the lyrics of an African song about inner beauty. The school works exceptionally well with outside agencies to ensure pupils' well-being. The availability of specialist therapeutic and medical care on site is a huge asset for pupils. Links with other schools, for example through outreach services provided by the school and regarding the re-integration of pupils, are very effective. The curriculum is outstanding. Pupils love the exciting and innovative learning chances which are precisely matched to their needs. The soft playroom, sensory room, yoga area, quiet garden and hydrotherapy pool provide sparkling additions to the classroom and off-site experiences on offer.

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils are very thoughtful, considerate and respectful. Their sense of fun was very apparent during the inspection as many staff and the inspector were caught out by the entertaining 'April fools' they carried out. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school life very much and this is reflected in outstanding levels of attendance. Pupils develop very positive attitudes towards healthy and safe living. They participate very enthusiastically in hydrotherapy, dance and other physical activities. Following a lesson about making simple circuits, one pupil explained carefully to the inspector, 'although electricity is wonderful, you have to remember that water and electricity don't mix'. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. The school council has made many impressive suggestions leading to school improvement including reorganising aspects of break-times. The high quality of pupils' achievements and personal development at the school gives them an outstanding preparation for the next stage in their learning.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The impact is seen in the extremely strong outcomes achieved and the significant improvements to teaching and the curriculum since the last inspection. Inclusion lies at the heart of the school's work and is the hallmark of its success. The level of staff commitment to the pupils has resulted in a remarkable sense of common purpose across the school. Led by the headteacher, the senior leaders work tirelessly checking the effectiveness of provision and making improvements. The chair of the governing body works closely with the school and the great depth of medical, financial and educational expertise amongst the governing body supports the school very effectively. Self-evaluation is penetrating and insightful. The school has improved since its last inspection. The school demonstrates an excellent capacity for improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children settle into school life quickly and start learning straight away because of the school's close working with parents and the outstanding quality of the provision. Their progress is outstanding and is especially rapid in the areas of personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and physical development. The curriculum is adapted very sensitively to meet children's needs. Resources are freely available and appealing to children, encouraging independent learning very well. Children become aware of themselves as individuals, learn to share and take turns and to respect each other's achievements.

Teaching is outstanding. Learning routines are very firmly established. Even snack time includes exceptional teaching and learning. For example, a teacher very effectively capitalised on the chances to develop communication and number skills along with promoting healthy eating awareness. Children also thoroughly enjoyed a communication, language and literacy lesson seen. They worked hard in the classroom and marched purposefully around the school as the lesson ended with an Easter egg hunt in places like the sensory room and quiet garden. Teaching assistants are skilful in the support and care they offer in the classroom. Classrooms and the outdoor environment are lively and stimulating. . The health and welfare of children are always given top priority. Extremely good improvements, such as the curriculum, have taken place since the last inspection, as a result of outstanding leadership and management.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Other than priorities already in hand, there are no additional areas for improvement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

In each Key Stage, pupils make equally impressive progress, regardless of their learning difficulties, gender or ethnicity. Even pupils with the most complicated learning difficulties and those with challenging behaviour achieve as well as their peers because of the excellent support they receive in the classroom. Achievement in English, mathematics and science is outstanding, while it is good in information and communication technology (ICT). Very challenging targets are set, and achieved. Communication and language development are always a very strong focus in learning and so all pupils make exceptional progress in this area. The spoken word is accompanied by signing or, more usually, the use of symbols, pictures and aids that enable pupils to understand and be understood. Higher attainers in Year 6 read and understand text at a level close to that expected for pupils of their age. Some of the pupils' work in art, music and history is stunning.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Personal development makes an excellent contribution to learning. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils quickly develop a very good sense of self-awareness and confidence. They mature well and develop very strong values about care, compassion, friendship and fair play. They are keen to help each other, for example, the older pupils regularly listen to younger ones read or befriend them at break-times. Pupils develop an extremely good knowledge of their own cultural heritage. They also show very good attitudes towards equality and diversity and this is a credit to the school's good work to promote community cohesion.

They soak up chances to learn about different cultures, traditions and religions. For example, in a discussion about different beliefs they spoke respectfully about how Muslims pray and what a mosque looks like.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers have a very good awareness of pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This ensures that lesson activities are very well tailored to meet pupils' individual needs. The level of challenge offered to all pupils is remarkable. Consequently, pupils are engaged very effectively in lessons and achieve extremely well. Teamwork between adults in the classroom is impressive. All these characteristics were seen in an outstanding English lesson for younger pupils. Each pupil made excellent progress in their speaking or communication skills as the teacher, speech and language therapist and teaching assistant combined their support very successfully. The lesson included many rhymes and songs and there was much useful discussion about healthy dinners. Assessment is outstanding. The information collected is used very well by teachers to plan future lessons.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy their education because the curriculum enables them to flourish and achieve as well as they can. Outstanding provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT helps pupils to develop their basic skills very effectively in these areas. Excellent chances to take on responsibilities in the community help pupils to develop their self-esteem very well. Pupils make a very strong contribution to the success of community events such as an annual arts festival, where they display their splendid work. School trips make an outstanding contribution to cultural development. Year 2 recently went to the Museum of Science and Industry and gained many rich experiences as they considered the impact of new technology on people's lives. Pupils are very well prepared for their future economic well-being, for example, they often take part in enterprise activities to raise funds for good causes. Education for safety, health and well-being is good. The school has fully addressed the issue of the last inspection concerning sex and drugs education.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Representative views from parents include, 'Staff are warm and caring. They put their heart and soul into doing their very best for the pupils'. Academic guidance is good. Individual learning plans meet pupils' needs very closely. Pastoral support and guidance are outstanding, leading to exceptional personal development. Celebration assemblies are frequently held and are very effective in raising pupils' aspirations. Outstanding behaviour and regular attendance are promoted very well through lots of prizes and treats. Excellent links with many external agencies ensure pupils' care and well-being. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust and regularly reviewed, and health and safety is carefully managed. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. In this safe and very supportive environment, the vast majority of pupils reach very challenging targets.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The leadership of the school is successfully focused on achievement and promoting the personal development and well-being of all pupils. Target-setting systems are very effective. Pupils' performance is frequently checked by leaders. Any underachievement is quickly identified and support put in place to address issues. Parents are very appreciative of the school's work. Courses in areas such as communication skills development are helpful in promoting parents' involvement in their children's learning. The school is taking good actions to promote community cohesion. Much is done to help pupils develop their awareness of, and appreciation for the different communities and racial groups in modern Britain. This includes chances to visit different places of worship and to study poetry written by people with different cultural attitudes. Resources such as electronic whiteboards and the sensory room are used very effectively to support learning. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

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**Annex A**

**Inspection judgements**

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| <b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b> | <b>School Overall</b> |
|--|-----------------------|

**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> | 1   |
| 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?  | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 1   |

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>       | 1 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve?   | 1 |
| 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?                     | 1 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?                          | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?                                 | 1 |

**Achievement and standards**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 1 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 4 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress                           | 1 |

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

## The quality of provision

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

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 1   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 2   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 1   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 1   |
| 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**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school. I enjoyed meeting you and you were all very helpful. This letter is to tell you some of the things I found out about Pictor School.

Your school is outstanding. This is because the teachers and other adults make sure you are happy and provide lots of exciting things for you to do. The care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. You know what you need to do to be healthy and safe. Your behaviour is excellent and you are extremely good citizens. I was very impressed with the work of the school council and the way they help everyone with their super ideas. You have outstanding teachers and this is why you all learn such a lot. The headteacher, staff and governors all work very hard indeed to make sure you all keep learning so quickly.

You are all doing wonderfully well and I know that everyone is proud of your achievements. Keep up all your hard work. I send my very best wishes to each and every one of you.