

# Holmeswood Methodist School

Chapel Lane, Holmeswood Nr Rufford, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L40 1UD

**Inspection dates** 19 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- All groups of pupils make good progress in their studies and achieve well from their starting points on entry to the school. The well-above-average proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their classmates as a result of the impressive support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils enjoy reading and talk about their favourite authors and the kinds of books they write.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and support staff provide pupils with the right work to capture their interest and enable them to make good progress. Pupils speak highly of the adults who work with them and say, 'The learning in our lessons is fun!'
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils are happy and feel very safe in school. They behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school site and relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very impressive indeed. Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities and they support an extensive range of charities.
- Exceptional leadership from the headteacher, who is supported well by teaching and non-teaching staff and members of the governing body ensures that the school continues to thrive. The school has improved well since the previous inspection. Standards in mathematics are now higher and pupils have a much greater awareness of the diverse nature of British society.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in English is not as strong as it is in mathematics.
- The promotion and reinforcement of pupils' literacy skills in all the subjects they study is not fully developed.
- The challenge for pupils to produce the best writing they can is not always as good as it could be.
- The marking in pupils' books does not give them enough advice on how they can improve their work.
- Pupils' presentation of work in exercise books is sometimes not neat enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed six lessons or part-lessons, taught by two teachers. They also listened to pupils in Years 2, 4 and 5 read. In addition, they attended the school's celebration assembly.
- The inspectors had discussions with a group of pupils, four members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and staff, including the headteacher, teachers, support and caretaking staff. They also spoke informally with parents and other family members at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of the 10 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a variety of documentation including internal and external pupil progress and attainment data, school development planning and the school's procedures for enabling it to gain an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered minutes of governing body meetings, reports written on behalf of the local authority and documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

James Kidd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Katherine Lee

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is very much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has two classes. The infant class comprises Reception children and pupils from Years 1 and 2. The junior class contains pupils from the four years which make up Key Stage 2.
- There are no pupils supported through school action. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is high, at two fifths of the school population.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is low. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after).
- There are no pupils in the current junior class supported by the pupil premium.
- All pupils are of White British heritage and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school is a nationally accredited Healthy School and holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark. It is currently working towards Eco-School status and the Step into Quality Early Years award.
- Holmeswood Nursery shares the school site, but is not run by the school's governing body. It therefore receives a separate inspection and a separate report, which is available on the Ofsted website.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment in English by:
  - promoting and reinforcing their skills in literacy in all the subjects they study
  - challenging pupils more so they produce the best quality writing they can
  - giving pupils more advice on how they can improve their work in literacy and also in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Ensure pupils present their work as neatly as they can.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The very small number of pupils makes any overall judgements on trends in progress and attainment difficult. However, although children's skills and understanding on entry to the school vary widely from year to year, they are generally below those typically expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, good support and a curriculum which meets their interests, pupils make good progress and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement from their starting points. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View are entirely satisfied with the progress their children make.
- By modifying how mathematics is taught and by ensuring that the subject has a greater profile in classrooms and on corridors, the school has addressed the relevant area for improvement from the previous inspection effectively. Pupils therefore make good progress in mathematics, and attainment in 2012 was just above average and the highest for some time. In the junior class, for example, pupils find fractions of quantities accurately and with confidence.
- Progress in English is also good, but not quite as good as it is in mathematics. Pupils sometimes find it difficult to transfer their literacy skills to other subjects of the curriculum and the quality of their writing is not always as good as it could be. Nonetheless, they reach broadly average standards in English and they read accurately and with understanding. They are proud to share their work with their classmates, for example when they read aloud their work on the visit to the livestock farm.
- There are no pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in the junior class and none of the three pupils in last year's Year 6 was supported by the pupil premium. However, the pupils in the current infant class who are supported by the premium make the same good progress as their peers and the gaps between their attainment and the attainment of other pupils are closing. This is a result of the effective use of the available funding to provide more one-to-one support for these pupils.
- The well-informed teachers and the talented and committed team of teaching assistants provide impressive support for disabled pupils and those known to be eligible for free school meals. These pupils make the same good progress as others in the school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is invariably good in both classes. Teachers have warm relationships with their pupils and provide them with work which meets their individual needs and which captures their interest. Pupils say lessons are fun and they particularly enjoy learning on the computer.
- Since both classes comprise a range of years, teachers and teaching assistants work hard and effectively to provide a range of activities, often on an individual basis, to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met closely. Staff recognise, however, that they do not promote pupils' skills in literacy as well as they could in lessons where the subject content is not primarily to do with English. They are fully aware, too, that pupils' writing tasks are not always as challenging as they could be.
- Nonetheless, reading is promoted well and pupils have many opportunities during the week when they can read in private and also read aloud to teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils enjoy this and, during the inspection, they gave inspectors convincing information about the books they enjoy and about their favourite authors and the different kinds of books they write.
- There are many examples in lessons of where the approaches of teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to work independently and to find things out for themselves. As a result, pupils in both classes have the confidence to talk to visitors and to tell them about the work they are doing. They particularly enjoy the opportunities they have to learn outside the classroom, for example in the school fruit and vegetable garden and during the many educational trips they attend.

- Teachers assess pupils' work in class well and often modify the lesson content to make sure that pupils continue to make good progress in the topics they are studying. However, although marking is regular, always completed and congratulates pupils on their efforts, it does not give them enough advice on how they can improve their work. In addition, on occasions, pupils do not present their work neatly enough in their exercise books.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils are very proud of their school and feel very safe within its walls. Indeed, all parents spoken to during the inspection and those who completed the online questionnaire are of the same opinion. They believe their children are happy and safe and have nothing but praise for the care, support and guidance their sons and daughters receive. One spoke for many with the words, 'This school is a family. Everyone looks after everyone else and the staff are approachable and always there when we or our children need them.'
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school at breaks and lunchtimes is exemplary. Older pupils are excellent role models for younger ones and pupils of all levels of ability are very much engaged in their learning. Pupils treat each other, the adults who work with them and visitors with the utmost dignity and respect. Pupils believe that bullying in all its forms is rare and that it is dealt with quickly and effectively if it occurs.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities. New play equipment, the 'eco-code' and school pets are just three examples of the positive impact of the school council on many areas of school life. The suggestion box also elicits the views of pupils as to what could be improved. The Thursday lunchtime gardening club is a highlight of the school week and pupils have made bird boxes and butterfly houses. They have entered competitions to display the produce they have grown and pupils and staff eat the fruit and vegetables from the garden.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well and pupils now have a much greater awareness of cultures and religions which are different from their own. Pupils benefit from the 'African Week' and they also taste food from other countries during 'cooking nights'. The school also has a strong link with another school in Estonia.
- Dance and drama are important elements of school life and the 'wake, shake!' session at the start of the day is a joy to attend. Pupils are currently practising their dance routines for the 'Wizard of Oz' production in a local high school.
- Attendance is above average and pupils are invariably punctual to school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Leadership from the headteacher is outstanding and he is supported well by committed teaching and ancillary staff. Staff of all levels of experience and responsibility share his vision for how the school can continue to improve. Teachers believe that performance appraisal is rigorous but fair and that pupils' progress is at the heart of the arrangements.
- Support staff take the lead in a range of school activities, the 'wake, shake!' session and the development of the school garden, for example. As two members of the support staff commented, 'We feel very honoured to be part of the Holmeswood Methodist team and thoroughly enjoy working here. Our opinions are always included in any changes the school wishes to make.'
- The school has an accurate view of its performance. It responded positively to the two areas for improvement from the previous inspection, in relation to mathematics and making pupils more aware of the diversity of modern society. It now recognises that pupils' progress in English, although good overall, is not quite as good as it is in mathematics and that pupils' skills in literacy are not always promoted effectively in subjects other than English.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well and pupils speak highly of the many out-of-school trips and activities which enable them to learn outside the formal classroom.

- Equality of opportunity is promoted well and the school ensures that all forms of discrimination are rejected. Safeguarding and child protection policies and practice fully meet current requirements.
- The local authority continues to provide good support for the school, particularly in relation to the tracking of pupils' progress and school development planning.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and its areas for further development. They are fully aware of the importance of the pupil premium and, although the level of funding is relatively small, they keep a close eye on how it is spent and the impact of the spending. They are actively involved in the school's strategies for improving the quality of teaching and visit lessons to check on teachers' and pupils' performance in the classroom. They oversee performance appraisal arrangements and ensure that teachers only receive financial reward if they meet their individual targets for pupils' progress.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119403
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	411987

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	28
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Tindsley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Relph Higson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01704 821360
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