

Inspection of a good school: Holmeswood Methodist School

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

Inspection date: 9 February 2022

Outcome

Holmeswood Methodist School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils feel safe due to the supportive relationships that they form with staff. They enjoy coming to school and talk fondly of Barry, the royal python. Pupils and parents and carers value the close-knit school community. Pupils typically commented: 'We are one big family.'

Pupils live up to leaders' high expectations. They behave well in lessons and at social times. Pupils are encouraged by sports councillors to 'wake and shake' each morning. This helps pupils to be ready to learn. Pupils understand what bullying is. They said that it is very rare and that staff would help if it were to happen.

Pupils take part in a range of activities, such as cookery, dance and sports clubs. Leaders plan visits that strengthen the curriculum, including residential visits and fieldwork. Pupils talked in detail about the many responsibilities that they have. These include being a member of the eco-council or being a money mentor. These pupils encourage their peers to protect the environment and promote the benefits of saving money.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad, balanced and engaging. They have identified what they want pupils, and children in early years, to learn. The curriculum is organised in a logical way that helps pupils to build new knowledge confidently on what they already know. For example, in mathematics, pupils learn how to measure simple angles before they learn how to draw angles of a given size with accuracy.

Teachers revisit pupils' prior learning often. Pupils said that revisiting this important knowledge often helps them to remember it. Leaders provide staff with regular, useful training. Staff said that this has improved their subject knowledge and confidence. This means that they deliver the curriculum well. In lessons, staff check on pupils' understanding often. They quickly identify any pupils who need additional support to learn

the curriculum. This includes pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers when this is appropriate. If pupils with SEND need increased support, leaders work closely with a range of specialists, such as speech and language therapists. Consequently, most pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

In some subjects, teachers' checks on pupils' learning do not focus well enough on the essential knowledge identified in the curriculum. This means that teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of how well pupils have learned the key knowledge. This limits teachers' ability to plan learning that builds confidently on what pupils already know in these subjects.

In early years, staff support children to develop their speaking and listening skills well. Teachers introduce children to letters and the sounds that they represent in an engaging way. Children learn phonics in a systematic way from Reception Year. They read books that are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. This improves their confidence. Teachers ensure that any pupils who struggle to read get the help that they need to catch up quickly. Staff promote a love of reading across the school. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about a range of books. They particularly enjoy their teachers reading to them. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils develop as confident, fluent readers.

Pupils behave well around school. Staff's high expectations for behaviour start in the Nursery class and continue through the school.

Staff provide pupils with many opportunities to become active young citizens. Pupils value the importance of debate and democracy. They elect members to the school council. Pupils, including children in early years, learn about different faiths, cultures and people. They respect these differences. As one pupil said: 'Everyone is unique, and that is good.'

Staff are positive about the support that they receive from the headteacher and governors. They are proud to work at the school. Staff said that they appreciate the consideration given to their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The curriculum includes many opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe. Pupils know how to raise concerns with staff if they need to. They learn how to report any online concerns and they learn what a good friend is. Pupils have recently worked with the fire service to learn about dangers in the home, including fire safety.

Leaders ensure that staff have the training that they need to spot any signs of concern quickly. When required, leaders involve external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get help in a timely manner.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' checks in some subjects do not always identify whether pupils have remembered the most important knowledge in the curriculum. This means that teachers do not always have the most useful information to refine their curriculums. Leaders should review their assessment systems, including those in early years, so that teachers can build learning more effectively on what pupils already know.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119403
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10211149
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Tindsley
Headteacher	Relph Higson
Website	www.holmeswood.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 to 11 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been some changes to teaching staff.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in December 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke to teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors also considered other subjects, including computing, and art and design. An inspector met with subject leaders, reviewed pupils' work and evaluated these curriculums.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation. The lead inspector spoke to the headteacher throughout the inspection. An inspector also met with the headteacher about the leadership of SEND at the school.
- The lead inspector met governors, including the chair of the governing body. He spoke to a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors held meetings with the staff responsible for safeguarding and scrutinised the single central record. They considered leaders' safeguarding processes and questioned staff's understanding of these procedures. Inspectors observed pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes. They discussed safeguarding with pupils.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Adam Sproston, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sharon Cowey

Ofsted Inspector

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