

Inspection of a good school: Methodist Voluntary Controlled Junior, Infant and Nursery School: With Communication Resource

Field Lane, Thornes, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 7RU

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2023

Outcome

Methodist Voluntary Controlled Junior, Infant and Nursery School: With Communication Resource continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have created a strong ethos based on the values of kindness, respect, perseverance and trust. Pupils understand the values and thrive in this inclusive school. They know teachers have high expectations. Pupils are clear about how to be good learners. They behave well in lessons and around school. Bullying is incredibly rare. Adults notice when pupils need help. Pupils feel safe and trust adults. They know adults take any concerns seriously.

There are strong positive relationships based on respect and friendship. Pupils know they belong to the school family. Governors describe the school as the foundation of the community it serves. Parents report how they feel welcomed into the school and feel part of it. They say staff are 'approachable, caring and have the best interests of the children at heart'. Children are happy. Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) say the support the school provides is 'life changing'.

Pupils are proud of the opportunities they have to take on responsibility. For example, they vote for school councillors to represent them. Pupils know they have a voice. Adults listen to them. School councillors report back about their meetings in assemblies and class discussions.

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

Leaders have reviewed their curriculum to ensure it is ambitious and meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND. All pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum. Leaders ensure training for teachers means they deliver the curriculum well. In lessons, teachers can spot misconceptions as they arise. They use assessment well to ensure

pupils are ready to move on in their learning. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They present information clearly. This helps pupils to understand how to complete learning tasks.

Teachers have skills in adapting learning to ensure pupils with SEND can learn alongside their peers. This includes pupils who attend the resourced provision. They access some mainstream lessons as part of their provision. These pupils receive high-quality support. Leaders carefully check the impact of the strategies used to support pupils' additional needs. Parents and pupils meet teachers to review individual plans. All staff have relevant training for SEND. This means they are knowledgeable about the strategies to support pupils to learn well.

The early years curriculum has clear learning goals that include developing the knowledge and skills children need in early reading and number. Children can recognise the sounds in phonics. They learn about number and skilfully count items using the different resources available. They proudly show how they can follow instructions to make something. For example, they enjoyed measuring ingredients for baking and mixing them together. The curriculum from Year 1 to Year 6 is carefully sequenced to ensure pupils develop their knowledge and skills. However, the curriculum from early years does not explicitly link to the curriculum for pupils from Year 1 and beyond. Leaders have already identified this.

Leaders ensure that all pupils develop their reading skills. Children in Reception begin to learn phonics in a systematic way. Staff have the training they need to deliver the programme. As a result, most pupils have mastered the phonics sounds by the end of Year 1. Adults check that pupils are keeping up in phonics. They ensure pupils who are at risk of falling behind get the support they need to catch up. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know. Pupils know reading is important. They enjoy the books they read together in class. They recognise reading is a good way to relax and learn new words.

The personal development of pupils is a strength. Leaders want pupils to become responsible citizens who contribute positively to society. Leaders have carefully considered what pupils need and provide a wealth of opportunities. The planned programme ensures pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and relationships. Pupils understand fundamental British values, as they reflect the school values. They learn about different religions and cultures. Pupils have a strong sense of respect and tolerance. Pupils take on responsibility as reading and science ambassadors, playground leaders, and house captains. The climate change group were an essential part of raising awareness about their concerns locally, alongside pupils from other schools. While most pupils attend school regularly, a few pupils are absent from school too often. They miss important learning and other opportunities on offer in school.

Pupils develop their talents and interest in sports, music and performances. Pupils can learn to play guitar and drums, and take part in school performances and competitions with other schools. They enjoy regular events at the church. Pupils visit the local areas of interest and museums, plant trees in the local area, as part of the work of the Woodland Trust, and go on residential visits to try new activities.

Governors commit to the success of the school. They know the school well. They have an accurate view of the school. This means they can ensure leaders are accountable. Staff feel valued. They hold leaders in high regard. Staff are a strong supportive team. They say leaders are approachable. Leaders ensure workload is manageable and staff well-being is a high priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive up-to-date training and information about safeguarding. All adults are vigilant about spotting any changes because they know the pupils well. There are strong systems in place. Staff notice when pupils are at risk of harm. They take swift action to follow up on concerns. Pupils receive the support they need. Leaders work with external agencies, and signpost families to other agencies. Records are well kept.

Leaders and governors carry out the necessary checks on adults who work with children. There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Pupils learn about online safety and how to stay safe in the community. They know about reporting any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in early years is designed so children achieve the early learning goals. However, despite subject leaders recently considering how this learning prepares children for key stage 1 and beyond, there is more to do. Leaders must ensure the school's curriculum is carefully planned from children's starting points in early years to strengthen the links with learning from Year 1 and beyond.
- A few pupils are regularly absent. As a result, they miss vital learning. Additionally, they do not benefit from the wealth of wider opportunities provided by the school. Leaders should continue to work with these pupils and their families to ensure all pupils attend school regularly.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2013.

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.

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	108252
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10269196
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	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Charlotte Baker
Headteacher	Donna Clark
Website	http://www.wakefieldmethodistschool.org
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a resourced provision for autism and speech, language and communication needs.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above the national average.
- The school offers a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body.
- The inspector met the local authority representative.
- To inspect safeguarding the inspector reviewed relevant documentation, met designated safeguarding leaders and checked the single central record.

- The inspector considered records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed curriculum plans with the subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including during lessons and at lunchtime.
- The inspector talked to pupils about their school and considered responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector met with staff who carry out different roles across the school and considered the responses received from Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, which included free-text comments, were considered by the inspector.

Inspection team

Louise Greatrex, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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