

Leigh Westleigh Methodist Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106442
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	287515
Inspection date	19 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Delia Hiscock

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Graham White
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Bowyer
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002
School address	Westleigh Lane Leigh Lancashire WN7 5NJ
Telephone number	01942 702967
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves an urban community with significant features of deprivation. Almost half of the pupils take up free school meals. There is a higher than average number of pupils who join the school in their Key Stage 2 years. The number of pupils in each year fluctuates from 13 to a maximum of 20. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. A small proportion of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. A tiny number of these are learning to speak English. The school is smaller than average and this has made the recent staffing changes all the more marked. The school has gained the sports ActiveMark, Investors in People award, Eco school silver award and other awards for excellent provision for the Foundation Stage. The new Children's Centre opened on the same site in January 2007. This was followed by the Community Centre, which opened in May 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The needs of its pupils are met exceptionally well. The many new experiences the school provides help pupils to thrive and learn in a climate of calmness and security. There is a seamless journey of learning and personal development that helps everyone to achieve their potential. Any difficulties or barriers that pupils encounter in their lives are overcome as quickly and successfully as possible as a matter of priority. No problem is seen as insurmountable. This is why pupils see school as such an enjoyable and safe place to be and why they achieve exceptionally well. Parents have lots of confidence in the staff and the leadership of the school. They greatly value the work they undertake, and particularly, the exceptionally good help their children receive from the learning mentor. The quality of this pastoral care and support is really good and fosters the well-being of each child sensitively and professionally.

This high quality support and guidance is why pupils are able to learn very well, take responsibilities around the school and develop their growing knowledge of global issues and the environment. What pupils have to say is important. The school council is representative of all pupils in the school including those with additional difficulties. These pupils are well aware of their role and forthright in their opinions and approaches about the take up of healthy diets in the school. These features contribute hugely to pupils' outstanding personal development and are the reason why they become responsible, thoughtful individuals who behave very well and show respect for others when they are in school. This includes pupils who joined the school late in their primary years, some of whom have been excluded from other schools. These pupils learn as well as everyone else. All the pupils listen really well to their teachers and increasingly are learning the skills of conversation, negotiation and appraisal with their classmates; a particular aim that the school is successfully striving towards.

In the Foundation Stage, provision is exceptionally good. Key strengths are exemplary development of children's personal, social and emotional development, and communication skills. This is why most children attain expected standards for their age at the end of the Reception from their below average attainment on entry. Although their writing and knowledge of the world around are still below expectations, standards are average at the end of Key Stage 1. They are slightly lower in writing than in reading. Developments in basic skills and the use of rich first hand experiences ensure that most attain average standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are above average in reading, mathematics and in science. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is exceptionally good overall. Pupils move on swiftly because learning is minutely tailored to their needs each day. In addition, new experiences awaken latent talent in art, music, drama and sports.

The outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher realises the vision for the school and community through very effective teamwork of staff at all levels and strong governance. There is excellent forward thinking, and there are exemplary systems of management and partnership with outside agencies, the Chapel, other schools; and the high school in particular. Evaluation is exceptionally sharp, and though modest, pinpoints exactly what action will move things on. These features demonstrate how the school has journeyed very successfully through a period of substantial change in staffing, to forge ahead with developments for the community and nursery provision. There is excellent capacity to make further improvements and excellent value for money is provided. The school agrees that a little less support for some

of the older pupils would benefit their independence. A wry comment from one of the pupils adds their view: 'We write so much that my arm aches. our brains need a rest.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Begin to dismantle some of the support for learners nearing the end of their Key Stage 2 years, to enable more of them to learn for themselves.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average. This is because pupils achieve exceptionally well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from different family heritages. This starts with exceptionally good progress in Reception. Really good provision ties into children's social and communication needs and helps them to get on well together and develop the confidence to share and talk. Really good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Successful developments to address below average standards in writing at the end of Year 2, translate into aver

contribution in their support for these pupils. Sometimes, small groups of pupils are brought together for teaching, to boost their progress. Marking tells pupils what they are to learn well. Some of this is exceptionally good and tells pupils precisely what to do to improve their work. These are the main features that make the learning journey powerful.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum meets pupils' needs and interests exceptionally well. This starts in the Foundation Stage where provision enables children to find their feet towards independence really well. A wide range of high quality enrichment experiences and extra activities after school really motivate pupils, develop the breadth of their skills and help them to make sensible choices in their lives. There are excellent links with external agencies and the high school to support pupils with specific needs, those learning to speak English and those who have talents. These add to the range of experiences provided to prepare them really well for the future.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pastoral care is exceptionally good because the personal needs and well-being of pupils are supported so well. The school provides a springboard for the pupils of families who are hard to reach. Excellent support for pupils' many additional needs is the result of detailed checks on the factors that could hamper personal as well as academic progress. The exceptionally good work of the learning mentor helps these pupils to work equally well as their classmates. The assessment systems are powerful and ensure that the pace of progress is maintained or accelerated for all pupils. Academic guidance is very good. Pupils are told how to make their work better. Occasionally, however, some of the support provided in Key Stage 2 limits pupils opportunities to learn independently. The requirements for the care, safety and child protection are in place, including those for risk assessment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The outstanding leadership and exciting vision of the headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and newly formed learning zone managers. Forward thinking, the determination to help pupils to achieve their best, and excellent management systems have enabled the school to successfully ride a period of substantial change in staffing. As a result, staff new to the school and sometimes temporarily so, have been able to help to lead the school forward and maintain the momentum of developments. The fruition of recent developments is evident in the opening of the Children's Centre and Community Centre. This is matched by successful improvements in pupils' skills for writing. There is, for example, exceptionally detailed monitoring and tracking of progress that staff use very well to reach the precise goals that are set by leadership. These dig down to establish what is needed to make that crucial difference to the life chances of each pupil. The work of the school is skilfully supported by governor expertise, community knowledge and business-like acumen.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	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

¹ 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.

Annex A**Leadership and management**

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	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 Westleigh Methodist Primary School, Leigh, WN7 5NJ

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for being really helpful in the discussions we had. I found that your school is outstanding. I think that the school listens to what you have to say and what you prefer and then improves things for you. What a great way to make things better!

Your school takes really good care of you all. Everyone works hard to help you to do well at school and is particularly helpful in making sure that you learn to keep healthy and safe, and grow up to become sensible and helpful to others.

I found that many of you know how to improve your work and are learning how to find things out for yourselves. This is a super way for you to learn for yourself. It is a skill that will help you when you go to the high school and when you start in the world of work in the future. To help you to learn even better, I have asked the school to:

- help some of you in Key Stage 2 to learn with a little less help so that you are even more prepared for the high school.

Keep up the energetic, busy playground activity. What a good way to keep fit!