

# Holmeswood Methodist School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119403
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339432
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Byrne

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

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<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>	25
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Michael Tindsley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Relph Higson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Chapel Lane Holmeswood Nr Rufford Nr Rufford L40 1UD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01704 821360
<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	head@holmeswood.lancs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed seven lessons taught by three teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff, pupils and the School Improvement Partner. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, the progress and attainment of pupils, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. He analysed 18 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those from staff and pupils.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- the level at which pupils achieve and their rate of progress in writing and mathematics
- the quality of teaching and the curriculum in developing pupils' ability to work independently
- pupils' understanding of what they can do and how they can improve
- whether pupils have a sufficient knowledge of the richness and diversity of modern society.

## Information about the school

This is very small rural school. All pupils are of White British backgrounds. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. An above average percentage has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy School status, the Quality Mark and Investors in People and gained accreditation for the financial management systems in schools.

Since the last inspection significant investments have been made to upgrade the accommodation. New staff have taken up post in the Key Stage 1 and Early Years Foundation Stage and two part time staff have been appointed to Key Stage 2. There is a separately managed and inspected Nursery provision incorporated into the school, sharing facilities with the Reception children.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features. Staff work very closely with parents and the community to give pupils a good preparation for life. The school is very much at the heart of its community and all associated with it are proud of being part of its growing success. The comment of one parent and/or carer typifies the views of the large majority by stating that the 'school is family orientated and provides an education which is unique and diverse'. Pupils thrive on good teaching, outstanding levels of care and excellent management.

Pupils love school and achieve well. They mature into polite, confident and independent young citizens with exemplary behaviour. Through activities such as the school council and the Eco committee, pupils develop a good understanding of processes of democracy and how they can influence decisions about their own lives.

Excellent opportunities are provided for pupils to make positive contributions to the local community. Very close and productive partnerships with local schools and educational and support agencies contribute significantly to learning. These productive partnerships contribute to the good rate of progress of the large majority of pupils. Attainment at Year 6 is typically above average in English and science. In mathematics, attainment has been at or below average because its profile in the school has not matched the attention given to English.

Lessons are fun. Teachers and teaching assistants successfully plan to meet the wide range of needs in each class. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the outdoors is used extremely well to enrich learning and children make rapid progress. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from an excellent array of visits and visitors which provides memorable experiences and adds interest and relevance to their learning. Although the school makes a highly valued contribution to cohesion within its community, it could do more to develop the pupils understanding of diversity in society.

The school has visionary leadership that has driven forward improvement since the last inspection. This has resulted in significant development to teaching and the curriculum and the creation of a high quality indoor and outdoor environment. These changes have accelerated pupils' progress and raised achievement. This good track record, coupled with a very accurate self-evaluation, gives the school a good capacity to improve in future.

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

- Raise attainment and improve achievement in mathematics by:

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- raising the profile of mathematics throughout the school
- evaluating the curriculum to establish which areas to improve.
- Strengthen the contribution to community cohesion by:
  - implementing a clear strategy for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diversity within modern society.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils love school, enjoying lessons and working diligently. The large majority approach their work maturely, listen carefully to teachers and focus on the learning tasks provided. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils proudly shared their writing task, which involved describing their feelings if they had been caught cheating. This demonstrated the fact that most pupils command a good vocabulary and, when motivated, apply this to create well written pieces of draft texts. In numeracy, pupils are confident to use a variety of methods to solve calculations but less confident in solving mathematical investigations.

The rate of progress is accelerating and is good overall. This contributes to a growing proportion of pupils exceeding expectations for their age. The increase is because of significant improvements in the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, which are raising attainment at Year 2. This upturn is feeding into Key Stage 2 but is not yet fully impacting on test results at Year 6, particularly in mathematics. The very small numbers in each year group means that trends in attainment need to be interpreted with care. Typically, attainment is above average with strengths in information and communication technology. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress as well as others. The role of teaching assistants is crucial in this success.

Pupils benefit from an ethos which instils the importance of treating others with respect and care. As a result spiritual, moral, social and development has many strengths, although pupils have a relatively narrow picture of cultural diversity. Bullying is reported to be non-existent. Pupils form excellent relationships and make lasting friendships. Initiatives such as planting and harvesting vegetables and participating in inter-school sports develop in pupils a good awareness of the importance of the environment and the link with staying fit and healthy. The large majority attend school regularly and arrive on time.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Good subject knowledge informs effective planning which balances the need to impart knowledge and develop skills with opportunities for pupils to learn for themselves. Lessons have a clear purpose, which everyone understands. This contributes to some excellent assessment procedures that entail pupils participating in evaluating closely their own progress. In most lessons staff give as much support as is needed, then gradually let pupils work more independently. Teachers support learning by skilfully posing questions tailored to match the pupils' ability. This was seen in an excellent lesson in which younger pupils were enthralled by exploring the value of digits in tens and units. Precise and positive reinforcement and praise helped them to feel confident and gain self-esteem. Marking identifies the next steps needed to improve learning. Regular assessments are recorded in English, mathematics and science and used to ensure that teachers have a clear understanding of where pupils are up to and what they need to do next.

The curriculum is being overhauled to reflect more closely pupils' interests. Good attention is given to the basic skills of literacy and information and communication technology but not enough attention has been given in recent years to numeracy. Visionary actions such as providing role play facilities for pupils in Key Stage 2 associated with the theme of the South African World Cup attracts the interest of pupils. Consequently, they feel more inclined to learn and do their best. The school believes that learning does not just happen in the classroom. Trips to places within the locality, for example, to Rufford Hall and further afield to Hawkshead, are carefully planned to enrich learning. Outdoor learning in the school grounds is developing very well with the

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creation of vegetable beds and work to create a high quality wildlife area.

There is an excellent ethos of care running throughout the school due to the dedication of all staff. Pupils feel valued and say that they feel safe at all times.

Each pupil is known and, whenever the need arises, staff do all in their power to support vulnerable pupils and families. Working closely with agencies from health, education and social services, the challenges some pupils face are skilfully managed. As a result attendance has increased and inclusion is outstanding. Clear procedures exist to ease the introduction of children to the Early Years Foundation Stage and to ensure good transition to secondary school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides outstanding levels of vision and dedication to making the school as good as possible. All staff share the same ambition for seeking excellence and work hard to continuously improve. Decisions and changes have a clear impact on the outcomes for pupils. This is exemplified by the way that weaknesses in writing were identified and resolved. All adults are totally dedicated to promoting equality and ensuring there are no incidents of discrimination. Staff share the management of the school together and are involved in its ongoing improvement. Systems for monitoring and collecting evidence are rigorous yet avoid unnecessary bureaucracy. The governing body is very supportive and has a good picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It ensures that all features of safeguarding are maintained to the highest possible level, with outstanding levels of security and procedures for child protection. Cohesion within the local community is very well promoted but is not as evident in the wider context of modern society. Parents and carers are an integral part of the school and are given every opportunity to get involved in their children's education. Much time is given to the school by a host of parents and family members. Very impressive fund-raising efforts make a vital contribution to facilities available for pupils. The school gives good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1

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<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children receive a good start to their school life. The presence of the pre-school group each morning enhances learning for all. It enables interaction between children, promotes their social skills and offers wider opportunities to develop creative and physical skills. Significant improvements since the last inspection to the quality of teaching and the resources for outdoor learning have boosted the progress of children. After starting Reception with levels that are typical for their age, children are currently making excellent progress and are set to leave with above average attainment. Children benefit from good quality support from a talented class teacher and teaching assistants. They know each child very well and use detailed records to monitor their progress. A good balance is struck between adult-led activities and those that inspire children to follow their interests. Limitations of space indoors, however, holds back the richness and diversity of learning opportunities and reduces learning in some key aspects, for example, in role play. Whenever possible, children's learning is enhanced by visits and visitors to school, for example, a wide range of learning activities were derived from a visit to a local garden centre.

The recent introduction of very strong leadership and excellent management is lifting the quality of provision. It ensures that all children are safe and secure at all times and promotes very strong links with parents and carers.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1



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## **Views of parents and carers**

A relatively high percentage of parents returned questionnaires. The large majority were very positive indeed with many comments about the high quality of leadership, the good quality of teaching and the care and support the school provides. A small minority expressed some concerns about the way Nursery children are educated alongside those in Reception. The inspection findings agree that the school provides a good quality of education and that its quality of care is outstanding. It is particularly effective in working with the community so that all pupils can get the best from their time in school. Regarding information about the Nursery provision, the inspection found that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from learning alongside each other.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holmeswood Methodist School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 25 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	61	7	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	61	7	39	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	78	4	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	78	4	22	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	67	6	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	67	6	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	56	7	39	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	78	4	22	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



14 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holmeswood Methodist School, Ormskirk, L40 1UD

The time spent with you was very enjoyable. You attend a good school which is a vital part of the local community. Your behaviour is exemplary. You learn to respect and care for others, develop good skills particularly in English, science and information and communication technology and know how to live safely and healthily. The school does a great job supporting those who find school difficult. Your staff all do their very best to help you.

Your headteacher and staff know each of you very well and give you interesting lessons. The many opportunities you have to visit places outside school as well as to meet visitors to it really adds to the fun of learning. Your pride in the school was impressive to see, as was the way so many parents and carers and members of the community support it.

You get a good start to school life in the Reception. This sets you up well for learning later on. Your interest in the outdoors as members of the eco committee and the way you help in school as councillors adds to way you become mature for your age.

There are two areas that I feel you could do better in and have asked the school to seek ways of doing this. These are:

- to do better in mathematics
- to develop a deeper understanding of the variety of cultures and beliefs in modern society.

You can help by continuing to attend regularly and working with teachers to make sure you achieve your targets.

I wish you all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Byrne

Lead inspector

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