

# Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106446
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	309130
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Onyon

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	195
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Kenneth Baxter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Barbara Hatch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Breaston Avenue Leigh Lancashire WN7 3DJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 672614
<b>Fax number</b>	01942 682367

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: do all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can by reaching challenging targets; and is the school's monitoring of the school rigorous enough in identifying further areas for improvement? Evidence was gathered from analysing data within the school, parental questionnaires, observing lessons, and evaluating the quality and impact of leadership and management by interviewing staff, governors and a random selection of pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school. Whilst the majority of pupils are of White British background the school has recently admitted a small number of children of Travellers and those seeking asylum. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion eligible for a free school meal is above average. The attainment of children starting school in Reception varies each year, but the majority have skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. The school has achieved the Eco Schools Green Flag award and Healthy Schools accreditation.

## 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. Its positive ethos generates excellent relationships and promotes pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents are very pleased with the quality of education and care provided, exemplified by a comment, 'The school has provided my child with a real enthusiasm for learning.' Pupils achieve exceptionally well and reach very high standards, both in terms of their academic and personal development. Their behaviour is excellent. They have excellent attitudes to learning and they are very well prepared for their next stage of education. The school's own self-evaluation is accurate, although modest in its judgement about pupils' personal development and well-being, and successfully informs areas for school improvement. The school gives very good value for money and has an excellent capacity to improve.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress from skills that are well below those expected for their age when they start, although standards are below those expected when they enter Year 1. In Key Stage 1, progress is good. Teachers' assessments show that standards are currently average. There are particular strengths in reading and mathematics and recent improvements mean that pupils also reach standards that are closer to average in writing. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good initial progress, accelerating noticeably in Years 5 and 6. In the national tests of 2006, standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science. In 2007, results are similar and data provided by the school shows that standards in the current Year 6 are high. Pupils overall achievement is, therefore, outstanding. Since the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved and computers are used regularly to support teaching and learning.

The good overall quality of teaching and learning is a key factor in how well pupils achieve. The quality of teaching and learning for older pupils is of particularly high quality. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together so that the pupils' varying needs within each class are met very well. As a result, the knowledge and skills of the more able pupils are extended, whilst the particular needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also met very effectively. Older pupils discuss their learning targets and have a very good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. This helps pupils to focus on their work and gives them regular opportunities to assess their own learning. The process is not as well developed for younger pupils. Throughout the school, teachers check pupils' progress in lessons and provide helpful advice when marking work. Pupils' awareness of targets for improvement, particularly in Years 5 and 6, is a significant factor in the high standards achieved.

The curriculum is good. It is planned to ensure that all areas of learning are effectively covered in the Foundation Stage and to make sure that pupils make at least good progress as they move through the school. There is a good emphasis on developing the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils have ample scope to develop their skills in sport and the arts. Very good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education contributes to the pupils' excellent knowledge and understanding of what is required to live healthily and safely. Recent initiatives have boosted pupils' awareness of environmental issues and of their individual responsibilities for a sustainable future. Educational visits and visitors and a broad range of extra-curricular clubs, enhance lessons well.

Parents offered extremely positive comments that the school is a very caring place. This is supported by inspection findings. Pupils are taken care of very well. The school rigorously

ensures the suitability of adults working with pupils and takes care to provide for pupils' health and safety. Pupils speak highly of the quality of care offered and that school is 'a safe place to be'. The learning mentor works effectively to support the learning and personal well-being of more vulnerable pupils. Those who find learning difficult are well supported and those with gifts and talents are identified and given suitably challenging work. Whilst all staff know pupils well, their use of data about pupils' progress is not as effective in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) as it is in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6).

The school is exceptionally well led and managed. The headteacher has a significant influence on the quality of education provided. She provides a very clear educational direction that keeps the school moving forward. Standards have risen considerably since the previous inspection. Members of staff work very closely together with a strong sense of teamwork. They readily consider new ideas and share the philosophy of encouraging all pupils to do as well as they can. The governing body gives good support to the staff and works with them to monitor all aspects of school life efficiently and accurately. The performance of teachers and the progress of pupils are rigorously and regularly checked. The outcomes of lesson observations and the analyses of pupils' work and test results are used effectively by the senior managers to set realistically challenging targets for pupils' performance across the school. The targets for pupils in the Year 6 national tests are challenging and have provided an added focus to teaching that has boosted standards. Over the last three years the targets for the proportion of pupils reaching above average standards were exceeded.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage is well managed and gives children a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception class. Teaching and learning are good. Good teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants results in imaginative ideas and tasks that are well matched to children's needs. Basic skills are taught well and there is a good balance in terms of the activities that the children select themselves and those that are led and chosen by adults. Children achieve well from low starting points but are still behind standards expected for their age as they move into Year 1. The assessment of children's progress is good and all adults are regularly involved in the process. Children are effectively encouraged to take responsibility for their choices of activity and are developing independence at an early age.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make better use of the data available from tracking pupils' progress to raise standards further in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that all teachers support pupils in achieving challenging targets by giving them clear guidance in how to improve their work.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School, Leigh, WN7 3DJ

Thank you for the friendly welcome you all gave me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my time with you and seeing some of you in lessons. I was pleased to hear about how you had enjoyed your 'Barnabas Day'. What really impressed me was the way you have all worked hard in lessons.

I promised your headteacher and the children I spoke to that I would let you know what I thought. I am pleased to tell you that Bedford Hall is an outstanding school. You do very well in lessons and exceptionally well in tests because you work hard and understand the importance of this for the future. I agree with you that your teachers and other adults make lessons very interesting and that if you need help, you get it.

Your behaviour is excellent and I was very impressed with how polite you are. You benefit greatly from a large number of school clubs. You told me that you feel safe in school and that if problems occur an adult will sort it out quickly when you tell them about it.

There are just two things I would like to happen to make your school even better. I have asked your teachers to use the information they have about your progress to help you to do even better in your assessments at the end of Key Stage 1. You should all be involved in talking about your learning targets so that you know what to do to improve. Keep on working hard so that you can play a major part in ensuring that your school continues to be highly regarded by all who come into contact with it.