

Inspection of Leyland Methodist Infant School

Canberra Road, Leyland, Lancashire PR25 3ET

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

The executive headteacher is Karen Chadwick, who is responsible for this school and one other. The head of school is Nicola Rogerson. The school is part of the Epworth Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Julie-Ann Hewitt, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stuart Ellis.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Leyland Methodist Infant School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as an academy. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff are proud to be part of this inclusive and happy school. Leaders and staff have created strong, supportive relationships with pupils and their families. Pupils feel they are well cared for and are keen to do their best.

From the moment children enter the Reception classes, they are encouraged to follow the school's rules. Pupils understand what is expected of them. They know they need to be 'ready, respectful and safe'. They follow the rules to the best of their ability. For those who may struggle with this, individualised support is offered. As a result, pupils behave well and school is a calm space with little disruption to learning.

The school expects pupils to do well so that they are ready for junior school when that time comes. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy learning new things. They work hard and try their best in lessons. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), typically achieve well in a range of subjects.

Pupils enjoy a broad variety of experiences. Older pupils act as role models for younger pupils. Sports leaders support Reception children with their play during lunchtimes. A range of leadership opportunities ensure that pupils are able to contribute to the life of the school. For example, the school council were involved in the design for the new school logo. The ethos group are actively involved in raising funds for charities both near to home, for example, the local food bank and further afield, supporting a school in Uganda.

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

The school has developed a well-ordered curriculum. Refinements that the school has introduced are having a positive impact. This is particularly so in reading. This allows children from the early years and pupils throughout key stage 1 to build their knowledge securely over time. Teachers explain new learning clearly. They regularly check to make sure that pupils have learned what was intended. As a result, for most subjects, pupils build a secure bank of knowledge over time. Most pupils progress well through the curriculum.

However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum has only recently been refined. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have not benefited fully from the school's redesigned curriculum in these subjects. Gaps exist in pupils' prior knowledge which sometimes go unaddressed, hindering how well some pupils build their knowledge and skills securely over time.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Early on, pupils develop a love of books. In the Reception class children enjoy stories. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about the books they have read. Learning to read is a priority and the school's chosen phonics programme is delivered with consistency and expertise. The introduction of the fluency element of the phonics programme, ensures pupils read accurately and with confidence by the end of Year 2.

From the moment children start in the Reception classes, and throughout Years 1 and 2, there is an emphasis on developing vocabulary. This supports their writing. However, from the early years and into key stage 1, too many children and pupils do not secure effective pencil grip and accurate letter formation. This slows the pace at which pupils become fluent writers.

The school supports pupils with SEND extremely well. It accurately identifies any barriers to learning that these pupils may have. Where pupils need something more individual, this is provided without delay. Carefully considered lesson adaptations means that pupils, where appropriate, access the same curriculum alongside their peers. As a result, pupils with SEND progress well.

The school has designed a well-constructed programme to support pupils' wider development. Pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. They also know how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils learn about the differences between people and families in age-appropriate ways. The transition programme the school has in place means that pupils are well supported, both socially and academically, for their next step into junior school.

Trust leaders and governors have a clear, shared vision. They understand their roles and responsibilities extremely well. Together, they hold the school to account for the quality of education that pupils receive and the outcomes that they achieve.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They feel valued and are appreciative of the considerations the school and the trust take concerning their workload and well-being. Change is managed in a way that does not overwhelm staff and supports them to carry out their roles effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For a small number of subjects, the implementation of the refined curriculum is relatively new. This means that for some year groups there may be gaps in their previous knowledge as some content in the previous curriculum was not as clearly defined. The school should ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge as the result of previous curriculums are addressed so that pupils can deepen their understanding of these subjects over time.
- The school does not prioritise with sufficient rigour the teaching of early transcription and letter formation. This hinders the development of pupils' early writing skills. The trust should ensure that the school gives greater focus to letter formation and pencil grip so that pupils gain the necessary knowledge to become proficient writers.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	150578
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10378053
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stuart Ellis
CEO of the trust	Julie-Ann Hewitt
Headteacher	Karen Chadwick
Website	www.leylandmethodistschools.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Epworth Education Trust. It became an academy on 1 May 2024.
- The school is federated with Leyland Methodist Junior School which is also a part of the Epworth Education Trust.
- This is a Methodist infant school. Its next section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, is due this academic year.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in September 2024.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and

management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector spoke with members of the board of trustees including the chair online. She also spoke to members of the local advisory board, including the chair and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, considered samples of pupils' work and spoke to some pupils about their learning. The lead inspector listened to pupils from years 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also scrutinised curriculum documents and samples of pupils' work in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times in the school day. This included during lessons as well as at playtime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with pupils to ask about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents and carers in their responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff.

Inspection team

Pat Speed, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Suzanne Blay

Ofsted Inspector

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