

Micklefield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107992
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	356286
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Tony Painter

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 of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jennifer Hudson
Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Dodsworth
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited six lessons taught by five different teachers. The inspectors spoke with governors, pupils, parents and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including school development plans, teachers' lesson plans, assessment records and tracking evidence. Responses from staff and pupil questionnaires were scrutinised as well as 34 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether significant variations in pupils' progress still exist through the school.
- Whether recent school actions have halted the declining attendance trend.
- How well the school's assessment systems are being used to help pupils of all abilities to improve.
- How far new strategies are broadening the curriculum.

Information about the school

This primary school is much smaller than the average size. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a small minority of these speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Around 27% of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is above average. A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection and over recent years there have been significant staff changes. The school has Healthy Schools status and a Sustainable School award.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It has increasing strengths and has successfully taken action to address weaknesses identified in the last report. Accurate assessments show standards are rising and this is confirmed through lesson observations and pupils' work. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals, are making at least satisfactory progress. Many are making good progress and detailed data shows most are on track to achieve their challenging targets. Overall attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. However, some pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, are still catching up on past underachievement.

The school shows clear evidence of improvements in most aspects of its work but these have not yet been fully consolidated. For example, much teaching is currently good but progress remains satisfactory because improvements are recent. The improved assessment system gives teachers an accurate picture of how well pupils are doing and most teaching makes effective use of this data to tailor activities to the learning needs of pupils of different abilities. Sometimes, however, tasks are not demanding enough for pupils at different attainment levels to produce the rapid progress needed to eradicate past underperformance. The curriculum has been successfully improved to a good level, with particularly effective action to capture pupils' interests through cross-curricular learning.

The school is particularly effective in giving pupils good care, guidance and support. At the heart of this, all pupils are very well known as individuals and a positive and caring ethos supports them well. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall although much is good and most pupils show positive attitudes to lessons. The school has good systems to deal with any unacceptable behaviour and there is a good balance between sanctions and rewards. Pupils say they are confident that all members of the staff will support them should they have concerns. The school's recent effective action to address declining attendance exemplifies its good systems for care, guidance and support. The overall rate of attendance has risen, although pupils' absences remain too high and, as a result, over time, some pupils' progress has been restricted.

Senior leaders' self-evaluation is secure; they know the school's strengths and have accurately identified the correct areas for development. They are rigorously tackling all areas requiring improvement and their vision for improvement is fully shared by staff and governors. Subject leaders and governors are both playing more active roles in aiding the school's development although this has not yet had enough time to impact fully. The scale of improvements already made provides ample evidence of a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take further action to raise the levels of pupils' attendance.
- Raise pupils' attainment by:
 - sharing the best teaching practice that is currently within the school
 - using assessment information to plan tasks to boost progress where the legacy of past underachievement remains.
- Extend the impact made by subject leaders and the governing body by:
 - providing necessary training and support for widened management roles
 - facilitating opportunities for direct monitoring and feedback.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils make satisfactory overall progress. In lessons, pupils show improving confidence and enthusiasm for their learning. The school's actions to promote speaking and listening are having a positive impact and pupils articulate their thoughts and questions with greater clarity. Pupils show good levels of enjoyment in lessons, particularly where there are strong practical elements. Throughout the school, pupils show greater independence in their learning and increasingly recognise how well they are doing and how they can improve their work.

There is clear evidence that progress is accelerating as a result of effective action to tackle past underachievement and raise attainment. Accurate assessment systems have been established that show that most pupils are now on track to reach the challenging targets set for them. However, past progress through the school has been uneven, particularly as a result of staffing difficulties. Some relative weaknesses in pupils' attainment remain. The school is continuing to remedy these and progress is therefore not consistently good. Year 6 pupils are on track to leave with broadly average attainment; an improvement on recent years, and satisfactory achievement from their below average starting points.

The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities throughout the school is satisfactory. Teachers have good systems to identify those who may need extra help and make sure they do not fall behind. As a result these pupils are now making good gains in their confidence and personal development. Many make increasingly successful progress in their academic work.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and know who they would turn to in the event of any concerns. They willingly take part in the growing range of opportunities to assume responsibilities in and out of school, such as serving on the school council, leading assemblies or supporting local environmental projects. The school's strategies for improving behaviour and dealing with those pupils with emotional and behavioural problems are proving effective, although teachers need to apply these systems more consistently. Nevertheless, pupils' behaviour is improving and pupils fully understand the consequences of their actions.

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Over recent years, attendance rates have declined. To some extent this has been due to a small but significant number of pupils with medical concerns that frequently keep them away from school. However, the school's recent action has had a positive impact and attendance has improved to broadly average. However, low attendance has been a restricting factor in the progress of some pupils.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Many lessons are good and teachers use their positive relationships with pupils and their effective organisation to ensure a good pace to learning. The senior managers' concerted moves to improve the quality of teaching are proving successful. Planning is generally detailed and teachers make good use of the school's marking and assessment systems to help pupils to recognise how well they are doing and how to improve.

Teachers' assessments give an accurate picture of how well each pupil is doing and information is often used well to group pupils within classes. In the best lessons, the learning needs of pupils of different abilities are successfully met through a range of activities that appropriately challenge all pupils. Where teaching is satisfactory, the activities are not sufficiently distinct to challenge all pupils to make the progress they need to make up rapidly for lost ground. The support given to pupils with special educational

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needs and/or disabilities is mostly carefully targeted to aid those whose progress needs to be accelerated.

The good curriculum is successfully enhanced through effective use of the strong partnerships the school has established. As a result pupils' experiences have been widened and they are given opportunities that this small school might otherwise find difficult to provide. For example, one teacher and the site superintendent are qualified to drive the shared minibus, allowing a much wider range of visits to take place. These have particularly enhanced pupils' experiences of a wide range of cultures. Thematic approaches, such as the current work on 'The Chocolate Factory', are helping pupils make good links between learning in different subjects. Pupils' imaginations are captured and they showed excitement and pride as they introduced pupils from other schools to their range of experiments. Pupils enjoy extra-curricular clubs and activities and there is a good take-up of what is on offer.

The school's good care, guidance and support for pupils are based on strong personal knowledge of each individual pupil. Staff have established a very positive ethos and strong relationships at all levels. These ensure that potentially vulnerable pupils have confidence in the school's ability to support them. This approach is making a good contribution to pupils' much improved self-control, personal development and sense of well-being. Actions are closely tracked and the support provided to individual pupils and their families is frequently very effective. For example, recent targeted support for pupils with low attendance and their families has brought about good improvements. Much support makes good use of the well-established partnerships with outside agencies.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Action taken since the headteacher's appointment is improving provision and raising attainment. Senior leaders work effectively together and have clearly set out a vision for the school's continued improvement. School staff, at all levels, are committed to this direction and playing a greater role in bringing about changes. Good systems have been established for monitoring teaching and pupils' progress. These include regular pupil progress meetings where areas where additional support may be required are identified and teachers are held to account for pupils' progress. Accurate analysis of the progress of individual pupils allows the needs of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those known to be eligible for free school meals, to be met and ensures the school promotes equal opportunities well.

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Development planning is based on accurate self-evaluation, identifying appropriate priorities. Resultant actions show some successes, for example, in the reorganised provision for younger pupils, and standards through the school are starting to rise. Planning generally focuses on outcomes and identifies success criteria although these are not always expressed with sufficient clarity to aid the evaluation of successes.

Stable staffing has allowed a new structure of subject leaders to be formed. After initial training, the staff have all made good starts to taking on their roles and are beginning to collect evidence of the effectiveness of provision in their subjects. However, they are not sufficiently involved in observing and evaluating their subjects to aid further school improvements. Similarly, governance has improved and the governing body is increasingly holding the school to account. Governors are playing more active roles, for example, in linking with classes and subjects. They do not, as yet, have strong systems for their own monitoring of school developments and for reporting back findings to the governing body.

The governing body ensures statutory responsibilities are met and the school has secure safeguarding arrangements and systems to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. The school's formal promotion of community cohesion is at an early stage and is satisfactory. However, some early work has been effective and the school is establishing stronger links with the local area; the school is a clearly cohesive community that has effective partnerships with neighbouring schools, community groups and outside agencies. Links with parents are satisfactory. The school provides a very wide range of information to parents and carers about school and their children's progress. There are many opportunities for them to be involved with the life of the school although take-up of these is relatively limited.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter school with overall levels of development that are lower than those expected for their age. Overall satisfactory provision ensures they all make at least satisfactory progress although the setting is quite new and there are strong signs of improving provision and outcomes. Staff have established good relationships that ensure children are happy in their learning and the management of the unit is secure. The caring atmosphere and well-understood routines are promoting good progress in children's personal and social development. They settle quickly, listen carefully, behave well and are keen to learn.

Staff use their understanding of how children learn to devise a wide range of activities covering all areas of learning. There is appropriate provision for outside play that reflects learning in the main unit. Staff work together effectively, and in many activities their effective questioning helps extend children's learning well. Children respond particularly well to the opportunities to work alongside older and younger classmates within the unit.

Arrangements for children to join the school are positive and children's welfare and safety are well supported. There are good opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in their children's development. Records of children's progress are carefully and systematically taken and used in detailed planning although there are some missed opportunities to tailor activities to promote even better progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The response rate to the inspection questionnaire, at 29%, is below the average found in most primary schools. Many parents and carers who responded expressed wholly positive views about the school. However, a number expressed negative views and many included additional comments. Inspectors thoroughly investigated all the matters raised and their findings, when significant, are included within the report.

A particularly large proportion of responses were critical of how effectively the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors reviewed school policies and actions as well as evaluating pupils' behaviour and incidents of unacceptable behaviour in classes and around the school. These findings are also included within this report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Micklefield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary 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 inspection team received 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	44	19	56	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	53	13	38	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	41	16	47	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	32	17	50	5	15	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	15	44	17	50	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	41	18	53	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	44	15	44	2	6	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)	16	47	16	47	2	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	41	15	44	5	15	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	41	8	24	11	32	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	38	16	47	4	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	56	9	26	6	18	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	44	17	50	2	6	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



11 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Micklefield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Leeds, LS25 4AQ

Thank you very much for being so helpful and friendly when we came to inspect your school. I would like to say a special 'thank you' to those who gave up time to talk to us about your work and activities. You told us that you enjoy lessons and that everyone gets on well together and we agree. You are good at staying safe and healthy, you work hard and you understand how you can improve your own work.

Yours is a satisfactory school and it is getting better. All the staff are good at making sure that you are well cared for. Teachers are helping you to make better progress. We saw you are keen to learn and many of you make good progress but we think some of you could still do better. We have asked the teachers to make sure you get that 'extra push' to help you catch up.

We were concerned that some of you have too much time off. Of course we know sometimes you are poorly and cannot attend. However, to make the best progress you are capable of making, you need to come to school as much as possible. We have asked the school to take steps make sure that your parents and carers get you all to attend regularly. You can help by making sure you come!

We have also asked your school leaders to make sure that governors and subject leaders play a bigger part in checking how well things are improving in school.

Best wishes to you all,

Yours sincerely

Tony Painter

Lead inspector

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