

# St Michael-In-the-Hamlet Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133330
<b>Local Authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	364035
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 April 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Johnson

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	424
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Kathy Desmond
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ruth Town
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Neilson Road Liverpool Merseyside L17 7BA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who observed 21 lessons and saw 14 teachers. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and analysed national test data and the school's own assessments, policies and governing body minutes, samples of pupils' work and documentation relating to curriculum and safeguarding. Also taken into account were 118 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff members and pupils.

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

- The progress made by potentially vulnerable pupils throughout the school to confirm that they are suitably challenged.
- The strengths in areas of provision and their impact on pupils' personal and academic outcomes.
- The accuracy of the school's evaluation of its Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

The large majority of pupils in this larger than average-sized primary school are White British. An above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased in the past two years. There are a few pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has established a unit, with funded provision, for up to eight pupils diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). The first pupils joined the unit from other schools on day one of the inspection.

The school has achieved Healthy School status, Activemark and the advanced level of the Inclusion Charter Mark.

**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**

**1**

## Main findings

This is a good school. The outcomes for pupils are outstanding, primarily due to the exceptional quality of their personal development that results from excellent care, guidance and support. Good teaching and an effective curriculum ensure pupils' good progress and achievement.

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. When they start Nursery their skills are below expectations for their age. They are well provided for by a skilled team of teachers and assistants and children make good progress. Leadership of this area of the school is outstanding.

Pupils' attainment is average at the end of Year 6. In English, it is close to being above average. Attainment in mathematics, while improving, is not as high as in English and remains an area for development. In particular, this relates to pupils' ability to carry out mental calculations quickly and accurately and to their application of mathematical skills in practical problem solving.

Pupils enjoy lessons because they are mostly interesting and offer good challenges. In a few lessons teachers' creative approaches lead to some outstanding teaching. A developing, engaging curriculum which includes an exceptional range of enriching opportunities outside lesson time, gives a good impetus to pupils' learning and enjoyment. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is managed well. Individual learning plans are carefully constructed to meet specific needs and those pupils make good progress. The school is very well prepared for the integration of pupils from other schools into the new unit for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.

The outstanding work of leaders and managers has enabled the school to build extremely well on previous strengths by steering it through a period of continual development. The school's pursuit of further improvement is relentless and is reflected in its current plans. Since the last inspection the school has improved significantly. Aspects of leadership, the curriculum, the quality of care, guidance and support, assessment, and teaching and learning have all seen good levels of improvement. Pupils' well-being receives a high priority and its safeguarding procedures are exemplary. All staff share in the process of the school's accurate and highly effective self-evaluation. Leaders are fully aware of where further improvements are required, for example in attainment in mathematics. The school demonstrates outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:

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- ensuring greater pace and challenge in developing the pupils' capacity to carry out mental calculations
- ensuring pupils receive frequent opportunities to apply mathematics learning in practical ways.

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

**1**

Pupils' attentiveness and their exemplary behaviour and attitudes in lessons ensure that they learn well. Pupils say that mathematics and writing are among their favourite subjects but are equally keen on other lessons and rise to the challenges provided, especially when practical work is involved. They work well together in groups and sometimes help one another to assess the quality of their own work. Pupils successfully adapt their writing skills to different purposes and audiences but are less accomplished in applying mathematical skills when solving practical problems.

Throughout the school pupils make good progress and achieve well. There is a rising trend to pupils' average attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Robust checking of each individual pupil's progress and swift intervention where needed, ensure that there is no underachievement. Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress well under the precisely targeted care and provision they each receive. A measure of the school's success is seen in its assessment data which clearly show that attainment gaps between groups of potentially vulnerable learners are steadily closing and have been eliminated for some. The rate of progress made by those known to be eligible for free school meals is also good.

Pupils' excellent behaviour and other outstanding personal qualities mean they feel entirely safe in school and enjoy the very best of relationships within a culturally harmonious school community. They are adamant that there is no bullying and have an extremely well informed knowledge about possible risks linked to their health and safety both in and out of school. They are exceptionally considerate of one another and conduct themselves extremely courteously as they move around the school. Pupils are fully aware of the importance of a sensible diet and make excellent use of sports clubs and playground facilities to ensure they have lots of exercise. All are very aware of other essential aspects, such as personal hygiene, and say that they stick to healthy choices of diet at home. Pupils' average attendance and rising attainment, combined with their personal qualities mean that they are prepared well with the skills they need to secure their future economic well-being.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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>1</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

In the large majority of lessons planning is good and takes account of pupils' varying abilities by providing the right levels of challenge. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and their expectations of pupils are high. Learning objectives are shared clearly so that pupils know what is expected of them and are motivated to achieve the lesson target. Excellent relationships are established in lessons. Pupils know that their contributions to lessons are valued so, consequently, they are more willing to 'have a go'. Resources are used imaginatively to engage pupils in practical work and help keep them alert. A particularly good example was in a science lesson where pupils became 'crime scene investigators' and had to use their sense of touch to identify and classify materials with similar properties. Occasionally, pupils are not engaged in practical learning quickly enough because they have to listen to the teacher for too long. Sometimes planning does not focus sharply enough on what pupils will be better at by the end of the lesson. Teachers' marking is mainly helpful and gives clear pointers to improvement but this is not consistent throughout the school. Teaching assistants work very effectively with teachers and make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning.

The curriculum is tailored well to pupils' needs and enables them to achieve well. Pupils' skills in literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) are encouraged through well-planned lesson activities. In numeracy there are not enough opportunities for mathematical investigations and for pupils to apply their learning to practical problem

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solving. There is also a lack of a consistently sharp focus on the development of pupils' mental speed and agility. Pupils excel in sport and physical education and there are impressive displays of pupils' art work around the school. Their learning and personal development are greatly enriched by an outstanding range of clubs and other activities. Pupils especially value activities involving use of the local environment.

Parents overwhelmingly endorse pupils' views that the school provides exceptional care, guidance and support. Productive links with external agencies, as well as high quality internal training for staff, ensure that those pupils who are potentially the most vulnerable have their needs fully met. The clear guidance given to pupils is reflected in outstanding personal outcomes. Rigorous monitoring of attendance is bringing about steady improvement. Parents are more than happy with the systems in place for communication with the school and with arrangements for their children's transfer to the next phase.

*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	2
<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 dynamic leadership of the headteacher has motivated leaders and managers at all levels and established a highly cohesive and effective team that is fully committed to school improvement. All staff members know how they are accountable for the school's improved performance. Extremely robust monitoring of teaching quality, carefully directed support for teachers and very astute appointments have all contributed to significant improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection. Highly successful professional development has resulted in some teachers leading in other schools in management and subject leadership roles.

The governing body carries out its responsibilities to the highest standard. An agreed performance management strategy, linked closely to the school development plan, means that monitoring of the school's performance is highly focused. Members of the governing body are extremely well informed about the day-to-day business of the school and engage very effectively with parents, pupils and staff. All staff very strongly promote equality of opportunities and equally strongly oppose all forms of discrimination. Challenging targets are set and there is no complacency in ensuring that pupils, equally, get the opportunities they need to achieve their personal best.

The measures taken to safeguard pupils are outstanding. Systems are reviewed and updated regularly with very effective use of technology to monitor and control access to the site and internal areas of the school. Policies link all aspects of safeguarding clearly. Those with specific responsibilities have an excellent understanding of safeguarding issues and ensure that all colleagues and pupils are informed of the parts they must play in

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protecting the safety and well-being of all who use the school. Community cohesion is promoted well. Positive action in the light of the school's understanding of its ethnic, religious and economic characteristics engages pupils effectively. Pupils reflect on the contacts they have with other schools and realise the value of their endeavours to communicate with pupils in Nepal or to support, financially, a library for pupils in Guatemala. Considerable involvement with local schools provides good opportunities for pupils to compare and contrast their cultural lifestyles.

*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
<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>1</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that their learning and development progresses well. Activities are well planned and resources are used creatively to provide many exciting challenges, particularly in the outdoor areas. Staff members promote language and personal and social development very skilfully by punctuating children's exploration and play with questions and examples which help them to reflect on what they do and to make choices about how they can progress further. Teachers are quick to seize upon children's interests to help them learn. A rewarding lesson about shape, space and number, for example, resulted from children's purposeful work of making 'sandwiches' for the 'Royal Wedding'. Daily lessons on letters and the sounds they make are planned well to match differing stages of understanding but, occasionally, the pace of the lesson slackens and not all children are fully engaged throughout.

Provision for children's welfare is outstanding and is one example of the impact of the excellent leadership of this stage. Children and their parents and carers are warmly welcomed into a stimulating and friendly environment. There are ample opportunities for parents and carers to find out how they can help their children at home and to contribute



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to their development of knowledge and skills. Relationships between home and school are outstanding. There is exemplary practice in safeguarding and all staff members display the highest aspirations for the children in their care. They are totally committed to the recent innovative way of managing the large numbers of children in two parallel Early Years Foundation Stage units. Although the initial signs herald much promise, it is too early to measure the full impact in terms of sustained outcomes for children.

*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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

A small minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Of those, a large majority indicated that they are entirely happy with the school. Some commented on how pleased they are with the additional care for their children. A few parents and carers commented mostly about the management of pupils' behaviour. Inspectors followed up these concerns by scrutinising the school's policies and records and evaluating the actions taken by the school. All concerns raised were discussed with school leaders while ensuring the anonymity of parents and carers was protected. Inspectors found that the school manages pupils' behaviour very effectively.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Michael-In-the-Hamlet Community 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 424 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	69	32	27	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	82	69	35	30	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	61	52	48	41	6	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	66	56	43	36	5	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	77	65	37	31	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	49	49	42	6	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	58	44	37	4	3	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)	53	45	48	41	9	8	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	52	46	39	6	5	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	42	52	44	4	3	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	44	50	42	5	4	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	62	53	47	40	6	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	71	60	41	35	2	2	3	3

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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"> <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 pupils' 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.**



3 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Michael-In-the-Hamlet Community Primary School, Liverpool, L17 7BA**

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave to my colleagues and me when we came to inspect your school recently. It was a real pleasure to talk to you because you are so polite and well mannered. In fact we agreed that your behaviour and other aspects of your personal development are outstanding. You are certainly proud of your school and enjoy lots of exciting activities. We shall remember what fun your playground party was for a long time. It was definitely a 'royal' celebration.

St Michael's is a good school. You make good progress in your work and achieve well. The standards you reach in English and mathematics are improving. They are average, but could be higher, especially in mathematics. We agree with you that your lessons are fun. Your teachers work hard to make them so. The grown-ups in school take excellent care of you, and your headteacher and all other school leaders do outstanding work in helping your school improve.

Nevertheless, inspectors think that it could be even better so we have asked your school leaders to do something to help that to happen. We have asked them to help you to reach higher standards in mathematics by making sure that you speed up and improve your mental mathematics skills and give you more chances to use your mathematics skills to solve practical problems in and outside the classroom.

You can help by continuing to work hard and enjoy school as much as you already do.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson

Lead inspector

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