

St Michael's Church of England Nursery and Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113407
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	378700
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Alison Cogher

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	443
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Williams
Headteacher	Martin Harding
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 May 2009
School address	Church Street Kingsteignton Devon TQ12 3BQ
Telephone number	01626 352854
Fax number	01626 334379
Email address	admin@st-michaels-pri.devon.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons and observed 15 teachers. Parents and carers were spoken to and meetings were held with the headteacher and other school staff with leadership responsibilities, with members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including pupils' progress tracking data, evidence of the school's self-evaluation, curriculum planning information and pupils' work. They also analysed questionnaires from staff, pupils and 139 from parents and carers.

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

- How well boys and pupils born in the summer months are supported to attain well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
- The extent to which pupils take responsibility for their own learning and the match of the curriculum to the needs and abilities of all pupils.
- How well leaders at all levels use assessment and monitoring information to secure school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and a very few speak English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. There are an above-average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school has very recently been federated with St Catherine's Church of England (VA) School in Heathfield. The school has been accredited with the BECTA award for outstanding commitment to information and communication technology (ICT), the Healthy School Plus Award and the full International 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

St Michael's is an outstanding school. 'The school has exceeded our expectations and staff are extremely professional and give so much care and attention to pupils and their parents too,' and 'I am really happy with the progress my children are making and they are really happy at school,' were typical of the views expressed by the very large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. Since the last inspection, the school has unstintingly focused on improving the quality of education it provides. As a result, teaching has improved and the excellent curriculum provides an exceptionally wide range of learning opportunities that supports pupils' academic and personal development very well. Pupils use their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills with confidence to support their learning in other subjects. The school's Christian values, including the promotion of personal and social responsibility at all times, supports pupils of all ages in developing a 'can do attitude' to their learning.

From levels of development that are typically below those expected on entry, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make equally good progress because of effective teaching and the school's very strong inclusive ethos. By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average and pupils' overall achievement is good. School-based assessment data and pupils' current work show that there is no marked difference of attainment between boys and girls or those born at different times of the year in any year group. Typically, pupils' behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. They make an outstanding contribution to their school community, readily accepting roles of responsibility such as eco-school counsellors and peer mediators. Attendance rates are above average, and pupils report that they feel extremely safe at school and that they enjoy being there. Pupils' above-average attainment and their outstanding personal development ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly reflects the school's Christian ethos and high expectations.

Teachers make good use of assessment opportunities in lessons and pupils' progress information to plan activities that move pupils' learning forwards at a good pace. This includes specific targeted support for individuals and groups of pupils who need additional help. Clear marking procedures and focused written and oral feedback ensure pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve. Too little time is provided, however, for pupils to take more responsibility for their day-to-day learning through checking their own and each other's work.

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Pupils are actively encouraged to contribute their ideas in lessons but have few opportunities to develop their independent learning skills by generating their own questions and ideas for investigation in class topics.

The headteacher has succeeded in securing a shared commitment to continuous improvement, and morale is exceptionally high. Staff and members of the governing body are highly reflective and work extremely well together. The first-rate governing body is exceedingly well informed and provides a purposeful and appropriate balance of challenge and support for the school. School self-evaluation procedures are robust and the judgements made are accurate. Action planning for improvement makes very good use of the evidence gathered and is sharply focused on improving outcomes for pupils so that they are all supported to do their very best. A very strong improving trend has been established, particularly in respect of pupils' progress and attainment. This, together with the significant improvements made since the last inspection, demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity to improve further.

Although at an early stage, the links being forged with St Catherine's Church of England (VA) Primary School are already very constructive and developing rapidly. The partnership work with this school and extensive links with the Church, other schools, and organisations and businesses in the local and wider community ensure pupils benefit from experiences the school alone could not provide. The school is a highly cohesive community with firmly established connections in the local area and excellent links with other schools nationally and internationally. Community cohesion is first-rate. The school adopts extremely effective safeguarding procedures and promotes equality of opportunity outstandingly well. A very wide range of procedures are in place to keep parents and carers informed about how well their children are doing and how they can support their learning, resulting in their very high levels of confidence in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning by:
 - planning opportunities in lessons for pupils to check their own and each other's work
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to contribute to the planning of their own learning by posing questions and identifying their own lines of enquiry, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils respond enthusiastically in lessons and work very well together. They are particularly well motivated when teachers generate a real excitement for learning. For example, having modified the story of *The Little Red Hen*, Year 2 pupils used actions as well as words to tell their story. Boys and girls, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, all fully engaged in the activity and their

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enjoyment of their learning was very evident in their smiles and enthusiasm. Similarly, Year 5 pupils worked cooperatively and with good humour to explore the importance of being very specific when writing instructions for others if a task is to be completed successfully. Pupils are very comfortable with the use of ICT as a tool to support their learning and use digital cameras and personal notebooks with confidence.

Pupils are polite, courteous and keen to contribute to discussions. They are willing and able to respond sensitively to the differing ideas and views of others. Typically, their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. The exemplary work of the peer mediators illustrates the exceptional level of respect pupils have for each other and their willingness to modify their behaviour in response to the needs of others. Consequently, break-times are very enjoyable social occasions. Pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe and the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle is exceptional. They enjoy their healthy snacks at break-time and a very large proportion of pupils walk or cycle to school. Large numbers of pupils take part in the many and varied sporting activities on offer during and after school. These features are reflected in the school's Healthy Plus award. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the school and wider community through the roles and responsibilities they take on and the very strong links to the Church and local groups. The school has been very proactive in ensuring pupils are provided with high quality, first-hand experiences of the richness and diversity of communities in other parts of the United Kingdom and in the wider world. This is reflected in St Michael's International School award.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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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How effective is the provision?

Good teaching is the norm at the school and whole-school practices are largely consistently implemented. Occasionally, time is not managed effectively and in these lessons, pupils lose focus and the pace of their learning slows. Teachers use their good subject knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn most effectively, to plan stimulating lessons that are well matched to pupils' needs. Activities are varied and resources, including the school grounds, are used well to motivate and engage pupils who generally work hard to complete tasks. Well-briefed skilled teaching assistants work very closely with teachers and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Good use is made of questioning to check pupils' understanding and to correct any misunderstandings. Very productive relationships ensure a real sense of purpose in classrooms that supports pupils' good learning.

An extensive range of experiences are provided that enrich and extend pupils' learning. Visits are eagerly anticipated and the school's national and international links challenge pupils to consider less familiar aspects of the wider world. For example, as part of a whole-school project, pupils investigated housing in other countries and how the materials used reflect the cultures, weather and environmental conditions found there. Connections between subjects are actively pursued and ensure pupils' learning is grounded in relevant experiences. The use of ICT is extremely well embedded, reflecting the school's award in this area, so pupils use it as a tool to support their learning. For example, when considering how written instructions for washing hands should be ordered, pupils in Year 5 took a series of digital photographs to aid their thinking.

The school is extremely inclusive and pupils are known as individuals. They receive exceptional levels of care, guidance and support that are much appreciated by pupils and their parents or carers. The school counsellor provides pupils and their families with specifically tailored programmes of support. This work has secured some very positive outcomes in, for example, increased attendance rates and levels of self-esteem that have resulted in markedly improved learning for pupils. Exceptionally close working links with outside agencies ensure pupils receive extra support when they need it. Transition arrangements are extremely well managed so pupils move on confidently to their next school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

A very strong culture of teamwork pervades the school and there is a very clear shared vision for the school's future development and that of the school it is federated with. Monitoring and evaluation information, including the analysis of data, is used extremely well to guide the planning for whole-school improvement and has driven the work that has secured improvements in the curriculum and overall quality of teaching. The contribution made by the governing body to this work is extensive. Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to actively work with the school to support their children's learning. Their views and ideas are keenly sought and valued. Safeguarding procedures exceed the recommended good practice guidelines. These are reflected in the excellent provision made to ensure pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, the work undertaken by the school counsellor and other staff to ensure pupils' safety in and around the school and when out and about in the community. The governing body is proactive in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's safeguarding practice on pupils' well-being.

The school's very strong Church links are particularly supportive in underpinning pupils' spirituality and the very supportive moral and social code that is woven throughout all aspects of the school's work. Wider well-established links help to ensure community cohesion is excellent. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress is used to identify pupils at risk of underachieving and those who need specific additional support. This information is used unswervingly to set challenging targets for improvement and to evaluate the impact of teaching. An improving trend of pupils' progress and attainment, and of the quality of teaching, has been firmly established as a result of this approach, and plans to move the school forwards further in these areas are underway. This, together with the extremely effective use of resources and deployment of staff, demonstrates the school's highly effective promotion of equality of opportunity for pupils and the outstanding value for money it provides.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction procedures and effective teaching ensure children settle quickly and happily when they start school. Systems to ensure children are cared for extremely well reflect those found in the rest of the school and mean that children feel safe and well cared for at all times. Teamwork is strong and all adults work well together to manage children in a consistent and supportive way so they develop into confident, well-behaved individuals. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and the focused teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills ensures children are well prepared for their work in Year 1. Assessment information is used well to guide the planning of activities so that children find them interesting and engaging. For example, children in the Nursery enjoyed talking together and making a group picture as they recalled their experiences of Bonfire Night. Reception children worked together to create a musical composition using their voices to represent the sounds made by fireworks. They were excited to learn the meaning of the word 'crescendo' and responded with enthusiasm and understanding as the teacher conducted their performance. Good quality resources are well targeted to support children's learning and, in the main, the planning of activities ensures children's experiences are broad and reflect their interests and experiences. However, too few activities are planned that encourage children to explore and investigate for themselves or to use their imagination, particularly in the outdoor area. Clear and accurate self-evaluation guides planning to keep improvement moving at a good pace.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are pleased with their children's experiences at school. A very large majority of those responding believe that the school keeps their children safe; that their children enjoy school; and that teaching is good. Positive comments included, 'Our children are achieving well academically, socially and emotionally thanks to the hard work and dedication of staff – we are thrilled.' Inspection evidence confirms these positive views. A very

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small number of parents and carers expressed concerns but these were specific to individuals and did not reflect the views expressed by the vast majority.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Michael’s Church of England Nursery and 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 139 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 443 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	59	51	37	4	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	88	63	46	33	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	81	58	51	37	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	61	46	33	2	1	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	96	69	37	27	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	81	58	46	33	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	91	65	44	32	2	1	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)	71	51	58	42	0	0	3	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	83	60	46	33	3	2	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	79	57	55	40	0	0	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	64	46	59	42	1	1	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	88	63	46	33	2	1	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	103	74	32	23	3	2	1	1

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 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"> ■ 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.



9 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Michael's Church of England Nursery and Primary School, Kingsteignton, TQ12 3BQ

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome during the inspection of your school. We appreciate the time you took to talk to us and were impressed with your politeness. It was good to hear that you enjoy being at school.

We think your school is outstanding. Your behaviour is excellent, you look after each other very well and you work hard. You are making good progress and this is getting even better so you are reaching above-average standards in your work. You receive outstanding care and support in school so you feel very safe and really enjoy being at school and each other's company. You are very good at taking on responsibilities and so make an extremely valuable contribution to the quality of your school. You are taught well and the planning of your work and activities means that you can learn in an interesting way. Your school is very well led and managed, and all the staff and governors are working extremely hard to ensure it continues to support you to achieve as well as you can.

Even outstanding schools can get better, so we have asked it to make some improvements.

- You are to be helped to check your own and each other's work so that you can spot and correct any mistakes.
- You are to be involved more in the planning of your work, and will be asked what you would like to find out and the questions you would like answered.

All of you can help your school by continuing to behave really well, by working hard and sharing your ideas with your teachers and each other.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cogher
Lead inspector

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