

# St Michael's Church of England Controlled Junior School

Church Lane East, Aldershot, GU11 3SS

**Inspection dates** 18–19 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Effective leadership and management have brought rapid improvement to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Teaching and learning are good, with outstanding teaching being seen. Some particularly good feedback to pupils helps ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Achievement is good. Pupils progress well and attainment is above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils say they feel safe and adopt positive attitudes to their work. Attendance is high.
- Leaders have a very clear strategic vision for the school, including continued improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Monitoring of the school's performance is good and very widely shared among leaders, including governors. Consequently, the strengths of the school and areas for development are well known.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Inconsistencies exist between teachers in the quality of their planning of work for pupils of different abilities. Similarly, at times some teachers talk for long periods during lessons and this hinders learning.
- There are some shortcomings in the extent to which pupils are encouraged to become independent learners and take responsibility for their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors heard pupils read, looked at pupils' work and observed 15 lessons.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, including analysing school data relating to pupils' progress and attainment levels. The school development plan, curriculum and lesson plans, governing body documentation, school policies and procedures, particularly those relating to the health, safety and safeguarding of pupils, were scrutinised.
- The team ascertained the views of 49 parents and carers through consulting the Parent View website as well as examining the most recent school parental questionnaires. Staff questionnaires were also considered.
- Discussions were held with governors, leaders and other school staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority.

## Inspection team

Michael Pye, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Ann Behan

Additional inspector

Stephen Schwartz

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average junior school.
- It has below the expected number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of pupils at school action and school action plus are below average. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly average. The main needs of these pupils relate to specific learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- Pupils come from a predominantly White British background. The next largest minority ethnic groups consist of pupils from Pakistani and other Asian backgrounds.
- Privately-run breakfast and after-school clubs operate on the school site.
- The government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, are exceeded by the school.

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

- Build on the improving attainment and progress of pupils through eradicating the inconsistencies in teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
  - plan appropriately challenging work for pupils of different abilities
  - conduct short, sharply focused introductions to lessons.
- Develop pupils' independence of learning by providing consistent opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning and learn about what constitutes a good learner.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Traditionally pupils enter Year 3 with attainment levels that are broadly average. This year standards on entry have risen.
- Unvalidated results for the Year 6 2012 national tests show attainment in English to be above average and in mathematics to be well above average. This reflects good progress for pupils given their starting points and includes pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Girls did better than boys in writing although as a consequence of school actions, such as new resources, the gap between them is closing. Lesson observation confirms this current picture of boys being more fully involved in their learning and making similar progress to the girls.
- Data analysis reveals that pupils increasingly accelerate their progress the older they get. While there is a slight dip in the progress of a minority of Year 3 pupils this has been identified by the school and actions have been planned to tackle this.
- The school tracks rigorously the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Interventions, especially one-to-one work, are very effective in supporting pupils facing difficulties with their learning. Consequently, they progress in line with their peers. In lessons, proactive work by learning support assistants helps ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Lower attaining Year 3 readers recognise words, and segment and blend their sounds so as to pronounce difficult words correctly. However, their comprehension skills are less well developed and this inevitably slows their progress in other subjects.
- Pupils read regularly during guided reading sessions. These deliver varied opportunities for pupils to explore a wide range of texts. As a result they support the rising reading standards well. Lower attaining, older readers are able to refer to characters in detail, and explain significant themes accurately in the books they are reading.

### The quality of teaching is good

- A strength of the teaching lays in the quality of marking and feedback given to pupils. In English and mathematics, teachers provide effective guidance about the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to respond to teachers' comments and to carry out self-, and peer assessment. However the quality of the pupils' responses is variable and reflects the need for pupils to become more aware of what constitutes good learning.
- Central to good lessons is the way teachers build challenge for the pupils. In one outstanding English lesson they quickly moved their learning from identifying definitions of words to discussing the significant aspects of persuasive writing.
- However, not all teachers consistently plan work that challenges pupils of different abilities. For example, in one mathematics lesson based on investigating numbers, high attainers were well challenged when asked to find the highest and most common factors, but the exercise for other pupils was less effective and their progress slowed.
- Good relationships between pupils and adults help ensure that pupils are willing to engage in their learning. At times, inconsistencies exist in the extent to which teachers maximise this willingness. Overlong introductions and a tendency for too much teacher talk limit the degree to which pupils are encouraged to become independent learners and take responsibility for their learning.
- Teachers use questioning well to explore the knowledge and understanding of pupils.
- The better lessons have good pace. Time targets and information and communication

technology (ICT) are well used to focus pupils' attention. A Year 4 history lesson saw pupils enthusiastically using computers to research the life of Mother Teresa.

- Talk partners are well used to involve pupils in discussing the questions raised by teachers.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Behaviour during the inspection and over time is good. Pupils adopt positive attitudes and show a pride in their work. Parents and carers also believe that behaviour is good.
- Pupils are courteous and respectful to adults and their peers. They listen well to the contributions of their peers during lessons.
- Pupils state that they feel safe. They understand the meaning of bullying and say that although some infrequent bullying takes place, the school, once informed, deals quickly with it. Parents and carers confirm this.
- Pupils also have a good understanding of how to stay safe, and willingly participate with governors in walking the school site to check on health and safety issues.
- One reason behind the good levels of behaviour and high quality of relationships is the consistency by which teachers apply the relevant policies and procedures. There are high expectations of behaviour and these are recognised by pupils, parents and carers.
- Pupils want to be fully involved in lessons. However, there are inconsistencies in how often teachers maximise the independence of pupils and challenge them to research and problem solve. On occasions there is minor off-task behaviour when a few lessons become too teacher led for prolonged periods.
- Pupils are very willing to help and are eager to accept responsibility. They act as school councillors and family captains. Older pupils readily take on the role of young leaders and encourage and help the younger pupils.
- The school has a positive ethos and in this safe environment pupils settle quickly to their work and are able to concentrate on their learning.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- A clear vision based on improving teaching and pupils' progress has been effectively shared and developed with staff.
- Ownership of this vision is reinforced because a wide range of adults are involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. Year leaders, for example, are involved in drop-in sessions to lessons, carry out data analysis and share good practice, for example the use of highly focused learning targets for pupils.
- Such monitoring and evaluation lead to accurate development priorities being identified. Leaders, at all levels, know the school well. Subject coordinators are proactive in identifying new initiatives and then monitoring their impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Teaching has also benefited well from ongoing lesson monitoring by senior leaders.
- Regular pupil progress reviews raise staff accountability as well as helping to identify pupils who need further support.
- Improvements to teaching, attendance and pupils' outcomes, along with an effective curriculum, reflect a good capacity to sustain improvement.
- Leaders have overseen the development of a good, broad and balanced curriculum. Topics give good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge. In topic work pupils use ICT to design pie charts and graphs relating to the depth and cross-section profile of the local river. Writing is well developed through extended pieces of work, for example that relating to Boudica.
- The spiritual and moral development of pupils is particularly well addressed when they write empathetically about evacuees in the Second World War.

- Performance management is embedded. Targets are challenging, especially those relating to pupils' progress. They address well the development priorities of the school as well as the professional development needs of staff. The local authority has provided a good level of support to the school, including staff training opportunities.
  - Parents' and carers' involvement is well addressed through family homework, and their views sought during social afternoons. Partnerships such as the sports partnership benefit pupils well, as does the science work conducted with older pupils by secondary school teachers.
  - Progress meetings are effective in ensuring inclusion and equal opportunities for pupils. The school is also committed to ensuring that pupils eligible for the pupil premium access the full curriculum. This includes the residential trips that undoubtedly contribute to pupils' social and personal development.
  - Leadership and management are not outstanding because despite the improvements, including secure safeguarding arrangements, there still remain inconsistencies in teaching to be addressed.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development because they visit, receive reports from subject leaders and communicate well with pupils, parents and carers and staff.
    - Governors challenge the school well over issues such as the quality of teaching and the progress and provision for pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs. Not all yet have a sufficient knowledge of progress data to allow them to raise questions about pupils' outcomes.
    - Statutory duties are met, particularly regarding health and safety and safeguarding issues.
    - A strategic decision has been taken to allocate the pupil premium budget to predominantly provide skilled staff to work alongside these pupils and ensure that they continue to progress well..
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## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116333
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401590

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	371
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Tom Moore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynne Hignett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22–23 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 322933
<b>Fax number</b>	01252 331688
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-michaels-jun.hants.sch.uk



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