

St Michael's East Wickham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wrotham Road, Welling, Bexley, DA16 1LS

Inspection dates 18–19 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- St Michael's is a friendly and inviting school where pupils thrive. The leadership and management of the school are highly effective and valued by most pupils and parents and carers.
- From the time they enter school pupils consistently make rapid progress to reach above average standards.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average including in Level 6 writing. The amount of progress pupils make is high compared to national averages.
- Effective management of performance and professional development have resulted in outstanding teaching. This has resulted in an increasing number of pupils achieving Level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and enjoy helping each other to learn and be happy. As a result, attendance is above average. Pupils feel safe and show a huge amount of respect and responsibility toward one another.
- The governing body has a wide range of skills which it uses well to ensure that the school is the hub of the community and maintains consistently high outcomes for all pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons of which four were jointly observed with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a number of other lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, representatives of the governing body, local authority, diocese and independent advisors. The inspection team also took account of the 28 responses to staff questionnaires.
- Forty responses to Parent View and feedback from parents and carers during the inspection were also taken into account.
- Inspectors observed and talked with pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes and in lessons. They also held more formal meetings with pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' work, looked at school policies including those on safeguarding, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's monitoring and planning documents.

Inspection team

Narinder Dohel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Michael's East Wickham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is an average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.
- Approximately 10% of pupils currently in the school are eligible for funding through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families). This includes three looked after children. There are no pupils from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average and the proportion supported through school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school is part of a partnership of 10 Anglican schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the use of information on achievement and establish developments in marking so that standards continue to rise even further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils achieve exceptionally well in English and Mathematics.
- By the time pupils leave school, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently above the national average. They also make progress that is significantly higher than the national average in these subjects.
- Children join the school in the Reception class with levels of skills and knowledge in line with expectations for their age. Children make excellent progress in all areas of their learning and development. Progress continues to accelerate in reading, writing and mathematics so that by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in these areas is typically above the national average, particularly at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Almost all pupils make rapid progress as they move through the school.
- Pupils with learning difficulties receive excellent support from skilled and committed support staff as well as from teachers. Consequently, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make very good progress.
- The average points score for those eligible for the pupil premium is at least as strong and in some cases greater than that of their peers in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. It is significantly above the national average in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The teaching of phonics (the blending and segmenting of the sounds that letters make) is taught exceptionally well and contributes to the high outcomes in the Year 1 checks, pupils' confidence and high standards in reading and writing.
- The outstanding quality of learning and progress made was seen in lessons observed during the inspection, as well as in the school's record of information on pupils' learning. For example, in a lesson about shape and number for younger pupils, the teacher skillfully used drama, description and creative resources to capture pupils' enthusiasm and imagination so that they were able to gain new learning and demonstrate and apply what they had learned.
- Teachers track, report and discuss their checks on pupils' progress and attainment well. Leaders are now looking to ensure that their information on achievement is detailed enough to ensure that standards continue to rise even further and more pupils attain at the highest levels in reading and mathematics as well as writing.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to 'Parent View' agree that their children make good progress and are taught well at the school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching over time is typically outstanding and as a result pupils make rapid gains in their learning. This is because all teachers know the needs and abilities of pupils well. They have high expectations of all pupils and a secure understanding of the subjects and topics they are teaching.
- Teachers are ambitious for their pupils and plan lessons that create excitement for learning and provide opportunities for using what they have learned to solve problems. For example, some younger pupils were asked to smell, taste, feel and observe spaghetti to generate descriptive language. In another lesson pupils were expected to show the methods of calculation used to solve problems of multiple addition and subtraction.
- Teachers make the aim of the lesson, and how to achieve it, clear. Teachers display and consistently refer back to these learning objectives and success criteria. This, coupled with attractive and stimulating displays enables pupils to check their achievements and make gains in their learning. It also helps teachers to notice any difficulties pupils may be having, so that

they can support, correct and extend pupils' learning.

- Adults provide pupils with careful guidance on how to improve their work. An excellent example of this was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson where pupils were asked to use their senses to improve their descriptive writing. Every conversation with a pupil helped develop their skills and understanding.
- Support by adults both inside and outside the classroom is particularly effective in developing pupils' reading and comprehension skills. Where adults work with smaller groups the work and teaching strategies used are changed to best meet the needs of the pupils.
- Typically teachers' marking provides helpful comments showing pupils how well they have done and giving examples or next steps in how to proceed. The school is developing a system to further improve feedback and the time allowed for pupils to reflect on their learning and respond to marking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils are extremely helpful and welcoming to visitors and each other. They get on very well with each other and show great respect for one another. They use their own judgement in knowing how and when to help others, and when to seek the help of adults.
- Pupils take part in learning with enthusiasm and are quick to help each other in their work. This is typical across the school from the youngest pupils to the oldest both inside and outside of the classroom. Their social and emotional skills are highly developed.
- Pupils play and learn together in a very positive and happy atmosphere. The established Christian values of the school are embodied in pupils' everyday behaviour resulting in a developed awareness of thoughtful behaviour. This ensures that there is no form of discrimination shown by the pupils.
- Pupils say they feel safe, well cared for and 'are treated as individuals'. They are well informed and very knowledgeable about different types of bullying and keeping themselves and others safe in and out of school. They are especially well informed about e-safety and cyber bullying. School records show that there have been extremely few instances of bullying.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive that their children are well looked after and feel safe. They say that 'all the staff in the school including the kitchen staff know all of the children'.
- Attendance is above average and there are no children who regularly miss school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Outstanding leadership is demonstrated through the ambitious drive and determination of the headteacher and senior leaders. They strive for excellence in pupils' academic, social, moral, cultural and spiritual development. As a result, pupils at St Michael's make outstanding progress to attain at the higher levels and attainment has been consistently above the national average for several years.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, communicate a consistent drive for the highest outcomes. Because of this, staff are highly motivated, work closely as a strong team and are well supported in developing their own skills and expertise through regular discussions and feedback about their work.
- There are robust systems in place for the management of teachers' performance. Objectives are linked directly to the standards that pupils achieve and this has resulted in improving the quality of teaching, maintaining high standards and providing effective professional development.
- The school's development plans and self-evaluation of its work are accurate, focused and supported by detailed action plans. Staff and governors work together to produce, review and evaluate these.

- Systems for checking pupils' progress are well established and help direct the support and resources that pupils need to make gains in their learning and ensure there is strong equality of opportunity. Senior leaders are looking to secure further refinements in how this information is explained and used to help the school to continue reaching high standards.
- The way in which subjects are organised makes an exceptionally strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are excited and enthused by opportunities to experience residential trips to outdoor activity centres, play musical instruments, enter sports competitions and learn about different faiths and cultures from visitors.
- The school receives light-touch support from the local authority and diocese. The school benefits from the professional development planned within its strong partnership of Anglican schools. The headteacher and governors also commission a range of professionals to review aspects of its work.
- The school meets all statutory safeguarding requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors work in close partnership with the headteacher. They use their skills and experience to inform and impact on the direction and work of the school and are continuously looking for ways to maximise impact on outcomes, such as the development of the outdoors and Early Years environments. They play a rigorous role in managing the performance of the headteacher. They understand about the management of teachers' performance and how it must be used to improve the quality of teaching and how it is linked to any pay awards or addressing underperformance. This has resulted in consistently outstanding achievement. Regular and detailed discussion about the performance of pupils and the quality of teaching takes place and is supported by the headteacher's report to governors. Governors are aware of the pupils that are eligible for pupil premium funding and that any additional funding is spent on building teaching resources for their benefit. They know that this has resulted in these pupils achieving at least as well as their peers in school and higher than their peers nationally. Governors visit the school regularly. They meet with the headteacher, speak with pupils and lead collective worship. They have a close working relationship with staff, a good understanding of the work of the school, of pupils' performance and of the school's finances. Governors also undertake and seek training opportunities that help them to support the school strategically and to ask challenging questions about performance.

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

Unique reference number	101475
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	402852

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Lay
Headteacher	Mr Richard Varney
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2008
Telephone number	020 8303 3287
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