

Saint Michael's CofE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)

Constantine Drive, Stanground South, Peterborough, PE2 8GA

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
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.

- Pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- Interesting learning experiences for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage help them to make good progress in their learning.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan lessons that help all groups to make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are particularly very competent in working with groups and individuals. They question pupils skilfully and help disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to make good progress.
- Pupils behave well around the school, and their good attitudes to learning support their good progress. Pupils say they feel safe in the school and all parents responding to the online survey agree.
- Leaders, managers and governors, well supported by all school staff, have ensured teaching and achievement have developed quickly and are good.
- The headteacher has established a team of staff who are committed to her vision of the school being at the heart of the local community.
- Governors are very supportive and have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- On occasion, teachers do not make sure progress is rapid. Teachers do not always use questioning effectively to involve pupils in their learning or to develop their thinking.
- Teachers do not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work so they can focus on this in lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six part-lessons; all teachers were seen teaching twice. All observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- The 14 responses to the online Parent View survey were scrutinised along with the views from parents who attended the school's coffee morning. The returns from 10 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work, reviewed records of pupils' recent attainment and progress, and looked at work in pupils' books. A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's evaluation of its work, its plan for improvement, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and safeguarding, behaviour and attendance records.

Inspection team

Susan Williams, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school opened in September 2012 with pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1. The school now has a Reception class, a mixed-age class for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and a mixed-age class for pupils in Years 3 and 4. In January 2014, pupils in Years 1 and 2 will be taught in single-age classes.
- The majority of pupils are White British. A fifth of pupils are from other White backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups, is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual time is much higher than found nationally.
- The school is situated in the middle of a new housing development. At the time of the inspection, only approximately one third of the houses it is planned the school will serve had been built.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is outstanding overall by:
 - ensuring learning proceeds at a brisk pace through carefully monitoring pupils' understanding in lessons and adapting activities when necessary so that progress is rapid
 - teachers asking pupils more searching questions which involve more pupils and develop their thinking
 - helping pupils to develop a clear understanding about what they need to do to improve their work so they can focus on this in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. Pupils' good attitudes to learning support their good progress. The school has not been open long enough to establish a track record of pupils' achievement through published national test results. Test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2013 reflect one year, at most, of the school's input into the pupils' education and do not convey a true picture of pupils' attainment and progress. From observations during the inspection and scrutiny of pupils' work, attainment for most pupils is at least similar to the levels expected for pupils of their age.
- Children enter the school with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. The teacher plans a wide variety of activities to support the development of children's skills and to interest them in learning. For example, phonics (letters and their sounds) was linked with the school's Nativity story performance. Children drew pictures and wrote about the Nativity story, and some acted out scenes which helped them to make good progress. In 2013, the majority of children reached a good level of development, preparing them well for moving into Key Stage 1. This represents good progress from their starting points.
- The school has focused on developing reading and making this high profile with pupils and parents. Pupils say they enjoy reading and read regularly. They are very positive about the 'beads' they receive for reading at home and how this is transferred into merit points and gives them the opportunity to receive prizes. Pupils make good progress in reading across the school with many pupils reaching standards above those expected for their age. In the phonics (letters and sounds) screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2013, most pupils reached the expected level.
- The pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding receive a wide range of help dependent on their assessed needs and circumstances. This includes one-to-one support, extra help in class and in small groups. These pupils are well supported and make good progress throughout the school.
- Pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times are also well supported and make good progress during their time in the school. More-able pupils are supported well with work which is well matched to their abilities and helps them to make good progress. All groups, including White British and other White pupils, make good progress which shows how the school promotes equality of opportunity for pupils' learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive high-quality help and this supports their good progress. In lessons, teaching assistants work with individuals and small groups, expertly questioning pupils, making learning interesting and explaining work clearly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good across the school, and equally strong in literacy and numeracy. This supports pupils making good progress. There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils. Well established routines support learning and ensure little time is wasted in lessons.
- Pupils have opportunities to discuss and share ideas with each other, engage in whole-class sessions, work in small groups or work on their own. Teachers plan lessons well and provide work for pupils that is at the right level. They ensure there is a clear, logical structure for lessons

which helps pupils with their learning. For example, in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher guided pupils through discussions and activities which helped them understand the topic and prepared them for their writing.

- The use of teaching assistants throughout the school is a real strength. For example, in a literacy lesson on nonsense poetry for pupils in Years 1 and 2, teaching assistants worked with small groups on specific activities which helped the pupils develop their writing while the rest of the class were given a further challenge.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is also good. A particular strength here is the wide range of activities which are provided to support learning. For example, in a Reception session some children were involved outside drawing numbers to ten while others were involved in writing numbers; some used computers to play counting games and some were involved in sharing sweets between two people linked to the Nativity story, which the children enjoyed.
- There are a few occasions where progress is not as rapid as it could be because pupils spend too long on the same activity even when they have achieved a good level of understanding. This is because teachers do not monitor closely enough pupils' progress and as a result work is not always adapted to either provide support or further challenge when necessary. Teachers' questioning does not always build effectively on pupils' learning or develop their thinking fully. Pupils are keen to do well and work hard, but teachers do not make it clear to them how exactly they can improve their work so they can focus on this in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning in lessons. They follow instructions and engage with activities quickly. They work well on their own or in groups. Pupils help each other when working and listen attentively to each other's ideas in class discussions. These positive attitudes support their good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good around the school, in assembly, as well as during break and lunchtimes. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. Pupils themselves say behaviour is good in the school and all staff agree with their view. The vast majority of parents responding to the online survey support this view, as did all parents who attended the coffee morning. School records confirm there have been very few incidents of poor behaviour since the school opened.
- The school works very hard to ensure pupils who join the school mid-term are made to feel welcome and quickly become part of the community. Pupils are made aware of who will be joining them so they can welcome the new pupils into the school. This has ensured a sense of community in the school despite a degree of pupil turnover considering the school's size. Pupils themselves choose to pray for pupils who have left in celebration and remembrance of them. The school is effective in promoting good relationships and ensuring there is no discrimination.
- Pupils say they feel safe in the school and are not concerned about bullying. They know about different types of bullying, including name-calling and physical bullying. They are confident they can go to teachers for help but do not perceive this as an issue in the school. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe, for example, when crossing the road or if approached by strangers. All parents responding to the online survey said their children feel safe in the school.
- Pupils are punctual to school and to their lessons. Pupils show how they enjoy school by attending regularly, and attendance is higher than usually seen nationally in primary schools.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school being at the centre of the local community. She has embraced the local community using the premises as well as setting up a church at the school. She provides strong leadership, has high expectations of staff and maintains a strong focus on pupils developing and achieving well. All staff are committed to the vision of the headteacher. The vast majority of parents responding to the online survey and all parents at the coffee morning believe the school is led and managed well.
- The headteacher has established a team of staff who support each other to drive improvement in the school. Staff at all levels take on leadership responsibilities sharing leadership of subject areas and key stages which is supporting the development of leadership capacity in the school. This has been effective in ensuring consistency of practice in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children take part in a wide range of activities which support their development and good progress.
- There are clear systems for the management of the performance of staff. Targets are set annually linked to pupils' progress, the teaching standards, leadership and management and individual training. These are reviewed throughout the year. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and consistency of practice.
- Staff have developed the subjects taught across the school as a team giving priority to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum is enriched with visitors and trips. For example, pupils have had visitors including the fire brigade and a storyteller, as well as trips to the seaside and opportunities to go pond-dipping.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. In the first year of opening, the first group of pupils worked with an artist to design a cross in metalwork which hangs in the school hall and establishes a legacy for the school. Pupils learn about different cultures and have the opportunity for regular reflection and prayer. Teachers develop this in lessons giving pupils time to reflect on key issues.
- The school has effective plans to use its sports funding. Specialist teachers from a local secondary school are to work alongside staff in the school to develop their expertise. Pupils will have the opportunity to take part in mini-Olympic and multi-sports events with other schools to widen their participation in sport. There are plans to increase the range of clubs on offer and to purchase an outdoor mini multi-gym for pupils to use on a daily basis to improve their general health and well-being.
- The local authority has provided effective financial support to the school to help it deal with the changing pupil numbers. In addition, support has been provided to help the headteacher develop teaching and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage which has been effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors use their professional expertise to support and challenge the school. Governors have been keen to develop their skills and have attended regular training on a wide range of aspects of governance. They know about the published data on the school and regularly discuss the progress that pupils are making. They are aware of how pupil premium funding is being spent and the difference this is making. They know about the management of performance of staff and the quality of

teaching in the school. They sign off pay awards for staff whose performance is strong and who meet targets. They are aware of what support is being provided to improve teaching. They ensure safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

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	136514
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	425154

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	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bryant Latham
Headteacher	Jackie Ashley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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