

# St Michael's Church of England Controlled Infant School

Park Road, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3PU

**Inspection dates** 5–6 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The expertise and aspirations of the headteacher and leaders at all levels have sustained, and improved upon, high standards in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics since the previous inspection.
- Skilled governors consistently and effectively challenge and support leaders. This has helped to secure outstanding teaching and achievement.
- Pupils of all abilities and from different backgrounds make excellent progress from their various starting points.
- A high number of the most-able pupils reach levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that are beyond those expected nationally by the end of Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress because of outstanding leadership in this area of the school's work.
- Extra funding is exceptionally well used to support disadvantaged pupils, resulting in attainment that is as high as other pupils in the school and above other pupils nationally at the end of Year 2.
- Provision for the early years is excellent. All staff work very effectively together. They ensure that children make a confident start, enjoy school and maintain outstanding progress. As a result, children are more than ready for the challenges of Year 1.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Extremely rigorous and consistently applied procedures ensure that pupils are very safe, secure and well cared for. This view is fully supported by parents.
- Teachers have high expectations of both work and behaviour. Teaching is exciting and challenging, developing in pupils a real eagerness to learn. This is reflected in pupils' exemplary behaviour and above average attendance.
- There has been significant improvement in the provision for pupils' cultural development since the previous inspection. Appropriate to their young age, pupils now demonstrate a very good understanding of different cultures and the importance of British values and democracy.
- Inspectors found relationships within the school to be very strong. All adults set an excellent example for pupils to follow. The school is an exceptionally happy and inspiring place in which to learn.
- Parents echoed this view and shared their very positive views with inspectors and their high level of satisfaction with the school. Pupils are well prepared for their move to the junior school.
- The school's website meets statutory requirements but would benefit from more detailed information for parents about the teaching of basic skills.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors looked at learning in 22 lessons and observed nine teachers. They were accompanied for some observations by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Teaching assistants were observed working with individual pupils and small groups. Inspectors attended assembly, talked to pupils about their work and life at school, and heard individual pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and analysis by the school of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. Records of checks on the quality of teaching and the minutes of the governing body meetings were examined.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and classes, especially writing and mathematics.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A meeting took place with a school adviser from the local authority.
- Questionnaires from 32 members of staff were analysed and considered.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 51 online responses from Parent View, a letter from a parent and informal meetings with parents at the school during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Wynford Jones, Team inspector	Additional Inspector
Suzanne Cawson, Team inspector	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Michael's Infant School is larger than the average-sized infant school. Most pupils attend from the local area.
- All children in the early years attend the Reception classes on a full-time basis.
- All pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. A few of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- The school organises a breakfast club. An after-school club is available, but it is privately run and was not a part of this inspection.

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

- Develop the school's partnership with parents by providing more information about the curriculum on the school's website, especially with regard to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The relentless drive and strong ambition of the headteacher, along with all other leaders over the last five years, has ensured that the school has built upon its high performance at the previous inspection. Governors and leaders consistently challenge and support each other to provide the best possible education for all pupils. Through this highly effective leadership, the school demonstrates its strong capacity to continue to sustain outstanding performance in all areas of its work.
- The local authority offers appropriate light touch support by checking pupils' progress to ensure that the school's data are accurate. The school works very closely in a strong partnership with other schools in the area and the local authority to share expertise. For example, Year 1 teachers are currently working together with nearby schools to improve the teaching of number in mathematics. Other groups of teachers meet regularly to develop their skills as subject leaders and senior leaders for the future.
- Exemplary behaviour flourishes in the school because of excellent relationships and imaginative teaching. High levels of challenge and expectation in work and attitudes abound. As a result, pupils develop a love of learning and thirst for knowledge at an early stage in their education. This makes a significant contribution to their outstanding progress.
- Robust use of performance management for teachers and regular checks on the quality of teaching mean that weaker teaching has been eliminated. Teachers have a very clear knowledge of the high quality of teaching expected and the progress pupils are expected to make. Senior leaders check pupils' progress very regularly to make sure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Middle leaders have worked effectively with all teachers to ensure a rapid rise in standards in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, skills to teach reading have been successfully disseminated to other adults who support pupils' reading throughout the school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in fostering good relations and in offering particular programmes to support pupils with a wide variety of complex learning and behaviour needs. No pupil is discriminated against and all are provided with equal opportunity. This allows those in the early stages of learning English and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs to make the same excellent progress as all other pupils.
- The additional pupil premium funding is used very effectively to provide, for example, extra adult help in smaller groups for number work and writing and one-to-one reading practice. This well-organised help means that disadvantaged pupils reach the same high standards as other pupils.
- The curriculum is exceptionally well planned. It includes many rich, first-hand and memorable experiences, such as visits to Bird World, an outdoor science activity centre and the local forest. Basic skills are very well practised. Pupils' books show clear evidence of this across a wide range of subjects.
- The school has rigorously addressed the issue from the previous inspection concerning pupils' understanding of the diverse cultures that exist in Britain today. This is a very inclusive school where all pupils now enjoy many opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures. Pupils from minority cultures who attend the school are encouraged to share celebrations of their festivals, such as the Chinese New Year and Eid, with other pupils. They bring artefacts and clothes from home to bring celebrations to life. All pupils took part in a major multicultural event in the local town. These opportunities to learn about different cultures prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Alongside the strong provision for pupils' multicultural development are woven opportunities for pupils to learn about democracy and British values. These are promoted very well through, for example, discussing and devising class charters and respecting the right of all pupils to learn. Pupils value voting for school councillors and the Good Citizens Award presented weekly in assembly.
- Pupils' understanding of right and wrong is well developed through learning about the 'rule of law'. Discussions about keeping the 'golden rules' in school and on the playground and why we have rules make a significant contribution to pupils' excellent behaviour.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is particularly well used. Teachers have benefited considerably from professional development. Gymnastics and outdoor games lessons observed during the inspection were very well taught using high quality equipment. Teachers are confident in their teaching and, as a result, pupils' skills are improving quickly. Pupils are keen to be active.
- The welfare of all pupils is paramount to all members of staff. School safeguarding procedures are known very well by everyone and rigorously and consistently applied. Well-developed safe systems were observed, for example, when a pupil arrived late and another required medicine in the middle of the day.
- The school engages with parents exceptionally well. This was demonstrated by their high satisfaction with the school, indicated through both the school's very recent questionnaire and the inspection questionnaire

Parent View. Parents who spoke to, and wrote to, inspectors were highly complimentary of the school's work. Information regarding the curriculum on the school's website meets statutory requirements. The partnership with parents would benefit from more detail about how the school teaches reading, writing and mathematics.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are very committed to their own development. Since the previous inspection, they have commissioned their own review into the work of the governing body to ensure that it meets the same outstanding quality as other aspects of school leadership. The outcome has enabled them to hone their skills in regularly asking leaders challenging questions, as well as supporting developments.
- Governors' frequent visits to the school and the attention the governors give to a wide variety of reports, presentations and training mean that they are very knowledgeable about the school's performance. Governors keep abreast of how well different groups of pupils are performing against national standards. They know about the quality of teaching and are very aware of how performance management is being used to tackle underperformance and reward good teaching in relation to pupils' excellent achievement.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. School records show that there have been no exclusions since the previous inspection. Racist incidents, bullying and seriously challenging behaviour are extremely rare. Pupils who might otherwise have difficulties in behaving well are very well managed and successfully supported in their efforts to improve.
- Rewards and sanctions are well known to pupils. They agree that the loss of 'golden time', a coveted reward of free time in the classroom, is 'shocking' and almost never needed. They really enjoy being named as Citizen of the Week in assembly.
- Pupils display an eagerness and love of learning by their constant wish to challenge themselves in lessons. They are very clear about the school's expectations and are very well behaved for all adults in the school.
- During the inspection, pupils were observed working exceptionally well in groups in lessons when not directly supervised, and there was no low level disruption to learning of any kind. Some pupils told inspectors that school is 'a fun place' to be. Their above average attendance echoes this.
- Pupils move around the building in a quiet and self-controlled manner. Their behaviour in assembly was exemplary. They get on exceptionally well together on the playground and enjoy their responsibilities as playground buddies which they take very seriously. The Lunch Bunch club is run by an assistant very experienced in managing behaviour. It successfully provides help for a very small minority of pupils in managing their own behaviour who otherwise might find the long lunchtime play difficult to sustain.
- The breakfast club is well led and managed. It is safe and secure. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they enjoy eating and playing together. This provision enhances pupils' social development.
- The whole-school community is modelled on respect. Adults provide an excellent model for pupils and, as a result, pupils are thoughtful and kind towards each other and to adults. The school is a quiet, harmonious place in which to learn.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and parents fully support this view.
- Pupils explained very clearly about internet safety. They are fully involved in safety routines in school. They help to check the safety of the site, armed with clipboards, and take part in risk assessments before going, for example, on visits to the local forest. They demonstrate a very good awareness of safety within the school building as they walk very sensibly in the long corridors.
- Pupils say there is no bullying, but they know exactly what to do if there is an unpleasant incident, saying it is 'nasty, mean and cruel' and they know 'to be tough, walk away and tell a teacher'. They very confidently explained what to do if they are in any kind of difficulty.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The high standards pupils achieve and their excellent progress are because the quality of teaching is outstanding over time. There is a strong consistency of excellent practice throughout the school in the

way teachers manage their classes.

- Teachers set high expectations within a culture of 'only the best will do'. This is made very clear to pupils and, as a result, their behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent, providing a very positive classroom atmosphere in which to learn.
- Classrooms are orderly, but vibrant. Displays proudly celebrate pupils' work and there is helpful information on the walls for pupils to use to support their tasks.
- At the beginning of lessons pupils know what they are to learn because teachers explain tasks very clearly. Well deployed teaching assistants and teachers settle pupils to work quickly and no time is wasted.
- All pupils are fully engaged and enjoy their learning. Challenging tasks are suitably pitched to meet the needs of pupils working at different levels. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and leads to outstanding progress in lessons.
- Pupils find work demanding but not daunting, so they are eager to learn. They respond very well to questions and any extra challenges set by teachers.
- Teachers are skilled at adjusting tasks and plans for learning, both during a lesson and when checking how well pupils are learning over time.
- Probing questions mean that pupils have to explain their answers, giving teachers the opportunity to assess pupils' understanding and address misconceptions.
- A wide range of high quality resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), for example Ipads, and interactive whiteboards as well as digital microscopes. These resources are used very effectively to enhance and support learning.
- As a result of teachers' expertise and excellent subject knowledge, pupils develop skills, knowledge and understanding rapidly and make accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 2 were effectively challenged in mathematics by a number line with missing numbers. They demonstrated being able to count competently in multiples of three.
- Reading is particularly well taught. A small group of the most-able pupils, for example, was observed engaged in exploring a demanding text. The group demonstrated excellent prior learning when supplying 'nervously' and 'cautiously' as replacements for the word 'anxiously'.
- The marking of pupils' work is consistent across the school. It is especially effective in the teaching of writing. Teachers identify very clearly for pupils the next step they must take to improve their work. Pupils understand the comments and respond positively. They correct spellings and other grammatical errors or try to enrich the language they have used.
- An emphasis placed on working together, sharing ideas and talking through problems supports pupils in developing their social skills. Homework tasks are set appropriately to practise basic skills, especially reading and consolidating pupils' knowledge and understanding of number facts.

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress in their Reception year. This is maintained and built upon throughout their time in Years 1 and 2.
- Results for the national screening check for phonics (the sounds that letter make) in Year 1 in 2014 were similar to the national average. Because the starting point for many pupils in language and communication skills is lower than might be typically expected, it takes extra time for some to acquire the necessary phonic skills. However, assessments showed that by Year 2 almost all pupils had reached the expected standard.
- In 2014, assessments for pupils in Year 2 showed standards to be significantly above the national average in all three areas of reading, writing and mathematics. These high standards have been maintained for the last five years.
- School information and pupils' work seen during the inspection confirm that standards continue to be high this year.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils reached the same standards in reading, writing and mathematics as other pupils in the school. Compared with other pupils nationally, they reached standards a term above in reading and writing and half a term in mathematics. School information this year shows again that there is no gap between this group of pupils and other pupils. They make the same outstanding progress as others.
- Some disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have very complex learning needs. They are exceptionally well supported and included in all the school offers. As a result, they make outstanding progress from their various starting points.



- Pupils told inspectors they enjoy reading, and they make excellent progress. Clear evidence of this was apparent as they discussed their favourite authors and recommended books they liked. Reading records show that they read often at school and some read regularly at home. Less-able pupils use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make, blending and segmenting unfamiliar words successfully. The most-able readers observe punctuation correctly and are confident, fluent and expressive readers.
- A significant number of the most-able pupils reach a higher level than is expected in all three areas of reading, writing and mathematics. For example, pupils were particularly challenged when working in pairs on a challenging task in mathematics to find the answer to nine multiplied by five and to explain the method they had used.
- Pupils have excellent opportunities to practise their literacy skills in other subjects. Work in their books is of a high standard, neatly presented and demonstrates that these young pupils take a great pride in their work.
- By Year 2, many pupils spell most simple words correctly and make very good attempts at more ambitious language. Most are joining their handwriting neatly and developing accurate punctuation over time. They write for a range of purposes, such as letters, diaries and reports in other subjects with increasing competence.

### The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children join the school with skills that are mostly typical for their age, although their language and communication and physical development are weaker than other areas of learning.
- Teaching is outstanding. As a result, the proportion of children reaching above the expected level in each area of learning by the end of the Reception year is substantially higher than the national average. All groups of children achieve very well and make exceptional progress.
- Leadership and management of the early years are excellent. All adults work effectively as a strong team, ensuring that children are kept safe and secure and enjoy school. They are looked after extremely well.
- Children are warmly welcomed into calm, well organised classrooms and relationships are excellent. They quickly and confidently engage in all the activities offered to them and their behaviour is exemplary.
- Planning is detailed and covers all areas of learning, with a clear focus for activities both indoors and outside. Children are curious and motivated to learn because activities are stimulating and fun.
- Adults support children very well during times when they choose their own learning, extending their thinking skills and promoting speaking and listening to increase their vocabulary. Children sustain concentration well at these times and become absorbed in their chosen activities.
- Children's physical development is enhanced by opportunities to use the balancing bars, a slide, swing-bridge and climbing equipment in the outdoor area.
- Children were observed making excellent progress with their mathematical development during a teacher-directed time. Maths Monkey arrived to help children count to 15, to recognise missing numbers in the number line, to count backwards and to record the number. Children were entirely engaged and captivated by the monkey puppet and listened intently to the teacher. The teaching assistant supported the most-able children with an even more challenging activity to enable them to make accelerated progress.
- During writing time, children's language skills were thoroughly extended by the teacher. The children enthusiastically joined in a discussion to provide a description of a troll. From the picture of the troll they built sentences and phrases in readiness for their writing. Children used their knowledge of sounds to correctly spell many three letter words, such as 'has', 'his' and 'end'.
- Systems for checking children's progress are well established. Examples of children's work are collected regularly and used to assess how well the children are doing and to plan what steps they need to take next. These 'learning journeys' form an important record of each individual child's development throughout the Reception year. They show that children are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1.

## 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>	116332
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448792

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	265
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Victoria Rogers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Liz Mathias
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 February 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 324300
<b>Fax number</b>	01252 311012
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@st-michaels-inf.hants.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2015

