

St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Somerville Road, Bournemouth, BH2 5LH

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's strong leadership has brought about good improvement over the past year. He is ably supported by the senior leadership team and governors.
- Systems for checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are regular and rigorous. The information is used effectively to set improvement priorities that tackle weaker aspects. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Teaching is good. Basic reading, writing and mathematics skills are effectively taught.
- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is broadly average and has improved in the last two years.
- Reception children successfully gain the important literacy and mathematics skills they need. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils who might be at risk of underachieving, such as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. By Year 6 many have caught up well with their peers.
- The school successfully supports pupils who speak English as an additional language. Their progress is good. Once they learn to understand English well, their attainment quickly catches up with that of their classmates.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted very effectively. Their behaviour is good and pupils are adamant that bullying does not happen. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school.
- Governance is good. Governors hold leaders to account well. Their monitoring of the effectiveness of steps to improve the school further is excellent. They have a very secure knowledge of teaching quality and pupils' progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Opportunities are missed to help some pupils make faster progress. Pupils are not always expected to explain the methods they use or the reasons for their answers to deepen their understanding of their work.
- Sometimes staff give pupils too much advice on how to complete their group or individual activities. This limits pupils' ability to apply their skills in new work, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Some middle leadership roles are still developing. Not all leaders are skilled in analysing the evidence on pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 22 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were jointly observed with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to group or individual activities that were helping pupils who had fallen behind to catch up. They listened to some pupils read during group-reading activities and scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work. Inspectors also visited some extra-curricular activities and the breakfast club.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff including senior and middle leaders. A conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 88 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke to a small number of parents bringing their children to, or collecting them from, school.
- Responses from the 66 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. They looked at documents related to planning and monitoring and safeguarding. They considered the school's joint working with the Bournemouth Septenary Trust.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Una Maria Stevens	Additional Inspector
Bruce Waelend	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Michael's is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. It has increased in size considerably since the previous inspection. There are now three classes in each of Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3, and two classes in other year groups. The school will continue to admit at least three classes in Reception over the next three years. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- There have been several changes in leadership since the previous inspection. In the past year the school has appointed two new assistant headteachers.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. A much higher proportion of pupils than is seen nationally speaks English as an additional language. A considerable range of languages is spoken.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school between Reception and Year 6 is much larger than is seen nationally. The large majority of those pupils who join the school speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is slightly below average. This additional funding is to provide extra support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school provides before- and after-school care. This was also inspected.
- St Michael's Pre-school shares the site. This is inspected separately.
- The school is part of the Bournemouth Septenary Trust. This is an alliance of seven local schools which support each other's monitoring and improvement work, including in governance.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise teaching quality and pupils' achievement through:
 - encouraging all those pupils capable of doing so to make faster progress and help more to exceed the levels expected for their age
 - ensuring pupils are able to explain their work, especially why and how they have used a particular approach or method, to deepen their understanding
 - enabling pupils to apply their writing and mathematics skills in different situations and in solving mathematical problems without having to rely so much on adult advice.
- Extend the strategies in place to increase the effectiveness of middle leaders, such as year leaders, especially by improving their skills in analysing evidence on pupils' progress and attainment.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's strong leadership has seen the school successfully address the issues which led to pupils' attainment declining last year. Changes in the senior leadership structure have considerably supported this. The senior leadership team supports school monitoring and improvement well.
- As the school has grown in size, the number of leadership roles has necessarily increased. Those who fulfil the relatively new roles of assistant headteachers have been highly effective. Some middle leaders, for example subject or year leaders, are still developing their skills, especially in data analysis.
- Staff show strong commitment to the school. They have ably supported leaders in the drive to improve pupils' progress and attainment. They have contributed to a culture where teaching and pupils' behaviour are good.
- Systems for checking the effectiveness of teaching and pupils' progress successfully collect and collate a wide range of evidence. Those for checking teaching quality very effectively focus on whether staff have addressed weaknesses identified earlier. Leaders and governors have an accurate and comprehensive view of each teacher's practice.
- Strategies, such as coaching and mentoring by skilled teachers, and opportunities for professional development ensure that teaching is good in all year groups and continues to improve. Teachers at the beginning of their career are effectively supported. Their skills improve well and, if they remain on the staff, many become skilled practitioners supporting others.
- Leaders and governors strongly promote equality of opportunity, foster good relationships and discourage discrimination. In this highly diverse school community, pupils from different cultures or backgrounds thrive.
- The pupil premium is used successfully, mainly by providing extra teaching or programmes of work, to help improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Both leaders and governors keep a close check on its effectiveness.
- The primary sport grant is allocated effectively to improve teaching quality and widen pupils' experiences. Consequently, pupils have greater opportunities to take part and develop skills in a wide range of sports such as fencing or lacrosse.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements. Staff and governors are well trained in this aspect, for example in child protection or the vetting of staff. The school environment is very safe and immaculately maintained. Pupils are well looked after in the successful before- and after-school clubs.
- The curriculum effectively supports pupils' academic and personal development and engages their commitment to learning. Strengthened programmes to develop important literacy and numeracy skills this year, in order to reverse the dip in attainment, have been very effective. The promotion of writing skills in topic work, for example, has resulted in some high quality work. Visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning experiences.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values, such as tolerance and respect, is very good. As a result, excellent relationships are evident among the pupils from diverse backgrounds. This prepares pupils especially well for their future life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are very committed to the democratic process. For example, the school councillors are very good at taking into account all pupils' views when choosing playtime resources.
- Parents are very appreciative of the school. They willingly provide support, for example in contributing to pupils' work at home.
- The local authority has supported the school well over the past year. Its officers have provided good literacy and numeracy support and challenge to help raise attainment. Their accurate view of the school supports their judgement that St Michael's will need less support in the future.
- The work of the Bournemouth Septenary Trust effectively supports evaluation and improvement work. For example, the schools' joint scrutiny of pupils' work and validation of progress data have helped to improve teaching quality at St Michael's and to raise pupils' attainment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There is strong expertise among the governing body that allows members to hold leaders to account and support them well.
 - The way governors make checks on the school's work is especially well organised through the working parties focusing on specific improvement priorities. They work very effectively with staff in monitoring and development in these areas. As a result, they have a good understanding about the quality of teaching.

- Governors are well trained, for example in safeguarding and understanding national and school progress data. Some governors have considerable expertise in data analysis. Governors are very well placed to compare the achievement of St Michael's pupils with other schools locally and nationally.
- Governors make sure that arrangements for managing the performance of teachers fully meet requirements. Governors are well informed, including through their own monitoring, as to why leaders are recommending salary increases for effective staff. This ensures they only reward good performance. They know what procedures the school would take to tackle any underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and work hard.
- Lessons are hardly ever interrupted by poor behaviour but, on a few occasions when teaching fails to engage their interest, some pupils lose concentration.
- Behaviour in lessons and when moving around school is exemplary. Relationships between pupils are excellent. Younger pupils greatly admire the older ones, who they say are very kind and helpful.
- Pupils are unfailingly polite, well-mannered and courteous. They are very proud of their school and take pride in their own work.
- Pupils have numerous opportunities to take on responsibility, for example as school councillors who consult their peers effectively about many aspects of school life. Younger pupils report that the older pupils are excellent at looking after their welfare at playtimes.
- The few pupils who find it difficult to behave well all the time are effectively supported. Their behaviour improves successfully over time. Exclusions are rare.
- Poor attendance is dealt with very successfully. Attendance levels are average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The site is very secure. Pupils are well looked after. Parents are rightly confident that their children are safe and secure at all times. Safety procedures are regularly reviewed. Some are currently being updated.
- Pupils are well aware of the different forms that bullying can take, including racial bullying, which they unanimously agree is totally unacceptable. Pupils report that any bullying is almost unheard of. They have very strong confidence in staff being able to sort out any problems swiftly.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep safe. They have a strong sense of road safety. This is important because of the very regular use made of nearby facilities like the local library. Pupils are made well aware of how to avoid hazards when using the internet.

The quality of teaching is good

- Leaders ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics skills. In addition, successful extra activities support those pupils who are struggling with their learning because of specific needs.
- Since the dip in attainment last year, lessons have strongly promoted important skills such as phonic awareness (recognition of the sounds letters make in words), grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematical calculation. This has brought about good improvement. The activities to help those Year 2 pupils who did not reach a secure level in phonics in Year 1 to catch up are excellent.
- Planning, by class teachers working together, ensures that all pupils benefit from strong teaching and lesson tasks that effectively support the needs of pupils working at different levels.
- The good teaching has a lively pace and high expectations that pupils will do well. Teaching assistants are well briefed and effectively support the learning of different groups.
- Teachers make it clear to pupils what is expected of them. However, they sometimes give pupils too much advice on how to approach a task. For example, they set out exactly what is needed to plan and carry out a writing task or which calculation method to use when solving a mathematical problem. This limits pupils' capacity to identify the right approach themselves.
- Teachers question pupils carefully to ensure that pupils understand new learning. However, they do not always encourage pupils to give detailed enough answers to help ascertain whether they have mastered a new skill or idea in sufficient depth.
- During activities where pupils work individually or in groups, staff monitor their progress well, intervening

swiftly if pupils need extra help. They are not quite as good at ensuring that those pupils who are learning quickly can accelerate their progress further.

- Expert teaching in the special activities for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, supports their progress well.
- Marking is a strength and clearly shows pupils how well they are doing and how to improve. Pupils are given time to respond to errors and their work is checked to show these are not repeated. Opportunities for editing writing tasks have an especially good impact on raising achievement.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The large majority of children who enter Reception have skills below those typical for this age. Most of the pupils who join the school after the Reception Year also have skills below those expected. Inspection evidence clearly shows that, from the time they start at St Michael's, pupils make good progress.
- Reception children achieve well. The majority reach a good level of development by the time they move into Year 1.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make consistently good progress and have done so over the past few years.
- Staff work hard to ensure that pupils develop the phonic skills that will allow them to read texts easily. As a result, virtually all pupils have good phonic knowledge by the end of Year 2. Attainment in Year 2 in reading is rising well. It is broadly average. More Year 2 pupils now reach or exceed the expected levels in reading than in previous years.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in reading and mathematics both declined in the Year 6 national assessments last year. This was partly because too little emphasis had been placed on ensuring pupils developed the extra reading skills required, and in solving more complex mathematical problems. Leaders quickly established what needed to improve and addressed these weaknesses successfully. Pupils' progress and attainment have improved swiftly as a result, especially well in reading.
- Progress across Years 3 to 6 is good in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment is broadly in line with the national average in these subjects. More pupils now make, or exceed, the levels expected for their age than in the last two years. Attainment is well placed to rise further.
- Pupils build well on their good phonic knowledge, reading a wide range of texts with very good expression and secure comprehension of what they read. In reading, almost two thirds of the current Year 6 pupils have already exceeded the levels expected for their age.
- Writing has also improved well. Although fewer pupils exceed the levels expected for their age than in reading, the proportion is greater than is seen nationally. When staff give pupils the freedom to apply their writing skills, especially in topic work, high quality writing takes place. This was most notable in the very effective Viking Sagas written by Year 6 pupils.
- Mathematically, pupils' understanding of place value and calculation skills is very secure. By Year 6 their mental calculation is good. In activities pupils know are related to a specific topic, for example the translation of shapes, they apply these skills well. Pupils are less good at working out how to approach a new task or solve mathematical problems with little or no guidance from an adult. This limits their attainment.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The large majority reach at least the expected Level 4 by the end of Year 6. This is because the support provided for these pupils meets their needs well.
- The majority of disadvantaged pupils also have learning or language needs. In the older year groups, most of the disadvantaged pupils joined the school later in their school careers. They make good progress because of the effective activities to help them catch up.
- The 2014 national assessment results for Year 6 showed that there was no gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other St Michael's pupils in reading and writing. These pupils were only half a term behind their peers in mathematics. When compared with other pupils nationally, they were about two-and-a-half terms behind in reading and mathematics and a term behind in writing. Inspection evidence shows that the gap with other pupils nationally is well on course to be much narrower this year.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. Once they have mastered English, most attain at least the levels expected for their age, and in mathematics often exceeding them.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. This year the proportion making accelerated progress and exceeding the levels expected for their age has risen well.

The early years provision**is good**

- In the warm and caring early years environment, children settle quickly, trusting adults and feeling safe and secure. Strong procedures ensure children are continually kept safe. Children themselves are taught how to avoid risks, for example when using tools such as scissors. Children enjoy school, work hard and make good progress. They are well prepared for the work in Year 1.
- Progress in their personal development is good. Children are eager and willing to learn, get on well together and are friendly and helpful.
- Children concentrate well when listening to adults or each other. They persevere on tasks even when there is little direct adult support.
- Teaching is good. Staff rightly give high priority to children acquiring important communication and literacy skills. When teaching phonics they ensure that children use their knowledge well, both in reading and writing activities.
- Children enjoy books, most reading simple words correctly. They write accurately in sentences, keen to use more complex vocabulary which they skilfully break down into the sounds using their phonic knowledge.
- A range of well-planned activities encourages children to count and compare quantities. They develop a secure understanding of numbers to 20 and undertake simple addition and subtraction. Children recognise common shapes and can say how many sides and corners they have.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted especially well. Staff take very good account of the wide range of countries and cultures from which pupils come. Children had great fun planning and comparing celebratory meals from countries like Poland and Brazil.
- Staff form an excellent relationship with parents of Reception children. The views of parents are valued and they contribute effectively to the assessment of their children's progress. Parents are highly appreciative of the school.
- The early years provision is well led and managed by a member of the senior leadership team. The Reception staff team works effectively together to ensure that children's changing needs are met.

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	113788
Local authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	461951

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	530
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Exon
Headteacher	Robert Kennedy
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 September 2010
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