

St Michael and All Angels CofE Primary and Pre-School

Meadow Close, Greenacres Estate, Shelf, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 7QU

Inspection dates

25–26 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher leads with passion and commitment. The school is a caring community, based on Christian values, where the needs of the pupils are at the heart of everything the school does.
- Leadership of the early years is very effective. Staff in the Reception class provide exciting activities that are well matched to the children's needs and enable them to make good progress. Further, more stimulating resources are needed inside the pre-school setting to enhance imaginative play.
- Leaders and governors have a clear vision for the school. The highly effective pastoral support systems ensure that pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding. The excellent support provided for the most vulnerable pupils is a strength of the school.
- Governors and leaders at all levels rigorously monitor the quality of teaching. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is now good. Staff set high expectations for pupils' learning.
- The teaching of phonics is consistently strong and pupils do better than others nationally in the Year 1 check.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics are having a discernible impact on raising pupils' progress and improving mathematical understanding across the school.
- Teachers use accurate assessment information to provide pupils with timely support. Consequently, most pupils are making stronger progress but do not yet always attain the highest standards they are capable of.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects. However, there are some weaknesses in pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Pupils behave well and are well mannered, polite and courteous. The school is a calm, orderly and purposeful place to learn. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils show great respect to adults and to one another.
- Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum, with many interesting and exciting elements. These include residential visits, sports and arts events, moments of reflection and learning outside the classroom.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes further, especially in grammar, punctuation and spelling, by the end of Year 6 by making sure that any previous gaps in learning are fully addressed.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils meet the highest standards expected of them in reading and writing by the time they leave the school
 - teachers maximise opportunities for deeper learning by recognising when pupils are ready for different or more challenging tasks
 - pupils always have the resources they need to help themselves if they are stuck or unsure, particularly in mathematics.
- Ensure indoor provision for the pre-school is improved, so that children access more stimulating resources to enhance their imaginative play.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and governors have high aspirations for pupils' academic and personal development. The positive vision and ambition of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher are acknowledged and welcomed by the governing body and by staff, parents and pupils. They understand and appreciate senior leaders' relentless focus on rapidly improving the quality of the teaching, learning and achievement across the school.
- Staff are dedicated and passionate about improving outcomes for pupils. All are united in the desire to try to ensure that every pupil has equal opportunity to succeed. Staff lead by example and work effectively as a cohesive team. Discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils, governors, staff and parents are regularly consulted. Staff responses to the inspection questionnaire about the school are overwhelmingly positive.
- A large number of staffing changes initially led to some inconsistent rates of progress following the previous inspection. Now that there is a full complement of staff in place, pupils are doing much better. The management of subjects, particularly English and mathematics, is highly effective. Teachers, managers and all support staff clearly understand their roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability.
- Joint observations demonstrate that leaders accurately evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in line with that of inspectors. The comprehensive professional development programme is well designed and is having a positive and rapid impact on the work of all staff, particularly those teachers who are new to the profession.
- Performance management procedures are strongly focused on the key school priorities. Staff regularly explore how they can help pupils do even better. Pupil premium funding is used well. The school carefully diagnoses the individual needs of each disadvantaged pupil and provides a wide range of support for them. The impact of the funding is carefully evaluated by leaders and governors.
- The school's exciting curriculum is highly effective in meeting pupils' needs and developing their knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. It is enriched by numerous opportunities for pupils to participate in the increasing number of valuable creative, musical, sporting and spiritual activities. Pupils say they find their lessons fun.
- Pupils are inspired to make a valuable contribution to their school and to create memorable experiences. The school is extremely effective in widening pupils' life experiences and enabling them to become responsible, self-confident citizens.
- Leaders consistently evaluate the impact of initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. The significant investment in professional development, assessment systems, learning resources, external specialist support and extra-curricular activities are rigorously evaluated to ensure that there is a clear and positive impact on the outstanding personal development and welfare of pupils.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used well. Sporting activities have a high profile and the school has had a marked degree of success in involving pupils in a

wide range of sporting activities and competitions. Staff participate alongside pupils to improve their fitness and to adopt healthy lifestyles through the '1k a day initiative' whereby all children and staff walk or run at least 1,000 steps every day.

- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. They gain a good introduction to the importance of principles, such as the rule of law and democratic processes, through holding their own school council elections, contributing to their own classroom rules and carrying out the numerous roles of responsibility in school.
- The local authority provides effective support and specialist professional development opportunities for staff. The valuable collaboration across the East Calderdale Learning Cluster is helping the school to continue to improve further.
- Together, the head teacher, the deputy head teacher, middle managers, staff and the governing body ensure that the school has good capacity to continue to improve even further.

Governance of the school

- The highly knowledgeable and skilled governors have a precise understanding of the quality of provision that the school offers its pupils. They bring expertise in areas such as education, school improvement and finance.
- Governors provide valuable support to senior leaders and are tenacious in the challenge they offer. They have played a key role in refining the school's assessment procedures and are directly involved in the recruitment of new staff at all levels.
- Governors are not afraid to take difficult decisions. They help ensure that performance management arrangements lead to improved provision and outcomes for pupils.
- Governors have a clear understanding of how senior leaders spend additional government funding and of the impact that this has on pupils' outcomes. They challenge the school appropriately to ensure that sports funding improves the specialist skills of teachers in PE and enables pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- Governors are highly self-reflective and undertake regular reviews of their own effectiveness.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors have a secure understanding of their responsibilities in relation to ensuring that pupils are safe. Governors are actively involved to ensure that all processes and procedures are undertaken robustly.
- Staff and governors receive regular training relating to safeguarding, including training by the local authority.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved as a result of the determined and accurate focus of senior leaders in the school. Staff have high expectations of pupils from the early years to Year 6. As a result, pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics are improving rapidly and pupils are well prepared for entry into each key stage of their education.
- The teaching of mathematics across the school is particularly effective. Staff are skilled in the use of a mastery approach to mathematics teaching, which enables the most able pupils to make strong progress in reasoning and problem solving. Pre-learning tasks are used consistently by teachers to ensure that pupils can relate and apply what they have learned in a variety of contexts. This deepens pupils' understanding. There is a need to increase the resources available in mathematics to prompt pupils when they find tasks difficult as these are not as evident as they are for literacy.
- The teaching of reading has also improved and is a priority for the school. The teaching of phonics is particularly effective; consequently, the attainment of Year 1 pupils in the phonics screening check is above that seen nationally. Investment in a stimulating library, regular guided reading, and displays have also ignited a love and passion for reading. Pupils are keen and proud to read because teachers check carefully to ensure that pupils are reading from appropriate texts that are matched to their ability.
- Pupils apply their writing skills through well-considered activities across the curriculum. Pupils demonstrate high-level responses to 'big questions', which teachers use skilfully to improve pupils' writing for different audiences and reasons. For example, Year 3 pupils produced imaginative writing in history prompted by the question, was Sir Titus Salt a hero or a villain? As a result, pupils extend their understanding and use of a range of specialist vocabulary and improve the accuracy of their spelling across subjects.
- The most able pupils, however, do not always achieve as well as they should because they are not always challenged sufficiently to make more rapid progress in reading and writing towards the higher standards expected of them. Leaders have rightly identified that there needs to be a greater consistency in the quality and accuracy seen in writing across the school to improve outcomes for this group of pupils.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and they make a positive contribution in lessons. As a result, pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well supported to make strong progress. For example, in mathematics, skilful questioning by the teaching assistant enabled lower-attaining pupils in Year 2 to reason carefully to explain how they knew which number was incorrectly included in the five times table sequence.
- Teaching assistants and teachers communicate regularly to develop effective strategies for targeting support for individuals and groups of pupils. This dialogue is essential as part of an inclusive approach to providing support for pupils. As a result, staff identify exact gaps in what pupils know, can do and understand.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' subject knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics is strong. Consequently, most pupils are challenged and supported well to make rapid progress in lessons. Pupils' 'learning books' show clearly that pupils use

guidance from staff very effectively to reflect on how to improve future work.

- There are occasions, however, when pupils' learning slows because they are unsure of what to do, or when the work set is slightly too hard or too easy for them. Leaders are rightly encouraging staff to change tack, and move away from the plan, when pupils show they need it. Sometimes in lessons, teachers persist with their set plan when the pupils show they are ready for something different or even more challenging.
- Teachers provide appropriate homework and there are good systems in place for parents to give support using a range of resources available on the school's website. For example, by using the 'NANDOS' initiative, pupils choose from a menu in which the 'peri-ometer' indicates their level of challenge. They must attempt at least one 'extra hot' task each half term and complete all of the 'extra mild' sections weekly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The very positive culture for learning across the school contributes to pupils' high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Pupils take pride in their achievements. They thoroughly enjoy the numerous opportunities to obtain rewards for their learning and behaviour, particularly those chosen to share afternoon tea with the headteacher.
- Pupils can explain accurately and confidently how to keep themselves healthy through exercise and good eating habits. More pupils are taking part in a wider range of physical activities and are now participating in sport outside school.
- Parents and pupils value highly the nurturing support provided by all staff, in particular the learning mentor who sensitively supports children and families who might find themselves vulnerable or in challenging circumstances. One parent stated, 'this is a fantastic school that has a real sense of community and strong family values running through it'.
- Older pupils are keen to take on extra responsibility to support younger pupils at playtimes through the school's buddies, hall monitors and play leader schemes. Pupils take these roles very seriously, making sure activities are well organised and engaging.
- All pupils have opportunities to play an active part in school life. The influential school council regularly make recommendations, from buying bouncy basket balls, to creating an end of term reward system. Those who act as 'junior wardens' thoroughly enjoy working alongside local police and fire officers to learn about safety in their community and sharing this with others.
- Leaders promote a culture where pupils feel safe. Pupils say that bullying is rare and they know who they can talk to should they have any worries. They are confident that staff, particularly the school's learning mentor, will deal with any concerns quickly and sensitively. Pupils report feeling very safe at school, and one pupil said that 'teachers are kind, they turn into our mums'. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, for example when using social media.
- There is a tangible sense of belonging in the school. The school's status as a 'stonewall

champion' and its Christian ethos are used fully to ensure that pupils celebrate their individual differences respectfully. Pupils and staff openly challenge stereotypes and prejudice of any kind.

Behaviour

- Pupils are polite, happy and very friendly. They enjoy being in school. Pupils work and play happily together, right from the early years.
- Pupils generally behave very well and are attentive in lessons. They listen carefully to adults and are supportive of each other. A few pupils, however, can occasionally take time to settle to tasks, which slows their learning.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors seemed surprised to be asked if there was any bullying in the school. They consider it to be very rare. This accords with the school's records. However, pupils said that sometimes there is unkind behaviour, but that this is sorted out by staff.
- One pupil said that staff are very kind and the school is like one big family. However, some parents pointed out occasional instances of rough playground behaviour, which are not fully dealt with by staff.
- The rate of attendance is continuing to improve and is above average. The school has stringent procedures for encouraging good attendance and governors monitor any absences rigorously. Consequently, rates of persistent absence have reduced significantly and the rate of pupil exclusion is now zero.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Achievement at key stages 1 and 2 is good over time, despite a number of staffing changes following the previous inspection which led to a period when progress was less than good. The proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them for their age and stage of education is in line with national levels, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected threshold in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1, including those who are disadvantaged, has improved to above average in 2016. Pupils in the current Year 1 class are on track to attain at least similar results. The support given to pupils who fall behind in their reading is timely and effective, as pupils soon catch up. The most able pupils are confident and fluent readers.
- Progress in writing is improving rapidly, particularly in Year 6, since the disappointing results in the latest national tests. School leaders have rigorously analysed the reasons for this. The immediate action taken by staff is having a positive impact on pupils' writing and understanding of complex vocabulary. The work in pupils' books, and on display, shows that they are now making strong progress across the school in writing.
- Pupils are encouraged to identify their own spelling lists derived from accurate self-assessment of their writing. They also include words that challenge them in their reading. While standards of punctuation and grammar are improving, leaders recognise the need to meet their own target to improve outcomes further, especially in grammar,

punctuation and spelling, across all classes.

- Progress in mathematics is also improving. Pupils' work shows that they have the opportunity to use different methods of calculation and to learn from their errors. They solve interesting problems and apply their learning in other subjects such as science and geography.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of well-targeted support from highly skilled teachers and teaching assistants.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is small. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to monitor and support this group of pupils. Current information shows that they are making similar good progress overall to other pupils in the school. As a result, the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are reducing.
- The school's new assessment system is robust. Rigorous monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress is undertaken by all managers and in most classes; this information is used well by teachers to plan learning according to individual needs.
- As a result of intensive, specialist training and development, all staff now have a more accurate understanding of the targets set for individuals and groups of pupils. Work in pupils' books shows that more of them are receiving timely, targeted support, and a higher proportion are currently working at least at the standards expected of them.
- Pupils are making good progress in a range of other subjects. Displays and work in pupils' books demonstrates high expectations of pupils in art, science, music, PE, RE, history and geography.

Early years provision

Good

- In 2016, most children reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year from broadly average starting points. This showed further improvement on 2015, where the outcomes were also strong. The current children are achieving well and the small number of children entitled to pupil premium funding also achieve very well.
- The school now provides a pre-school setting for children aged from two-and-a-half years. The headteacher, the new leader of the early years and the recently appointed play leader have a precise and accurate understanding of the quality of the provision. A thorough and rigorous evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and resources has enabled staff to make rapid improvements and to take appropriate action to raise standards where necessary. For example, boys are now reaching similar high standards to girls.
- Teaching is good because adults ensure that children are given stimulating and challenging activities which stretch and challenge them. This enables them to develop their communication and mathematical skills well. Adults ask questions that make children think about their learning. Where staff identify children who are falling behind, they provide extra support to ensure that their understanding is fully secure. Regular assessments in phonics and accurate records of what the children can do are used well to plan activities that promote good progress in reading.

- Learning areas in the pre-school and Reception classes are well resourced. However, leaders have rightly identified the need to provide more stimulating activities in the pre-school setting, to further encourage imaginative play.
- The 'come and write' area in Reception provides motivating prompts to maintain children's interest and enthusiasm in writing. Children are encouraged to write as part of all activities; for example, while engrossed in building a fort, boys were encouraged to create 'wanted' posters relating to their role play.
- Adults who work in the early years take full advantage of training opportunities to improve their practice. For example, adults have received training to enable them to teach phonics as effectively as staff in key stage 1.
- Children behave very well in the early years. Inspectors observed children working collaboratively on activities. They are taught well to work cooperatively. This is due to the close relationship that children have with their teachers and other adults, and the clear routines that the teachers have quickly established. Children listen attentively to adults and to one another and follow instructions immediately. They are developing the good learning behaviours required for key stage 1.
- Teachers work closely with parents to support their children's development. Parents are encouraged to come in to school to support their children and discuss their child's progress. Homework books are used effectively to enable parents to play an active part in their children's learning.
- Staff take children's safety very seriously. Staff undertake risk assessments for outdoor activities, and meet and greet children at the door every morning. Staff are aware of the action they must take where they have a concern regarding a child's welfare. The early years leader works closely with the headteacher to ensure that the children within the early years are safe.

School details

Unique reference number	107570
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10023814

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clem Rushworth
Headteacher	Claire Berry
Telephone number	01274 676246
Website	www.st-michaelangels.calderdale.sch.uk/
Email address	head@st-michaelangels.calderdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The governing body became responsible for the pre-school provision in 2016. Children aged from two-and-a-half years attend the school's pre-school in the school bungalow. The setting was part of the inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that seen nationally.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below that seen across the country.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016 which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- Children attend the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The before- and after-school club, for pupils who attend the school, runs daily.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes to observe lessons. Two observations were conducted jointly, involving the headteacher and the deputy.
- Inspectors observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work in all classes, including the books of pupils who took part in discussions with inspectors, in order to obtain a view of teaching over time.
- Inspectors took account of 25 staff questionnaires and the responses from 20 pupils. There were 26 published responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also took account of the school's own surveys of the views of parents and pupils.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms, in the playground, in the dining hall and around the school.
- Inspectors examined a range of information and documentation for the school, including pupils' progress and attainment information.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast club and a school assembly.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing body. Meetings were also held with several other leaders in the school and the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their work informally during lessons and met with groups of pupils, including the school council, to discuss their learning and listen to their views about their school.
- Inspectors also considered the views of those who contacted them during the inspection.

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Nimer	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Ydlibi	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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