

# St Michael's Church of England Academy

Hazel Grove, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 9DA

## Inspection dates

5–6 June 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Since the school converted to become an academy, the headteacher's vision and determination have been central to the rapid improvements seen across the school.
- The deputy headteacher has been instrumental in improving the quality of teaching. She is ably supported by other effective leaders. Staff have been extremely well supported to improve their practice. As a result, pupils are making better progress and attainment is rising.
- Pupils' personal development is exceptionally well catered for. Relationships at all levels are supportive and caring. The school's learning values, such as 'Aim high', 'Work together' and 'I believe', have been cleverly woven into the everyday experiences for pupils. Consequently, pupils work hard, have high aspirations and enjoy their time at school.
- Governance at all levels is strong. The multi-academy trust provides astute support and challenge to the school. The local governing body carries out effective checks and asks leaders pertinent questions.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is excellent. Teachers' strong subject knowledge enables pupils to be confident when calculating and solving problems. In 2017, almost all pupils achieved the expected standard at the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders and staff ensure that areas for development are swiftly addressed. A new whole-school approach to the teaching of reading has improved pupils' language acquisition and comprehension skills. A lively culture for reading is emerging. Pupils enjoy reading and discussing high-level texts.
- The teaching of writing requires development. A new approach has been recently implemented, but it is not consistently applied across the school. Consequently, too many pupils do not progress as well as they should.
- Pupils' basic early writing skills are not secure. In the early years and key stage 1, expectations are not high enough for pupils' letter formation, handwriting and presentation.
- The leadership of the early years is effective. Staff support pupils well in Nursery and Reception. A stimulating environment and well-planned activities enable pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils' conduct and behaviour are exemplary. Support for pupils who have complex social and emotional needs is very effective.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve attendance, but it is not yet high enough.

## **Full report**

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

- Continue to develop teaching and learning and boost pupils' progress in writing by:
  - consistently embedding the whole-school approaches to the teaching of writing
  - making sure that the teaching of early writing includes sufficiently high expectations for pupils' letter formation, handwriting and presentation.
- Build further on the outstanding leadership and management by:
  - refining the partnership with parents of pupils who are persistently absent.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher has worked with the whole school community to build a compelling vision. He and the deputy headteacher make an excellent team. They have combined well with other leaders to transform the quality of teaching and learning. There is a strong sense of purpose across the school and expectations of what pupils can do have been significantly raised. Over the three years that the academy has been open, outcomes have continued to rise.
- A strong sense of teamwork between leaders and staff has enabled rapid improvement to take place. Staff are proud to work at the school and appreciate the range of high-quality training opportunities. Staff work together in research groups to analyse their practice and consider ways to improve. As a result, staff feel part of the improvement process and the quality of teaching is continually refined.
- Senior and middle leaders know the school well. They carry out regular checks of teaching and provide effective feedback to staff on how to improve. Thorough analysis of information about pupils' progress enables leaders to identify and swiftly address areas for improvement.
- The leadership of mathematics is a significant strength of the school. Leaders have worked in partnership with other schools nationally and in Shanghai. Teachers regularly demonstrate their best practice to visiting schools. This approach has helped teachers at St Michael's to continually reflect on and sharpen their mathematics teaching.
- Pupil premium funding is targeted precisely on raising attainment for disadvantaged pupils. A range of thoughtful strategies is evaluated well for impact. For example, adults target particular pupils for additional one-to-one reading. This and other precise reading interventions have a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- The provision for physical education (PE) and school sport is impressive. Leaders have made it a strong feature of the school's ethos. The PE and sport premium grant is used very effectively to raise participation levels in extra-curricular activities and competitive sport. The PE specialist has a clear vision for the subject and a strong grasp of pupils' attainment across the school.
- The leadership of special education needs (SEN) is effective. Since opening as an academy, leaders have developed more accurate identification and assessment procedures. Strong links with external agencies and parents further enhance provision. Consequently, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive the focused support that they need and make strong progress.
- Leaders have worked hard to develop an inclusive community ethos in the school. The children's centre and the school dovetail their work together and think carefully about the needs of the community. A range of positive strategies is used to build close partnerships with parents and other community stakeholders.
- The curriculum combines well with extra-curricular activities to provide pupils with rich and varied learning experiences. Pupils enjoy the range of topics that they cover and the associated trips that are organised. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about curriculum trips to places such as the National History Museum and Cornwall. As a result of a

thoughtful curriculum, pupils develop a range of skills, knowledge and understanding across different subjects. Themed weeks, such as 'careers week', have helped to raise pupils' aspirations and their awareness of different job possibilities. Pupils are being prepared well for their next journey in education and their life in modern Britain.

## Governance of the school

- The multi-academy trust has been an instrumental part of the rapid improvement seen in the school. The chief executive officer has successfully steered the school through a period of financial challenge. He and other trust leaders provided astute support and challenge to the school. They have nurtured leaders and have a genuine vision for getting the best for the community that the school serves. The lines of accountability and the model for school improvement are clear and robust.
- The local governing body is proactive and knows the school well. Its members have clear areas of responsibility and use visits and meetings to ask leaders searching questions. For example, governors quizzed leaders to check that the approach to teaching reading is challenging enough for the most able pupils.
- The multi-academy trust and the local governing body provide strong capacity for further improvement.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The three designated safeguarding leads are well organised and leave no stone unturned in keeping pupils safe. They organise regular training and check that staff understand their role through activities and discussion. As a result, staff are very clear about their responsibilities and there is a positive culture for safeguarding. The designated leads' recording is meticulous and any incidents of concern are followed up very well. External agencies are used appropriately to both challenge and support families. Leaders use early help in a timely way to provide effective support.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they know who to talk to if they are concerned about something. Their understanding of the dangers associated with cyberbullying are strong. Pupils talked of a useful visit from a policeman, which helped to secure their understanding of some of the issues that can occur on the internet. Regular teaching of safety in the curriculum complements the positive safeguarding culture of the school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- A key characteristic of the good teaching is the consistency with which teachers implement whole-school policies, particularly for reading and mathematics. A further strength is the quality of staff's questioning, which helps to deepen pupils' understanding or to clarify particular points. Teachers and teaching assistants work productively together and use effective subject knowledge to progressively build pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils enjoy learning because teachers have high

expectations and plan learning that stimulates their interest.

- Learning environments in classrooms are rich and purposeful. Strong relationships have helped to build trust. Pupils are willing to take risks and stick at difficult tasks. Displays celebrate pupils' work and include useful prompts that are integrated into learning.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is superb. Teachers understand the policy clearly and use their excellent subject knowledge to enable pupils to excel. A typical lesson sees pupils consolidating and practising key skills, before applying their understanding to complex problems. Pupils regularly discuss their mathematics work and have highly effective reasoning skills. Teachers also provide high-quality opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their understanding using pictures and concrete objects.
- Reading is taught well. Phonics teaching kick-starts pupils' reading skills and provides them with the skills that they need to decode unfamiliar words. The whole-class book approach enables pupils to access engaging high-level texts. Pupils enjoy their reading and tackle comprehension activities with enthusiasm. Teachers set skilful questions to check pupils' understanding of the text and develop skills, such as inference and prediction. Pupils read widely and often at home and at school. Strategies for hearing individuals pupils read are effective. For example, some pupils are identified for additional reading time and pupil librarians read with younger pupils in the school.
- Teachers are adjusting to the newly implemented approach to the teaching of writing. There is a strong emphasis on making sure that pupils build up a secure understanding of the features and language for particular styles of writing. This is having an impact on the quality of pupils' writing, but the approaches are not consistently embedded. As a result, some pupils' progress slows. In key stage 1, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations for pupils' handwriting and presentation.
- Pupils love their PE lessons. Teaching is lively and pupils enjoy being physically active. Staff use high-quality demonstrations and technical teaching points, so that pupils know exactly how to carry out skills themselves. During one lesson, pupils enjoyed evaluating their own relay running technique and trying to improve their times in a team relay.
- The quality of teaching in religious education shows strongly in pupils' books. Pupils demonstrate an effective understanding of different faiths. Teachers also ensure that pupils write at length in the subject.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders and staff have cleverly woven the Christian values and the learning values into the everyday ethos of the school. Values such as thankfulness, compassion and understanding are lived out in pupils' outstanding behaviours. Pupils treat one another respectfully and work maturely in groups. The learning values are clearly evident in pupils' work ethic and their determination to succeed. They are rarely off-task and are immensely proud of their work.

- The range of extra-curricular clubs and trips add significant value to pupils' personal development. Social times are a hive of activity. Adults organise purposeful play with different groups of pupils outside and other interesting clubs take place inside classrooms. School trips are organised to give pupils memorable wider experiences. Pupils spoke passionately about how much they learned on trips to places such as Wembley Stadium, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and to see England play cricket.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of being physically healthy and active. Physical activity levels are high and improving. Pupils make healthy choices at lunchtimes and often choose activities that raise their pulse rate. During the inspection, pupils were seen enjoying energetic games of table tennis or playing football on the school's new artificial all-weather surface.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The strength of the religious education teaching is enabling pupils to have mature and tolerant views about different views and beliefs. The work done in careers week enabled pupils to learn about stereotypes and how some roles, for example being a mechanic, is something that both males and females can do.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the different forms of bullying. They say that it happens rarely and when it does, adults are quick to step in address it.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils maintain the highest standards of conduct around school and during lesson time. They are polite, friendly and very sensitive to the behaviour procedures in the school. Pupils' excellent understanding of the school values helps to clarify what is expected of them. On the rare occasions that standards of behaviour fall below expectations, adults are quick to subtly intervene and pupils respond accordingly. Adults put a strong and successful focus on rewarding pupils for their positive behaviour.
- There are some pupils who have significant social, emotional or behavioural needs. Leaders and staff put in place highly nurturing and supportive strategies to help these pupils manage their feelings and access learning. A range of external services is used to provide more specialist provision where required. Fixed-term exclusions have reduced over time. Several parents commented on the positive impact of additional support that has been put in place for their child.
- Leaders have rigorous processes for monitoring and checking pupils' absence. Overall absence levels improved in the academic year 2016/17 and have remained at a similar level during this academic year. There is still some work to do to ensure that absence levels are similar to the national average. Some parents whose children are persistently absent require a more individualised approach. Current approaches are working for some and leaders showed several case studies with strong improvements in attendance over time. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Outcomes are rising positively across the school. In 2016, attainment at the end of key stage 1 and 2 was below the national average. In 2017, attainment improved significantly. The work in pupils' books and the school's assessments for current pupils demonstrate that this improvement has been sustained.
- Outcomes in mathematics are impressive. Strong teaching enables pupils' mathematical skills and understanding to develop rapidly. In 2017 at the end of key stage 2, almost all pupils achieved the expected standard and almost half achieved the higher standard. Pupils' progress score was in the top 4% of all schools nationally.
- In 2017 at the end of key stage 1 and 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading was above the national average. The proportion working at greater depth was above the national average at the end of key stage 1. At the end of key stage 2, the proportion attaining the higher standard was slightly below the national figure. Work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information show that the most able pupils' attainment in reading is rising.
- High-quality phonics teaching has led to positive outcomes in the end of Year 1 phonics screening test. The proportion reaching the expected standard has been above the national average for the last two years.
- By the end of key stage 2 in 2017, the progress of pupils in writing was similar to that seen nationally. Work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information shows that writing progress is too variable across the school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive precise support in the classroom and through interventions. Consequently, they make progress that is similar to other pupils in school. In 2017 at the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress was strong when compared to national figures.
- Targeted interventions and better quality teaching are having a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils. Their attainment and progress are rising. For example, in 2017 at the end of key stage 2, a higher proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children receive a strong start to their education in the early years. Relationships at all levels are positive and, as a result, children are confident, happy and settled. The environment in Nursery and Reception is rich and purposeful. Children's work is celebrated and resources provide an excellent stimulus for learning. During the inspection, children were keen to show inspectors their work.
- Transition between Nursery and Reception is managed very well. Leaders and staff work in close partnership to share important information about children in the setting. This partnership working extends in to the good quality links made with parents and the children's centre. Consequently, parents feel involved in their child's learning and

staff understand children's individual needs very well.

- Leadership of the early years is good. There is an effective understanding of the priorities for improvement and close links are made with whole-school initiatives. For example, the high-quality mathematics teaching elsewhere in the school has translated well into the early years. Children's mathematical experiences are a notable strength.
- The teaching of writing is not as well developed in the early years. Work in children's books does show that they are given sufficient opportunities to write. However, staff do not ensure that children's letter formation, handwriting and presentation are of a high enough quality. While children are well prepared for Year 1 within others areas of the curriculum, this is not the case for writing.
- Leaders and staff use assessment well. Regular moderation in school and across schools in the multi-academy trust has led to accurate assessments of pupils' needs. This information is tracked well and learning activities are sufficiently focused on the next stage of child's development within the different areas of learning. There is a good blend of focused teaching, as well as opportunities for children to choose their activities. Children cooperate well in play and use their imagination when using a range of exciting resources, both indoors and outside.
- During this academic year, leaders have been moving to new criteria for identifying children's starting points and judging progress. This transition has provided some professional learning for leaders, but it has not hampered the children's learning in any way. Assessment information demonstrates that children make strong progress across the early years. The proportion of children who have achieved a good level of development by the end of Reception has been above the national average for the last two years.
- All of the statutory welfare requirements are securely met. Staff keep children safe at all times.



## School details

Unique reference number	142021
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10048365

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	Diocese of Coventry Multi-Academy Trust
Chief executive officer	David Morris
Headteacher	Chris Errington
Telephone number	024 7631 3204
Website	<a href="http://www.stmichaelsprimaryschool.co.uk">www.stmichaelsprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin2641@welearn365.com">admin2641@welearn365.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is an above-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- A large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school is a sponsored academy and is part of the Diocese of Coventry multi-academy trust. The school converted to become an academy in July 2015. When its

predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2014, it was judged to be inadequate.

- The chief executive officer, the head of education and the school improvement partner provide strategic support and challenge. This includes aspects such as finance, human resources, leadership, the quality of teaching, and performance data. The multi-academy trust also commissions an annual review, which is carried out by an independent adviser.
- There is a local governing body at the school which takes responsibility for challenging and supporting leaders to develop educational outcomes for pupils, as well as being a link to the local community.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 29 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at social times and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, as well as other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with three members of the local governing body. He also met with the chief executive officer, the head of education and the school improvement partner from the multi-academy trust.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation. These included assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors considered 26 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Justine Lomas

Ofsted Inspector

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