

St Michael’s Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Kingsteignton, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 3BQ

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders’ actions have not secured good progress for significant groups of pupils.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress in key stage 2. Consequently, they do not reach the standards they should do by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils’ reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics are improving but are not yet sufficiently developed.
- Teaching in key stage 1 does not enable pupils to achieve greater depth in their understanding because work is not well matched to their abilities.
- Teaching does not allow enough time for some groups of pupils, particularly the most able, to grapple with problems before moving on.
- Some pupils’ handwriting skills are not developed well and so their letter formation is not as accurate as it should be.
- Senior leaders have established a vigilant safeguarding culture at the school and so pupils are kept safe. However, their record-keeping is not sufficiently well organised.
- Some middle leaders are new to their roles. They have not yet developed effective plans to improve the quality of teaching in their subject areas.
- The governing body has not been critical enough of senior leaders in the past. It has only recently begun to challenge leaders effectively over the performance of the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and head of school have established an open and inclusive culture at the school. All pupils feel welcome.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for learning. It stimulates pupils to think about international themes and motivates them well.
- Pupils’ emotional and mental health are supported well by the school.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. As a result, children in the Nursery and Reception Year are thriving.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Governors and senior leaders ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well. These pupils make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievements by:
 - ensuring that teaching is challenging for the most able pupils
 - enabling pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subject areas
 - allowing pupils more time to grapple with problems in mathematics
 - raising teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting
 - planning work in key stage 1 that is more closely linked to pupils' abilities.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - raising the level of challenge that governors provide for senior leaders, especially over the progress pupils make from their starting points
 - ensuring that senior leaders' actions focus more precisely on improving the progress of particular groups of pupils
 - making senior leaders' record-keeping sharper and more rigorous
 - developing the self-evaluation skills of middle leaders so they establish coherent and effective strategies for improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The overall effectiveness of the school has declined since the previous inspection seven years ago. The executive headteacher and the head of school are both passionate about improving the school. However, they have had only partial success in raising teachers' expectations. Consequently, the most able pupils, who form a significant group within the school, do not make enough progress.
- Middle leaders work in teams across the school. Several of them have only recently been appointed. Middle leaders have not yet established and communicated coherent strategies for improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching regularly and invite leaders from other schools in the federation to moderate their judgements. However, senior leaders have been too generous in their evaluation of teaching. As a result, teaching has not improved quickly enough.
- Senior leaders set out a clear rationale for the curriculum that takes the school's setting into account. They place emphasis on learning through international links. This gives pupils a broad view of the world. The personal, social and health education programme builds on the school's Christian values well to ensure that pupils' attitudes to themselves and others are positive. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of activities at lunchtime and after school. Many different and unusual sports are available. Leaders' judicious use of the primary sport premium ensures that almost all pupils take part in at least one activity. This makes a good contribution to pupils' physical health.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well by activities that are threaded through the curriculum. Pupils appreciate other cultures and points of view. School drama productions enhance pupils' confidence and cultural awareness. For example, pupils enjoyed taking part in a production of 'Beauty and the Beast'.
- Senior leaders ensure that staff provide effective help for disadvantaged pupils in lessons and through extra-curricular activities. This work supports pupils effectively to make good progress.
- The coordinator for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has a good awareness of the requirements of this group of pupils. She directs the use of additional funding for these pupils well and so they receive appropriate and timely support.
- Teachers are well motivated. Teachers regularly share ideas within the school and with staff in other local schools. Teaching assistants also benefit from regular training. Their morale is high, especially in the early years.
- Parents respect the executive headteacher, the head of school and the staff. They say the school is well led and managed. However, some parents are dissatisfied with the quality of communication they receive from the school about their child's progress.
- The great majority of staff who responded to the online survey believe the school is well led and managed. Most staff say leaders trust them to innovate and so develop

their practice.

- The federation provides regular professional development for staff at all levels. This makes a strong contribution to the high level of staff morale. Staff feel supported and well trained as a result of the federation's actions.

Governance of the school

- Governors are suitably skilled and knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities. The governing body works closely with the executive headteacher and the head of school to set the strategic direction of the school. Good communication and trust are the hallmarks of their relationship. Nevertheless, in the recent past, governors have not challenged leaders enough over pupils' progress and so the rate of improvement for some groups of pupils has not been swift enough.
- Governors' oversight of safeguarding is generally thorough. As a result, they have fulfilled all their statutory duties. They ensure that staff are well trained in safeguarding practice. However, governors have not ensured that senior leaders' record-keeping is sharp enough in all areas.
- The governing body provides suitable financial control. Governors ensure that extra funding for disadvantaged pupils, and for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, is used well. They make sure the primary sport premium is used appropriately to increase pupils' participation rates in sport and enhance teachers' skills.

Safeguarding

- Senior leaders ensure that safeguarding practice in the school is effective, so pupils are kept safe and secure. All policies are up to date and reflect the latest national guidance. However, senior leaders' record-keeping is not rigorous enough and requires improvement.
- The head of school carefully considers the risks in the local area and liaises closely with other organisations, such as a local youth centre, to ensure that risks are minimised.
- Senior leaders communicate clear messages about safeguarding to parents and pupils. For example, they regularly give information about e-safety to pupils and parents. Most parents who responded to the Parent View survey believe their children are happy at school, feel safe and are well cared for.
- Appropriate checks are made on all staff to make sure they are suitable to work with children. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. They understand their responsibilities clearly. Senior leaders have established a vigilant safeguarding culture at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers' planning in key stage 1 does not take what pupils already know and can do into consideration sufficiently. As a result, too often, the work teachers give to pupils does not deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers' expectations of the most able pupils' capabilities are not high enough. Consequently, the level of challenge experienced by these pupils is too variable. For example, sometimes tasks are too easy and take little time to complete. At other times, teachers pose difficult questions but give pupils help too quickly.
- Mathematics teaching is improving. Key mathematical concepts, such as percentages, are now taught effectively. However, teaching has not fully developed current Year 6 pupils' confidence in using their knowledge to solve problems.
- English teaching develops most pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling effectively. Teachers ensure that pupils master this knowledge and use their skills in different types of writing in other subjects. Teachers set homework regularly and apply the school's homework policy consistently.
- Phonics teaching is effective. As a result, Year 1 pupils develop sound early reading skills. A large proportion of pupils meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check each year.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and motivated. They provide effective support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of technology to benefit individual pupils' learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils understand the school's Christian values and say they are keen to live up to them. Most pupils take pride in their work and their school. Pupils are motivated to behave well and achieve by the house points system.
- Pupils have a good sense of social responsibility. This is strengthened by the international dimension to the curriculum. For example, the school has international links by sponsoring toilet facilities in other countries.
- Pupils report that staff tackle bullying quickly and effectively. The majority of parents believe the school deals with bullying well.
- Pupils feel safe at school. Teaching helps pupils understand the risks they face, such as risks associated with using the internet.
- Staff care for pupils well, especially those pupils who are potentially vulnerable. A counsellor is available for pupils to speak to about any concerns they may have. Pupils act as mediators for each other. This makes a good contribution to pupils' emotional well-being.
- Several pupils use the breakfast club, shared with Kingsteignton School. This club

provides these pupils with a calm start to the day in a safe environment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to their learning and to each other.
- Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy clearly. Teachers apply the rules about behaviour consistently. Consequently, although some pupils misbehave occasionally when they are not challenged sufficiently, the atmosphere in lessons is typically positive and respectful.
- Around the school, at breaktime and lunchtime, pupils are polite to each other and to staff. They respect the school environment, look after play equipment and avoid dropping litter. The school is a calm, orderly place.
- Senior leaders' records show that serious incidents of poor behaviour are infrequent, and so the school's rate of pupil exclusions is low.
- Pupils' rate of attendance is above the national average. Few pupils are persistently absent from school.
- Parents to whom inspectors spoke, and those who replied to the Parent View survey, believe pupils' behaviour is generally good. One parent's comment was typical, 'There is a lovely community feel in this school and overall we are very happy.'

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, the most able pupils' progress in key stage 2 has been consistently below the national average in each of reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, the most able pupils' progress was in the lowest 10% of schools nationally in each subject. Last year, the progress of this group of pupils improved, but it is still not good enough.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined has improved steadily in the last three years and is now above the national average. Nevertheless, in that time too few pupils attained the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined.
- Pupils' mathematical reasoning skills are improving, as improvements to the quality of mathematics teaching become more deeply established. However, particularly in Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding is not yet secure. For example, they are not yet sufficiently confident in applying their reasoning skills in different contexts.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Many pupils were keen to tell inspectors about their favourite books. Pupils read accurately, and while some do not add great expression, the majority comprehend well.
- Pupils' handwriting is not consistently good enough across the school because some pupils do not take enough care over their letter formation. Pupils use a good range of vocabulary in their writing and vary their style well for different audiences. For example, in Year 4 pupils wrote persuasively about Majorca as a holiday destination.
- A large majority of children leave the Reception Year having attained or exceeded a good level of development. Many pupils do not build effectively on this good start. By

the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. However, fewer pupils than seen nationally attain a greater depth of understanding.

- The least able pupils develop their communication and numeracy skills well across the school. Staff provide effective extra help for these pupils and so they become more confident learners.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well and so make good progress from their different starting points.
- Staff have a good understanding of the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face and how to overcome them. Disadvantaged pupils' progress is in line with that of other pupils nationally.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is strong. The foundation stage coordinator has a clear vision for the development of teaching and outcomes for children. Her staff share this vision and so they form a well-motivated team.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been above the national average for the past three years. Children's early reading, writing and number skills develop well.
- Teachers prioritise language and literacy as the cornerstones of learning. They develop children's spoken language well. As a result of well-planned phonics teaching, children are able to break words down into shorter sounds to read them and blend sounds together to write words.
- Over the last two years, leaders have introduced a new system for recording and assessing children's development. This allows teachers to diligently monitor the progress children make from their starting points. Working in teams, staff subsequently take prompt action to provide extra help for children in individual areas of learning.
- Children learn the school rules quickly. At the time of the inspection, even after only a few weeks in school, children had developed good routines. These routines support their good behaviour. Children listen carefully to adults and respond appropriately to requests.
- Leaders have worked successfully to ensure that parents are involved in their children's education.
- Teachers ensure that children engage in varied activities led by adults as well as activities they can choose for themselves. The indoor learning area is welcoming and stimulating. The outdoor learning space is well organised. It provides equipment and resources that allow children to investigate and explore their own ideas. For example, a 'writing hut' encourages pupils' early writing skills.
- Leadership of the Nursery provision is strong. Teaching promotes children's speech and language learning effectively. Children's personal and social skills develop well because the nursery provides a nurturing environment.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective in the Nursery and in the Reception classes.

Adults ensure that children are safe and secure. Children trust staff. They know who to go to if they are unhappy.

School details

Unique reference number	113407
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10056532

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	445
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Thompson
Head of school	Karen West
Telephone number	01626 352 854
Website	www.st-michaels-pri.devon.sch.uk
Email address	admin@st-michaels-pri.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school is part of the United Schools Federation which is a group of five primary schools in the local area. All schools in the federation are overseen by one governing body.
- The executive headteacher has leadership responsibility for all the schools in the federation. The head of school is responsible for the day-to-day running of this school.
- The executive headteacher is a national leader of education. The school is designated as a national support school.
- St Michael's is a Church of England voluntary controlled school in the diocese of Exeter. It received a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools inspection in December 2016 and was judged to be good.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The

proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.

- The proportion of pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The school runs a nursery on site for children from the age of three.
- The school is temporarily sharing its site with a newly opened free school, Kingsteignton School. This arrangement will end in January 2019 when the free school is due to move into new premises.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, middle leaders and governors.
- Telephone calls were made to two representatives of Devon County Council.
- Inspectors observed learning across a range of subjects and age groups. Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of pupils' written work and listened to several pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including minutes of governors' meetings, development plans, analysis of pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour logs, safeguarding documents and the school's review of its own performance.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start and the end of the school day and considered the school's analysis of parents' views. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with one parent.
- Inspectors took account of 48 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 22 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection was carried out following a complaint made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether safeguarding was effective.

Inspection team

Paul Williams, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Adrian Massey	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Johns	Ofsted Inspector

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