

St Michael and All Angels Catholic Primary School

Stonyford Road, Wombwell, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S73 8AF

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2019

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 school's Christian ethos and the vision of senior leaders underpin all of the school's work. Pupils' well-being is of prime importance and they learn in a genuinely caring and supportive atmosphere.
- Staff are fully supportive of the leaders' improvement agenda. As a result, areas identified at the last inspection have improved, including in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, governance and the early years. Consequently, pupils are making strong progress.
- Leaders have developed an exciting curriculum that contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their enjoyment of school life. Pupils make particularly strong progress in art as a result of highly effective teaching by skilled staff.
- Leaders and governors accurately evaluate the strengths and priorities for the school. They take the right actions to bring about improvement. Leaders have successfully overcome difficult challenges caused by significant changes in staffing.
- Pupils have developed a love of reading. High-quality teaching ensures that by the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading is above average.
- As a result of effective teaching, most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress. However, learning for a few of the most able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not always as productive as for others. This hinders their progress.
- Leaders have established successful strategies to improve the attainment of pupils. An increasing proportion of pupils are reaching the higher standards in mathematics and reading. Fewer pupils reach similar high standards in writing.
- Parents value highly the level of care provided for their children. Leaders have worked hard with families to improve pupils' attendance. The school recognises the need to provide more opportunities for parents and carers to be even more involved in their children's learning.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They respect and listen to one another, and work well together.
- The early years is well led. Children are confident and happy. They receive high-quality care and they make strong progress. Assessment information is not always precise enough to ensure that activities meet the specific needs of children.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by making sure that:
 - they spread the most effective practice in the school so that pupils, particularly the most able, make strong progress from their starting points, particularly in writing
 - all teaching supports pupils with SEND effectively so that they make stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - they monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' progress across all curriculum subjects
 - parents are given more opportunities to become involved in their children's learning.
- Improve the assessment and recording of children's progress in the early years to ensure that activities are closely matched to children's needs.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher and the head of school have created a culture of high aspiration for all pupils within a caring and supportive environment, enabling pupils to achieve well.
- Senior leaders have engaged the whole school community in the development of a clear vision based on the school's Christian values. This has ensured that St Michael's provides a happy, caring learning community in which young minds are inspired to learn. Senior leaders' active and strategic approach to tackle the issues identified in their detailed school development plan has led to much improvement.
- The head of school leads her staff ably and sensitively. Teachers and support staff are positive about the actions taken by leaders to improve the quality of education. They have a strong sense of purpose and respond positively to the culture of accountability set by leaders. Staff, particularly those who are new to the school, appreciate the opportunities they have to improve their confidence and expertise through formal training and collaboration with colleagues from partner schools.
- The curriculum is exciting because topics are meaningful and relevant to pupils. Subjects are planned effectively to develop and broaden pupils' skills and knowledge. Leaders have also designed the curriculum to draw on the particular expertise of staff. As an example, many exciting opportunities are provided by highly skilled staff to enable pupils to develop their expertise in art. This strength of the school was demonstrated clearly by the exceptional drawing by Year 3 pupils of the faces of gods as part of their 'Gods and Mortals' topic. Similarly, the modern foreign languages curriculum draws on the languages spoken by teachers and parents. During their time at St Michael's, pupils experience learning across a range of interesting topics and, in this respect, are well prepared for the next stage of learning at secondary school.
- The assistant head of school has successfully enhanced the assessment and tracking systems to improve on the school's data analysis at school, cohort and individual levels. Regular monitoring of pupils' progress provides informative opportunities for leaders and teachers to discuss pupils' individual outcomes. Leaders implement effective strategies to ensure that pupils who face particular challenges thrive and have the same aspirations as other pupils.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by the leaders of English and mathematics is accurate, thorough and informative. They take effective action to secure good-quality teaching and pupils' strong progress. The training provided by the mathematics leader has successfully strengthened teachers' subject knowledge. This has resulted in better planning to improve pupils' mastery and reasoning in mathematics.
- Teachers receive accurate, high-quality feedback from leaders which enables them to improve their practice. This is demonstrated by the recent improvement in the quality of pupils' writing across classes. Leaders are aware that they need to strengthen their evaluation of the quality of teaching across all other subjects in order to more closely monitor pupils' progress across the curriculum.

- Leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to benefit disadvantaged pupils. There are specific interventions to support learning and to enable this group of pupils to participate in a broad range of opportunities. Specialist support for those disadvantaged pupils who face significant barriers to learning is strong. Currently, the progress of disadvantaged pupils across most year groups is in line with that of other pupils in the school.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used well to provide a range of physical activity and sporting opportunities. The school's emphasis on healthy living, whether through regular PE sessions or healthy eating initiatives, contributes directly to pupils' physical and emotional health and well-being.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has an extensive overview of provision and ensures that long-term targets for pupils with SEND are precise and shared with staff. Specific interventions are appropriate to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. However, in some lessons, tasks are too difficult or overwhelming for those pupils who have complex needs. Activities are not always adapted appropriately to better suit the specific needs of these pupils.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop spiritually, as well as socially, morally and culturally. Pupils have opportunities to lead the worship for the whole school and do so reflectively. Religious education and geography are well used to develop pupils' appreciation of different faiths and cultures. They learn to respect and value people from different backgrounds as equals. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The overwhelming majority of parents value the school greatly. They speak highly of its ethos and the quality of education provided. One parent said: 'This school has helped my daughter be confident and happy. She loves going to school every day. I would very highly recommend this school to anyone. They have amazing staff.'
- The local authority and the diocese provide good support for leaders to enable close links with schools within the local Catholic partnership and with staff in the schools within the federation. This has increased opportunities for middle leaders to moderate pupils' work, share good practice and provide support for vulnerable pupils. Opportunities for all staff to benefit from the most effective teaching practice in the school, however, are more limited and this has led to some inconsistency in meeting the learning needs of the most able pupils to maximise their progress, particularly in writing.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Governors bring a wide range of skills and experience from inside and outside the community to support and challenge school leaders. The chair of the governing body is committed to developing a strong team and, following a recent reorganisation, he has clearly established his high expectations of all governors. Governors know where the strengths of their team lie and roles and responsibilities are allocated accordingly.
- Governors have a secure understanding of the distinct needs of the pupils at St Michael's. Governors receive detailed and regular reports from the head of school and visit the school routinely to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of school

leaders' work. As a result, the governing body has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for further development.

- Governors help to ensure that additional funding is spent effectively. They ask searching questions of the head of school to ensure that the funding is having the desired impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Governors ensure that their legal duties in relation to safeguarding are met. They keep their own safeguarding training under review and ensure that school leaders keep them well informed about current safeguarding issues.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, have established a strong culture of safeguarding within the school. Leaders have ensured that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Staff are well trained, vigilant and mindful of the needs of pupils, particularly the most vulnerable groups.
- Staff meet regularly with the designated leaders for child protection to discuss concerns and review pupils' support. Staff are conscientious in working with external partners to support pupils who are potentially at risk.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after in school. Almost all parents who responded to the parental survey agree. Pupils can explain how to keep themselves safe and recognise risk. They know how to protect themselves, particularly when they are online.
- The school's single central record of recruitment checks of staff is well designed and fully compliant with current requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The high expectations of senior leaders, supported by high-quality training for all staff and effective monitoring, have resulted in teaching, learning and assessment improving significantly since the previous inspection. It is now good. The head of school knows that, in order to achieve the best outcomes, pupils need to receive high-quality teaching from teachers and teaching assistants. Despite significant changes in staffing, leaders have worked hard to achieve this. They continue to provide support and challenge where practice is weaker.
- Senior leaders expect a high level of consistency in how lessons are taught. This means that pupils are confident with routines and expectations and respond well. Teachers cater well for the different ages of pupils in the three classes which have mixed-aged pupils. Teachers in a few classes are working exceptionally hard to overcome the legacy of underachievement from previous years.
- Teachers often use their strong subject knowledge and assessment information well to extend pupils' understanding. Practice is particularly effective in Year 6. The teacher regularly identifies misconceptions which pupils can then rectify. Tasks for this class provide a suitable level of challenge and support with strong questioning to probe,

verify and extend pupils' understanding. On occasion, teaching in other classes is not as effective because planning is not tailored closely enough to pupils' starting points. This means that teachers limit what some of the most able pupils and those with SEND can achieve because expectations are too high or too low.

- Pupils are improving their mathematical fluency and understanding. Teachers apply a consistent approach so that pupils have opportunities to complete well-designed problem-solving activities. However, some younger pupils do not routinely reach these more complex tasks or do not move on quickly enough when they are ready to do so.
- At key stage 1, the majority of pupils develop their phonics skills sufficiently to enable them to identify words accurately. Older pupils continue to develop their skills, particularly focusing on comprehension, analysis and inference. Teachers successfully foster an enjoyment of reading and use a range of texts to develop pupils' writing skills. Pupils talk positively about reading and can do so with intonation and expression.
- Most work in pupils' books is well presented and pupils are proud to share these with visitors. Pupils routinely check their work in response to feedback from teachers. Work is improved quickly by pupils using their 'polishing pens' which highlights strong progress, particularly in mathematics. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and adopt a similar, positive approach in their interactions with pupils.
- The quality of pupils' writing is improving rapidly as a result of the many interesting activities which enable them to produce pieces of extended writing across the curriculum. For instance, pupils in Year 6 wrote thoughtful and imaginative poems during their study of the First World War. Their associated whole-school presentation demonstrated their detailed knowledge from their history topic.
- As pupils move through the school, the quality of their writing becomes more assured. Pupils show an improving ability to sustain their responses and write for a variety of audiences and purposes. They understand the conventions of different genres and demonstrate this in their own compositions. Younger pupils use finger spaces and capital letters, forming sentences with increasing complexity.
- Homework tasks enable pupils to further consolidate their skills. Parents are encouraged to support their children's reading. However, further opportunities to support their children's learning in all classes are limited.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Adults provide positive role models for pupils. The school environment is underpinned by warm relationships. Pupils say that they are confident to speak to adults about any concerns and they enjoy being entered into the 'Golden Book' in acknowledgement of what they have done well.
- The curriculum supports pupils' learning about keeping healthy. Pupils appreciate the importance of healthy eating and they know that diet, sleep and regular exercise all contribute to good health. Experiments and investigations in science help reinforce their knowledge.
- Pupils explore different cultures and religions and show a respect for diversity. Pupils

show an understanding of democracy, making them well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Pupils readily take on additional roles and responsibilities, such as 'buddies', liturgy leaders and members of the school council. They carry out their duties sensibly and maturely. Members of the school council canvass pupils' views and contribute their ideas to school improvement. Pupils are proud that their influence and negotiation skills led to improvements to the school's dinner menu.
- Leaders have provided workshops with outside organisations to support older pupils to understand risk. Pupils can talk about these sessions openly and know how to keep themselves safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They are proud of their achievements and keen to work hard in lessons.
- Leaders' work to ensure that parents understand the importance of good attendance has had a positive impact. Pupils' persistent absenteeism has been reduced significantly. Consequently, pupils' attendance is at the national average.
- Pupils play together sensibly during playtimes. They are well supported by adults and follow routines well. Around the site, pupils conduct themselves well and interact positively with each other and with adults. Pupils say that behaviour is largely good and this was demonstrated clearly during the inspection.
- Pupils are positive about their experience of school. They understand about different types of bullying, but say that it is rare in the school. Leaders' actions to raise pupils' awareness about derogatory language have been positive. Leaders place great emphasis on using restorative approaches, so that pupils understand and learn from their actions.
- Leaders have implemented a range of rewards and sanctions. School records show that this is having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Strategies to support pupils who find behaviour expectations more difficult to adhere to are effective. Targeted interventions are carefully matched to the needs of these pupils to help them cope in situations that might prove problematic.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders showed no complacency when dealing with dips in attainment at the end of Year 2 and in pupils' progress in Year 6 in 2018. The detailed analysis showed that some pupils, particularly those new to the school, were not sufficiently prepared to deal with aspects of problem solving and reasoning in mathematics and areas of reading comprehension in English. This was due to individual pupil circumstances, including some pupils missing the expected standard by one mark. In addition, leaders identified the need for a sharper focus on the progress of some of the most able pupils and those disadvantaged pupils who also have SEND.

- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check improved rapidly to above the national average in 2018. Every girl reached the required standard. Pupils use their decoding and blending skills well and the most able readers read with fluency and expression.
- The school's records on the progress of current cohorts show that the strategies to improve outcomes are effective. The results of assessments conducted during the autumn term, as well as work in books, provide evidence that pupils are making strong progress across the curriculum.
- Currently, across all year groups and in all subjects, including English and mathematics, most disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress than in the past which is more in line with that of other pupils.
- Effective support in lessons and timely interventions allow teachers and support staff to help most pupils with SEND to catch up when they experience difficulties. However, assessment information on the progress of these pupils and work in books show that their progress is not always as positive as that of other pupils.
- The most able pupils are routinely encouraged to do work which is more challenging. There is evidence in books that these challenges are generally well targeted and provide opportunities to enable more of the most able pupils to develop their skills and knowledge further, particularly in mathematics. Currently, an increasing number of pupils are reaching the higher standards in mathematics and reading. Although the quality of pupils' writing is improving, fewer pupils reach similar high standards in writing.

Early years provision

Good

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been below the national average for the past three years. This reflects changes in the cohorts rather than deficiencies in teaching or in provision. In some years, most children joining the school have done so with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, whereas at other times the entry profile has been higher. Also, the numbers on roll in the early years have varied considerably from year to year. However, from their starting points, children in the early years make good progress and are prepared well for entry to Year 1.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have secured additional funding to provide a stimulating outdoor learning environment. Activities have been refined to more closely match the interests of disadvantaged children and boys, who have historically performed less well than girls. For example, opportunities to ride bicycles and scooters are provided to develop children's gross motor development outdoors. As a result, children make very good gains in their physical and social development.
- There is strong leadership of the early years. The leader is very experienced and provides effective support for the Reception classes in all three schools in the federation. She works closely with the head of school to identify how provision will develop further in the school. Leaders' strong support for the recently appointed teacher in the early years has enabled her to make immediate improvements to the learning environment.

- The teacher already has an accurate overview of outcomes and provision. She is working closely with the highly skilled teaching assistant, who is very effective and has excellent relationships with the children. Between them, staff have created an environment that is welcoming, nurturing and safe.
- Routines are well established, and children respond well to adults. Opportunities to develop positive communication skills begin with the warm welcome children receive from staff at the beginning of the day. Staff model the language responses they want children to follow so that they develop good speaking and listening skills.
- The revised action plan for the early years is clearly focused on providing engaging activities to accelerate children's progress. 'Learning journeys' contain a good range of photographic evidence and observations by adults about what children can and cannot do. This informs their early assessments of children's starting points and their abilities. Staff acknowledge that some written observations of children's learning are too descriptive and do not focus closely enough on the development of skills. A review of assessment and recording processes is under way to ensure that provision is more closely matched to children's needs.
- Children make good progress in personal development. The inspector saw this when children played together excitedly, and carried out a range of group and individual activities, such as painting and construction. Liaison with the SENCo is timely and there is a coherent understanding of children's needs and identification of the additional support required.
- Children make good progress in phonics. Most children are beginning to read phonetically regular words and blend sounds to help them decode these. Thus, children are confident to practise their reading skills independently.
- Planned activities, both in structured situations and free play, support the development of children's fine motor skills. As a result, children increasingly develop their ability to demonstrate correct pencil grip and form letters and numbers. Staff provide opportunities for children to contextualise their writing and number work. For example, children enjoyed recalling and writing about how they had made porridge in a microwave the previous day. The most able children demonstrated a wide range of vocabulary to independently write well-constructed sentences and they could explain why one minute was not long enough to cook porridge.
- Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe in school. This is because adults ensure that all safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Staff have received appropriate first aid training and they provide high levels of care and support to children.

School details

Unique reference number	106641
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10059032

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Janvier
Headteacher	Damien Thorpe (executive headteacher) Jane Holcroft (head of school)
Telephone number	01226752120
Website	www.federationcc.org.uk
Email address	stmichaels@federationcc.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 November 2016

Information about this school

- St Michael and All Angels is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is a member of the Corpus Christi Federation of three schools. The federation shares an executive headteacher, middle leadership team and a governing body.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British or Other White background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is higher than that seen nationally. An average proportion of these pupils have an education, health and care plan.

- An increasing number of pupils join classes during the school year.
- The school provides full-time places for children in the Reception class. There is no nursery provision.
- Children in three of the five classes are taught in mixed-age groups.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the staffing of the school.
- There is one newly qualified teacher and one teacher has recently joined the school.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school, governors, senior and middle leaders and staff from the school and the wider federation.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority and met with a representative from the Catholic Diocese.
- The inspector visited lessons across year groups to observe pupils during learning. A number of visits were undertaken jointly with school leaders.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally.
- Observations of pupils' behaviour took place during lessons, in an assembly, at playtime and lunchtime and when pupils were moving around the school.
- The inspector jointly reviewed a range of pupils' work in English, mathematics and other subjects with the head of school. They discussed pupils' work and monitored their progress. The inspector heard pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read.
- A range of documentation provided by the school was examined. This included the leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, their development plan, attendance and behaviour information, assessment information and documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the six responses to the staff survey and the 23 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspection took account of the views of the 32 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, which included 19 free-text responses. The inspector also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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