

Inspection of a good school: St Michael's CofE Primary School

Bounds Green Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HE

Inspection dates:

15–16 January 2020

Outcome

St Michael's CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that they would recommend this school to a friend. Most pupils said that they feel safe and happy when they are at school. Pupils enjoy coming to school because their teachers want the best for them.

Staff have high expectations of the pupils. Leaders have taken time to design a curriculum which clearly sets out what they want pupils to know and remember at each stage of their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well in the classroom.

A small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about how bullying had been dealt with. Pupils said that any unkind behaviour was dealt with quickly. Pupils told me that they trusted that their teachers would help them to resolve any disputes they had. I saw that the school had clear and well-understood systems in place to support children with managing their behaviour.

During lessons, pupils join in and work well with each other. Pupils said that they understood the school's expectations for behaviour. Pupils who had achieved the 'Diamond Award' for good conduct and attitude to learning were genuinely proud of their achievements.

Music has a high profile in the school. Pupils listen to and comment on a wide range of musical genres. All pupils have the opportunity to play a number of musical instruments.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have created a curriculum that is well planned and sequenced. They have considered what they want the pupils to learn and have broken this down into a step-by-step approach. Leaders support teachers in their planning and teaching with key questions and vocabulary. This is particularly effective in mathematics.

Mathematics is well planned. Pupils are able to clearly explain what they have been learning previously and how this supports the area of mathematics that they are currently learning.

The teaching of early reading is well organised. Training is in place to support teachers. Leaders have monitored the impact of the staff training. Where weaknesses in teaching have become apparent, they have put strategies in place to ensure that pupils do not fall behind. Nevertheless, as a result of staffing changes, leaders have identified that the teaching of phonics is not consistently of the highest quality. Leaders have identified the need to ensure that all staff are trained to deliver phonics well. Staff provide daily additional phonics support for children in the early years. They carefully choose reading books to improve pupils' fluency and enjoyment of reading. Staff teach older pupils to question and infer information from texts. Pupils read a range of different books including non-fiction and poetry. Pupils said that they enjoy reading. They enjoy choosing books they want to read themselves and like to make recommendations for each other.

Pupils learn essential vocabulary at the beginning of each lesson. This helps pupils to articulate their thoughts using the correct terminology from the outset. In science, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to complete practical experiments. These help to illustrate scientific principles and allow pupils to test these concepts for themselves. I saw pupils clearly enjoying these activities. They were able to talk to me about how lessons taught earlier in the year helped them to understand this new learning.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Teachers take time to ensure that all their planned activities are adapted where necessary so that these pupils can access the full curriculum. Leaders seek support from a range of outside agencies so that they meet the needs of these pupils.

In addition to English, mathematics and science, planning for other subjects is in place. Teachers make links between subjects to connect pupils' learning. Leaders have identified that the curriculum is new and needs time to fully embed. Staff enrich the curriculum with special events, such as Diwali lunches and visiting the London landmarks after which their classes are named. These activities spark pupils' interest in their learning.

St Michael's Parish Church plays an important part in school life and the ethos of the school. Pupils told me that the school helps them to better understand and respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally. Staff provide pupils with opportunities to explore science and technology during playtimes with activities such as paper spinners and balloon rockets.

Leaders have worked hard to involve parents in school life. They have organised 'reading cafes' where parents can read with their children. Staff leading the events give parents ideas and techniques to better support their children with reading. By developing these strong relationships with parents, leaders aim to work more closely with families to improve pupils' attendance.

Leaders of the academy trust and the local academy committee have a clear understanding of the areas the school needs to further develop. The members of these groups work with school leaders towards these shared goals.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive training in how to keep pupils safe and how to identify the potential signs of abuse. This training is regularly updated. In regular meetings, leaders provide staff with all the necessary updates to legislation and procedures. All staff work hard to identify pupils' needs. Leaders seek support from outside agencies when appropriate and act on this. Robust records are kept so that staff can analyse issues quickly.

Pupils told me that staff teach them how to stay safe. Outside speakers, such as the police, have been invited into the school to talk about issues which might affect pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- As a result of staff turnover, the teaching of early reading and phonics is sometimes inconsistent. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the training required to teach phonics consistently well. The school has identified weaknesses in teaching and put in place additional staff to prevent pupils from falling behind. Leaders need to ensure that this support continues to help pupils learn.
- Leaders have identified that, while fully planned and taught, the curriculum is in an early stage of development. Leaders should continue to monitor how well the curriculum is implemented and make changes where necessary so that all pupils achieve well in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Michael's CofE Primary School, to be good in October 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	139175
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10121596
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Cumberland
Headteachers	Simon Knowles (Executive Headteacher) Meera Shah (Head of School)
Website	www.stmichaelsn22.lidsact.org
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2016

Information about this school

- St Michael's CofE Primary School has one class in each year group.
- The head of school has been in post since April 2019.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the executive headteacher, head of school and members of staff. I also met with members of the local academy committee and chief executive officer of the academy trust.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and science. For each of these subjects, I held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- I spoke with parents and considered the seven responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses from parents.
- I spoke with pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. I also considered safeguarding records, documentation and the school's single central record of staff suitability checks.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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