

Inspection of St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lyme Regis

Kings Way, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3DY

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this warm, welcoming school. Leaders ensure that the vision and values of the school are part of everyday life for all. Everyone understands the core mission to 'do to others as you would like them to do to you'. Pupils and staff share a language that helps them to understand how to behave individually and as a community.

Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for all pupils. However, the quality of education is not yet good. Pupils experience too much variety in the way teachers deliver the curriculum.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. There is a calm, orderly atmosphere. However, in some lessons, pupils are too passive as there is not enough challenge for them. This is because leaders have not set out the curriculum in enough detail.

Relationships are positive in the school. Pupils and staff share a mutual respect. Pupils say that 'there isn't anyone you wouldn't trust' when talking about sharing a worry or a concern. They feel that all staff listen to them and encourage them to do their best.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that builds on the school's unique locality. The curriculum also ensures pupils have the opportunity to broaden their knowledge, experience and understanding of the world.

Key knowledge is sequenced from the early years onwards, which gives structure to learning. However, knowledge is not broken down into small enough steps to ensure that pupils secure understanding and then build on this. This means that pupils struggle to know more and remember more as they move through the curriculum.

There is a clear system for identifying pupils who may have additional needs. Leaders support teachers so they know how to meet these needs and remove barriers to pupils' learning. However, individual plans are not specific enough. The lack of detail in curriculum plans hampers the progress that pupils with SEND can make.

Leaders have prioritised developing a love of reading at the school. Pupils can talk about books they have enjoyed reading or those that they have had read to them. However, the teaching of reading is not effective enough, particularly for pupils in early years and key stage 1. Pupils in these year groups are behind where they should be in their phonics. Recent changes are now having an impact but there is work to do to ensure they catch up with peers nationally. Leaders have not yet ensured that teachers and support staff have strong enough subject knowledge.

Plans for pupils' personal development are built on the values of the school. They take part in citizenship activities such as local beach cleaning and raising funds for Ukraine. Pupils learn about respect and tolerance and how people can be different. One child said that at this school everyone 'respects people for who they are'. They learn about relationships and positive friendships. Before the pandemic, pupils enjoyed a broad range of clubs and are excited about many of these restarting.

Governors are ambitious for pupils. They are committed to their work and have revised the way they support and challenge leaders. They are knowledgeable about the school and carry out their core functions with diligence. Leaders' recent work with external agencies now means developments are faster paced.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant and effective at helping to keep children safe. They work well with external agencies to get the right help at the right time for families.

Training ensures that staff are knowledgeable about the risks to children, particularly the local risks their children face. They are vigilant and use the agreed systems for recording and reporting concerns. This means that concerns are acted on in a timely manner.

Pupils have a good understanding of safeguarding. They learn about good and bad secrets and who they can talk to if they are worried. They also have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet or playing online games.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not secured the effective implementation of the reading curriculum. Plans for this important aspect of learning are not ambitious enough. This means that too many pupils have not made enough progress in their phonics and reading. Leaders must ensure that the reading curriculum is ambitious and that staff have the subject knowledge to deliver this curriculum effectively so that pupils reach the standard of which they are capable.
- The curriculum is not planned with enough detail. As a result, pupils are unable to make good progress in key knowledge or build understanding of important concepts in many subjects. The curriculum needs to be broken down into smaller steps so that teachers can help pupils to secure this knowledge and understanding.
- The implementation of the curriculum is inconsistent across classes and subjects. This means that pupils are not learning as well as leaders intend. Leaders need to

ensure that teachers deliver the curriculum as they expect so that pupils can build knowledge and skills well.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	113851
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10211744
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Betty Wood
Headteacher	Nick Kiddle
Website	www.stmichaelslyme.dorset.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Salisbury.
- Its last section 48 (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection took place in May 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and PE. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum

with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority and spoke with a representative from the diocese.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss how they keep pupils safe in school. They considered the school's recruitment procedures, staff induction and training, records of concerns and their engagement with external agencies. The inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration responses to the staff's and pupils' surveys.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school's self-evaluation document, evaluation reports and documentation relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Angela Folland, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stewart Gale

Her Majesty's Inspector

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