

Inspection of a good school: St Michael and All Angels Church of England Primary & Pre School

Meadow Close, Greenacres Estate, Shelf, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 7QU

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Outcome

St Michael and All Angels Church of England Primary & Pre School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Michael and All Angels Church of England Primary & Pre School is a friendly and welcoming place to learn. The school's core values, which include respect, resilience and cooperation, are woven through all that the school does. They are seen as values for life. The majority of parents are happy with the provision that their children receive. Some comments to the inspector included, 'I am delighted that my children have had the benefit of attending this school,' and 'This school has a wonderful community feel.'

Pupils are extremely polite. They show great respect for their teachers and one another. They listen well and show great curiosity in their learning. Pupils chat with enthusiasm and confidence about their work. They particularly highlight that their teachers are experts, talking animatedly about recent lessons that they have enjoyed.

Adults and pupils form strong partnerships. The support for pupils' well-being and welfare is a priority. As such, pupils feel safe and well cared for. They trust adults to swiftly sort out any problems that might arise. Bullying is rare.

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

Pupils learn to read fluently. This is because leaders ensure access to regular coaching and good-quality professional development. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly. If pupils are falling behind, they are given immediate support to catch up. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. This develops pupils' confidence well. Leaders recognise that pupils need a broad vocabulary to become fluent readers and succeed across the curriculum. As such, they have worked to create resources which aid pupils' vocabulary throughout the curriculum. Teachers focus on developing pupils' language and communication from pre-school through to Year 6. Every

member of staff knows the importance of this. As a result, pupils get every opportunity to practise these skills.

A significant number of pupils do not have well-developed handwriting skills. This affects many pupils' ability to write fluently. The speed with which they are able to write means that they lose motivation and lack confidence in themselves as writers. Leaders have identified this and are implementing plans to support pupils.

Teaching programmes match the scope and ambition of the national curriculum. In mathematics, leaders have considered the important knowledge pupils need to learn. This is well sequenced. Pupils understand more complex ideas by building on what they have learned before. Careful sequencing allows teachers to check pupils' understanding so that misconceptions are addressed quickly. Furthermore, pupils express true delight in this subject. They comment that all of their classmates are excited when learning mathematics. They say that this is because their teachers are experts and teach it well.

In some other subjects, such as science and history, leaders have not yet refined the important ideas that pupils need to learn and remember. This means that pupils' 'learning journeys' in these subjects are not well focused on what pupils need to know. Similarly, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to practise or refine their skills. This means that pupils are not always well equipped to complete some of the ambitious end pieces that are expected.

The school's pre-school and Reception class provide secure foundations for children's future learning. Staff deliver the curriculum effectively. They know their children well, and the children respond with joy and great interest.

Pupils conduct themselves well. They are keen to do their best in lessons. They are rarely disrupted from their work because everyone is engaged in their learning. Older pupils say that this is because they are respectful of others.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents. For example, pupils benefit from cycle training and enjoy attending clubs. However, some pupils and parents reflect that these opportunities to attend after-school clubs are limited.

The school is well led. School leaders, including governors, understand the strengths of the school and have appropriate plans to help it improve further. Staff enjoy working at the school and are proud to be part of the school community. They feel well supported by leaders who are considerate of their workload. The school's partnership with parents and carers is strong, and most parents are fulsome in their praise of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff complete a comprehensive range of training to identify when a pupil could be at risk. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, staff pass these to

leaders and timely action is taken to support pupils to get the help they need. It is clear that leaders foster constructive relationships with external services. Leaders have ensured that the right checks have been made on adults who work with children. The school's single central record is well maintained by the school's administrative team.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of the dangers they may face when online and those they might face when crossing roads or travelling to school independently. Pupils have a strong sense of doing the right thing. They are quietly assertive; priding themselves in making well-informed decisions.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, such as history and science, leaders have not yet refined their curriculum intentions in each unit of work. Consequently, they have not yet identified, with sufficient precision, the important knowledge which will realise these intentions. As a result, teachers are not ensuring that all learning is purposeful. Some of the activities do not contribute to the end goal. Leaders should ensure that the curriculums in these subjects identify the important knowledge in a logical manner so that pupils can embed earlier learning and build securely on what they know.
- A number of pupils are insecure in their abilities to correctly form letters when writing. This means that pupils do not write with fluency. The speed of their writing is slowed, and this affects their confidence as writers. Leaders have identified this. Leaders should work at pace to ensure sufficient time and practice for pupils to improve. Similarly, leaders should establish clear expectations for the correct formation of letters in time for the youngest pupils to move through school.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

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.

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	107570
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10211289
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joanne Feltham
Headteacher	Claire Berry
Website	www.st-michaelangels.calderdale.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	25 and 26 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school was judged to be good at its most recent inspection of denominational education and the content of the school's collective worship under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place on 11 October 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of the previous section 48 inspection.
- St Michael and All Angels Church of England Primary does not use alternative provision.
- The school provides an early years provision for children from the age of two years old.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector spoke to leaders about their plans for history.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, subject leaders and other members of staff. The inspector met with those responsible for governance, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. The inspector spoke to a representative of the Diocese of Leeds and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour, both in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. He gathered pupils' views from both formal and informal discussions.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and the minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspector checked the school's single central record, met with the school's designated safeguarding lead and reviewed safeguarding information.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also took account of the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Marcus Newby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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