

Inspection of a good school: St Michael's Church of England School, Louth

Monks Dyke Road, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 9AR

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 October 2022

Outcome

St Michael's Church of England School, Louth continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud that they attend this school. They appreciate the way that their teachers make learning interesting. They know that they can seek help should they need it. One pupil spoke for many when they said: 'When I am stuck, someone always comes to help me. The teachers are good at giving us support.'

Leaders do everything they can to keep pupils safe in school and make sure that they are learning. Their expectations of pupils are high. Pupils are rarely suspended. The learning environment is calm. Pupils value the 'bee points' they receive for their good behaviour. They receive their points with pride.

Pupils play happily together. They understand the school routines. They show respect to each other and to their teachers. Pupils said that bullying or 'falling-out' is quickly resolved by teachers. They said, 'There are always people I can turn to who I know will help me.'

The school values of 'respect, thankfulness, peace, compassion, courage, trust and friendship' are taken extremely seriously. Pupils have a voice in the school. Their views and opinions are listened to and acted upon. They are helped to understand their community and to become an active member of it.

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

The headteacher has brought new ambition. Expectations of what pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve are high. New subject leaders have revitalised many aspects of the curriculum with their knowledge, expertise and passion. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are improving as a result.

The curriculum is carefully planned and constructed in many subjects, but not yet in all. There remain a few subjects where curriculum planning is in the early stages. In these few subjects, there is still too much focus on learning activities. There is not enough focus

on the knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders are aware of this issue and are working at pace to address it.

There is now a well-planned and structured reading programme in place. This is helping pupils to quickly read with confidence, accuracy and fluency. Early readers receive high-quality support as soon as they enter the school. Pupils read regularly and are supported to practise their reading at home and at school. They said that they enjoy the books that they read. Some older pupils have not had enough structured reading support. Help is in place for these pupils. Even so, some of these pupils can still struggle with their reading.

Many teachers are highly experienced. They have good subject knowledge. Assessment in class is used well. Teachers regularly check that pupils have grasped the knowledge that they should. They routinely adapt the learning to ensure that pupils succeed.

Pupils with SEND receive good support. Their needs are quickly and accurately identified. Teaching assistants are highly effective in their roles. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is well planned. Pupils learn how to keep safe. They receive age-appropriate information that helps them to make wise choices. They know how to keep safe online, for example. They are introduced to ethical issues. They learn about the views of others, including pupils of different faiths. They are helped to have a deeper understanding of life beyond Louth.

Staff develop pupils' interests and passions. Lots of pupil-led fundraising takes place. Pupils have raised funds for the homeless, for the local air ambulance and for local food bank charities. They are rightly proud of these achievements.

The school has undergone a great deal of change. Parents and staff support these changes. They support leaders' ambition for the school. Staff appreciate the training and professional development they receive. They know that leaders are considerate of their workload. They are extremely proud to be part of the school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is extremely skilled. She has ensured that safeguarding systems are robust. There are positive relationships between leaders and the community. Families said that they felt confident to approach the school with any issues or concerns. Staff pick up and deal with issues quickly.

Professional curiosity is obvious. Leaders go to great lengths to keep pupils safe. Records are comprehensive. Work with external agencies is productive – indeed, many agencies seek the support of school leaders because of the high quality of their work.

Staff are well trained and knowledgeable. Processes for the safer recruitment of staff meet requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in a few subjects is not well planned and sequenced. At times, there is too much focus on learning activity rather than the knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders must ensure that all subjects have a carefully constructed, knowledge-rich curriculum in place so that all pupils learn consistently well across all the subjects that they study.
- Some older early readers have not received a well-structured reading curriculum. Some are still struggling to read with confidence. Leaders must make sure that all pupils receive the curriculum needed to help them read fluently and accurately. They should make sure that early readers in key stage 2 have the skills they need for their next steps.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2011.

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	120574
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10211593
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roderick Baddon
Headteacher	Sarah Addison
Website	www.st-michaels.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2020.
- There are no pupils receiving their education in alternative provision.

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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to discuss their evaluation of the quality of education. She met with the chair of governors and members of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at the curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. She heard pupils read.
- The inspector met with the DSL to discuss the actions taken to keep children safe. She reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record of staff.

She looked at information about the actions taken to protect the most vulnerable pupils.

- The views of members of staff, pupils and parents were considered.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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