

Inspection of Saint Michael CofE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)

Constantine Drive, Stanground South, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE2 8SZ

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 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

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are charming. They strive to achieve the 'lead learner' or 'super citizen' awards. Pupils like the way that collecting 'smilies', 'stars' or 'merits' for achievement, effort and behaviour leads to rewards. These include individual rewards as well as ones for their 'house' team. In this way, pupils appreciate opportunities for teamwork. The different residential trips add to this. Pupils visit places and take part in activities they may not otherwise experience.

Pupils are keen to learn. They like working with a partner to answer questions and solve problems. Most pupils remember lots of what they learn. For example, Year 5 pupils know the link between decimals and fractions, while Year 3 pupils keenly describe life in the Stone Age. However, when it comes to reading, there are pupils who struggle to read the books they receive. Struggling to read makes it harder to achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils feel safe. Bullying happens, but staff work with pupils to resolve it. Pupils know staff are calm and fair. Therefore, pupils trust and confide in staff if they have a problem.

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

Governors support the well-being of school leaders, staff, pupils and their parents well. This ensures school is a happy place. However, governors lack strategic oversight of aspects of the curriculum and wider school systems. School leaders do not share all information clearly with governors. Equally, governors do not request all the information they need. As a result, governors lack the knowledge to check and challenge carefully. This means issues are not identified and resolved efficiently.

The reading curriculum in its current form is not working as well as it could. Some staff leading lessons and providing additional support do not use assessment well to target weaker readers. These pupils then receive books they cannot read. The changes to phonics in the Reception Year work better. Staff call upon their training and experience to ensure more children keep up with the pace of the phonics programme.

In other subjects that form the school's curriculum, leaders have set out the specific end points they want pupils to achieve. Leaders train teachers to understand these. This helps teachers introduce concepts in a sensible order. Teachers also arrange appropriate activities for pupils to complete.

Assessment is mostly used well to identify what pupils do and do not know to inform teaching. For example, in mathematics, there are opportunities for pupils to correct mistakes once they receive written feedback. Leaders are continuing to strengthen the systems for checking what knowledge pupils recall. Still, what is in place currently works, where pupils remember much of what they learn. Because activities

are matched to the needs of children in the early years, children can access the ambitious activities staff provide.

Other than in reading, the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities helps them to thrive. Sometimes, there is difficulty accessing external support. Leaders and their staff call upon their experience and creativity to mitigate this. They arrange appropriate support that meets pupils' needs. For example, the 'sunshine room' provides some pupils with a calm, focused space. There, they can complete schoolwork and practise their social skills through turn-taking games.

Many pupils behave kindly. The simple approach to the school rules means staff and pupils understand and follow leaders' expectations. Staff in the early years introduce children to this particularly well, settling children using clear routines. This strong start then continues into Year 1 and beyond. When a pupil needs additional support, well-trained staff provide this in a timely, patient way. For example, the 'rainbow room' is a safe space where pupils learn to manage their feelings.

There is a clear system for overseeing attendance. The hard-working staff involved quickly identify and address problems with a pupil coming to school. Staff sensibly balance the need to support and challenge families. Consequently, pupils attend school regularly.

The personal development programme is well thought out. Pupils are caring and measured in how they talk about differences among people. Pupils across the school write application letters to take on responsibilities. This helps them understand the world of work, teaching them to be aspirational. These roles also encourage pupils to be charitable. For instance, the pupil librarians give up their time to help younger pupils select books to enjoy with an adult at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and volunteers receive suitable checks and training. Pupils learn to stay safe through collective worship and the wider curriculum. As staff are calm and encouraging, pupils feel safe to share their worries. Staff spot changes that may identify that a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff promptly report these concerns to leaders.

Some safeguarding records are not as comprehensive as they could be. While all records are kept securely, the cross-referencing of information is not well established, so it is not as easy as it should be to pull information together quickly. However, this does not result in pupils being unsafe as leaders do take effective action and do have sufficient records.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of leaders' safeguarding record-keeping is not comprehensive or well cross-referenced. It does not capture clearly some of the actions they and staff have taken to protect pupils from harm. Leaders should ensure their records for safeguarding are comprehensive and well organised to capture the positive work they and their staff do to keep pupils safe.
- Governors do not challenge school leaders as well as they should. This means aspects of the school that need to improve have not been identified. Governors should ensure they receive the information they need to hold school leaders to account for their work to strengthen the quality of education and safeguarding systems.
- Some pupils are not secure in their phonic knowledge. They struggle to read the books they receive. Leaders should ensure all staff implement the phonics programme well, ensuring weaker readers catch up quickly.

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	136514
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10241101
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	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mikala Dainter
Headteacher	Rebecca Smith
Website	www.stmichaelschurchool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Ely.
- The school has a religious character, Church of England, and was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 on 21 October 2015. The next inspection is due by October 2023.
- There is before- and after-school care, run by school staff and managed by school leaders.
- School leaders do not currently use alternative provision for any pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers, five governors, three representatives from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history and art.
- For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leads, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of other school documentation and policies, including development plans and records of meetings.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and three deputy designated safeguarding leads. The lead inspector also met with two representatives from the local authority. The lead inspector viewed records relating to safeguarding and reviewed the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors also spoke with governors, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors spent time observing and speaking to pupils. Inspectors also considered the six responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by reviewing the 57 responses and 39 free-text responses submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also reviewed other written correspondence from parents and spoke with several parents at the start of a school day.
- Inspectors gathered staff members' views by speaking to several of them. Inspectors also took account of the 32 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Daniel Short, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Wilson	His Majesty's Inspector
Katherine Douglas	His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022