

Inspection of a good school: St Michael-in-the-Hamlet Community Primary School

Neilson Road, Aigburth, Liverpool, Merseyside L17 7BA

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 June 2023

Outcome

St Michael-in-the-Hamlet Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at St Michael-in-the-Hamlet Community Primary School. They enjoy the warm welcome from staff each morning. Pupils said that staff care for them well. They told the inspector that school is fun and that they enjoy their lessons.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils behave well in lessons and during breaktimes. The school values permeate pupils' everyday life. They listen to their teachers and work hard. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils get on well together. They are kind to each other. On the rare occasions on which bullying takes place, leaders deal with it effectively. This helps pupils feel safe.

Pupils, including those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), enjoy the wider opportunities outside of their lessons. For example, they like to select books from the 'reading hutch' in the playground. Leaders offer a range of extracurricular clubs and activities, including athletics, board games and knitting. All pupils are encouraged to attend and most pupils go to several activities each week.

Parents and carers are invited to join events to learn alongside their children. These events cover a wide range of curriculum areas and have included learning about using technology safely and managing money effectively. Pupils enjoy learning alongside their parents.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum that begins in the early years. Curriculum leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subjects that they lead. In most subjects, leaders have determined the important knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this knowledge should be taught. Pupils achieve well in these

subjects. In a few subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. In these subjects, leaders are in the process of refining the subject knowledge that should be taught. As a result, some pupils' learning across these subjects is uneven.

In most subjects, teachers deliver the curriculum well. They benefit from appropriate subject-specific training. This enables them to explain new concepts clearly and design appropriate lesson activities.

Teachers check how well pupils have learned and remembered essential knowledge. They identify and address pupils' misconceptions quickly. Nevertheless, in a small number of subjects, where the curriculums are still new, teachers' checks do not precisely match the intended learning.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Children start to learn to read from the beginning of the Reception Year. Pupils read books that match the sounds they learn in lessons. Leaders ensure that they provide support for any pupils who fall behind in their reading. This helps these pupils to catch up quickly with their peers. Pupils learn to read accurately and fluently.

Leaders promote a love of reading from the early years to Year 6. They enjoy listening to the stories that their teachers read to them. Pupils have access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Teachers skilfully choose texts that broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Staff and parents and carers work well together to review the provision for pupils with SEND and ensure that these pupils' needs are met. Staff receive detailed information about pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision. They use this information to adapt their teaching so that these pupils follow the same curriculum as their classmates.

Typically, school is calm and purposeful. Children in the early years quickly learn the rules and routines. Pupils follow adults' instructions promptly. Most lessons proceed without interruptions. This means that little learning time is lost.

Leaders prioritise their programmes to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about the importance of eating healthy foods, different faiths and cultures and what makes a positive relationship. Pupils celebrate differences and enjoy the opportunities to learn about each other's families and traditions.

The governing body are knowledgeable about the school. They are kept up to date by leaders about changes to the curriculum. They use their expertise to support and challenge leaders to improve the quality of education.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Staff say they feel valued and that leaders are mindful of their workload when introducing new strategies. Leaders provide new staff with appropriate training and support. Parents who shared their views with inspectors were positive about the communication that they receive from staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify, report and record safeguarding concerns. Staff receive regular training so that they are confident in identifying any potential safeguarding concerns. Leaders work tirelessly with external agencies to ensure vulnerable pupils and their families receive the help they need.

Leaders know their pupils, families and the wider community well. As a result, they are attuned to the current risks and issues that pupils may face. Leaders use this knowledge to inform the curriculum for pupils and to design information-sharing sessions for parents.

Leaders prioritise support for those pupils who are struggling with their mental health. These pupils benefit from the help provided by specialist staff in school. Pupils said that there are trusted adults who they can speak with if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. This impacts on how some pupils learn in these subjects. In these subjects, leaders must identify the key subject knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this should be taught.
- In a few subjects, teachers' checks are not matched to the knowledge the pupils are learning. This means teachers do not identify and address the gaps and misconceptions that some pupils have in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that teachers use leaders' assessments to check that pupils are learning the curriculum as intended.

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 June 2014.

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	133330
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10286267
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Amanda Patmore
Headteacher	Laura Moreton
Website	www.stmichaelinthehamletschool.com
Date of previous inspection	17 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This provision caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. There are eight pupils in this provision.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The chair of the governing body took up post in 2022.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that 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.
- The inspector completed deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils and students about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, leaders and other staff.

- The inspector met with some governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to groups of pupils and students about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' and students' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspector held meetings with the staff responsible for safeguarding and scrutinised the single central record. Inspectors considered leaders' safeguarding processes and procedures. Inspectors discussed matters relating to safeguarding with pupils, students and staff.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Eleanor Overland, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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