

Inspection of St Michael's Church of England Academy

Fisher Street, Paignton TQ4 5EW

Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Julie Edwards. This school is part of Learning Academy Partnership (South West) multi-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tracey Cleverly, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joanne Tisdall.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Michael's Church of England Academy is a welcoming and friendly school. Pupils learn about the school's distinctive values of love, hope, wisdom and community in assemblies and through their learning. They know why these are important to their learning and development.

Pupils are kind, thoughtful and respectful. Their conduct is exemplary. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils are keen to do their best and understand learning routines. Pupils are eager to share their ideas and value the rewards they receive for their positive engagement. Beyond the classroom, pupils socialise happily. They enjoy opportunities to mix with pupils from other schools at sporting and outdoor learning events.

The school works in partnership with parents and carers to promote the importance of regular attendance. Most pupils attend regularly. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the nurture and care their children receive. Pupils are safe. They know that staff will help them if they have any worries.

Pupils make visits to places of interest. For example, pupils travelled on a steam train and a ferry to develop an understanding of modes of transport. Pupils regularly participate in local community events. These support them to become active citizens in their community.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. In most subjects, the school has set out the important knowledge that pupils need to learn over time. Pupils revisit learning regularly and link their knowledge to new ideas and concepts. For example, in geography, pupils connect their work about Bondi beach to what they have learned previously about human and physical features. Teachers make regular checks on what pupils know and remember. Pupils who have fallen behind are supported to catch up.

However, in a few subjects, the school has not identified closely enough the knowledge they want pupils to learn. Consequently, not all pupils gain the depth of knowledge and skills they need to prepare them for what comes next. In some subjects, teachers' use of assessment is not fully developed. This means that teachers do not always form an accurate picture of how successfully pupils learn the curriculum.

The school weaves the development of pupils' oracy skills through the curriculum. A structured approach to the extension of pupils' vocabulary begins as soon as children start in Nursery. For example, staff ensure the youngest children develop the correct mathematical language when measuring. Children enjoy opportunities to learn in the classroom and outside. They collaborate with others for sustained

periods. The youngest children learn to identify how phonic sounds join to make words. This stands them in good stead for learning to read later.

In the Reception Year, children learn to read as soon as they start school. Books are well matched to the sounds they know. The school puts precise support in place for pupils who fall behind. This allows them to catch up rapidly with their peers. As pupils get older, they successfully improve accuracy and fluency in their reading. Staff read books to children from a diverse range of authors and genres. Through these, children develop an understanding of inclusion and tolerance, as well as a love of reading.

Staff use the training and advice they receive to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' individual plans match their specific needs. The school also works with external agencies to provide support for pupils. Consequently, pupils with SEND progress through the curriculum successfully and participate fully in school life.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum permeates through school life. This begins in the early years and continues at an age-appropriate level as pupils get older. Pupils develop an understanding of other faiths and cultures. They know that it is important to treat everyone fairly. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of protected characteristics and British values. Younger pupils put democracy into practice by voting for their favourite books at story time.

Pupils develop their confidence through positions of responsibility. Older pupils are 'buddies' to younger children at lunch time, for example. Through these roles, pupils grow in empathy. The school offers a range of enrichment opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves both physically and mentally healthy. They learn how to stay safe online and know not to speak to strangers. Pupils understand potential risks when in the community. For example, pupils talk with maturity about road safety and the dangers posed by parked vehicles obscuring their vision.

The trust and the local governors' committee share the school's mission of 'the future we create every day.' Despite the challenges faced by pupils being taught in temporary accommodation, they are passionate that pupils receive a good quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not identified closely enough the knowledge they want pupils to learn. As a result, not all pupils gain the depth of knowledge and skills that they need for what follows. The school should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects sets out the knowledge that pupils require with precision.
- In a few foundation subjects, the school's approach to assessment is not fully developed. This means the school does not always form an accurate picture of how successfully pupils have learned the curriculum. The school should ensure that the use of assessment identifies exactly what pupils know and remember so that this can be used to inform future planning.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	147851
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10298094
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joanne Tisdall
CEO	Tracey Cleverly
Headteacher	Julie Edwards
Website	https://stmichaels-lap.co.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	27 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2021.
- Pupils are currently taught in temporary accommodation while building work takes place on the school site.
- The school is part of the Learning Academy Partnership (South West).
- The school has a nurse school for three- and four-year-old children.
- The school does not use an alternative provision.
- There is a pre-school and an after-school club.
- This is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2020.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, subject leaders, members of the local governing body, trustees and a representative from the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and by talking to parents before and after school. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Liz Geller, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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