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Inspection Report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 113407
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279164
Inspection dates 8 March 2006 to 9 March 2006
Reporting inspector Ted Wheatley AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Kingsteignton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 3BQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01626 352854
Number on roll	349	Fax number	01626 334379
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father Christopher Benson
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr Martin Harding

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Michael's C of E Primary School is a large school. More pupils than average enter the school after the start of the school year. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and no pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average and a small number of pupils have physical disabilities. Children enter reception with below average skills in most areas, particularly in literacy. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds.

The school has had a high turnover of staff in the last two years and the headteacher started just over a year ago.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that has many strengths and is rapidly improving. It provides satisfactory value for money. This reflects the school's view of its performance. Its self-evaluation procedures are good, as is its capacity to improve further. The new headteacher provides outstanding direction for improvement. He has initiated a thorough evaluation of the reasons for underachievement and low standards and has led the school very effectively in planning and implementing improvements, especially in teaching and learning, which are leading to improving achievement and rising standards. Staffing is now stable.

Children are well taught in the reception year and make good progress, reaching average standards by the start of Year 1. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards are also average, which means that pupils have made satisfactory progress overall. Progress is improving significantly due to challenging teaching that is mostly well matched to pupils' needs. Occasionally, the highest attainers are not sufficiently challenged. Current good progress is leading rapidly to rising standards, especially for older pupils who performed badly in the past. Teaching and learning are now good overall and improving, although marking does not consistently set targets for pupils or tell them what they need to do to improve.

The school has made satisfactory progress on the issues from the last inspection, although no effective action was taken until recently. Care, guidance and support for pupils are strong and have led to significant improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, which are now good. Attendance is good, having improved since September 2005. Pupils enjoy being in school and their personal development is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards further by continuing to improve teaching and learning and ensuring all pupils are suitably challenged, especially the more able
- ensure that marking gives pupils accurate, clearly written information so that they know how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards and achievement are satisfactory overall and improving. Children make a good start in reception. They enter with below average skills and by the time they reach Year 1, the majority have achieved the early learning goals in all areas, indicating good progress.

Standards in Years 1 and 2 are broadly average, which represents satisfactory progress. A small but significant proportion of pupils reach above average standards. In the end of Year 2 national tests in 2005 results were a little above average in writing but below average in reading and mathematics.

In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005 results were very low, indicating very poor achievement based on pupils' prior attainment. This continued a pattern of falling standards over recent years. Under the new headteacher the reasons for underachievement have been identified and dealt with. Staffing issues have been resolved, teaching is more closely matched to pupils' learning needs, and poor behaviour of pupils is now managed effectively – all of which have had led to better attitudes and progress. The pupils in Key Stage 2 are now catching up on their work quickly, but due to the legacy of unsatisfactory progress their overall standards are no more than average. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve satisfactorily and, as with other pupils, their rate of progress is improving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' views of the school are positive and they enjoy being there. Pupils show respect for the opinions of others, which results from a strong personal, social and health education programme. They have a keen sense of right and wrong. Pupils are aware of world issues and, for example, raised funds for the school's two sponsored pupils in southern Senegal. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Social development is particularly good because of increasing links with the local community and the pupils' positive contribution to it, as is spiritual development due to close links with the church. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives through the sound basic skills and the positive attitudes they are developing.

Pupils behave well, a result of the new behaviour management procedures, which they see as a marked improvement on their earlier experience. This is contributing to their improved achievement. A very small number of pupils occasionally misbehave when teaching is not fully matched to their needs. Children are eager to learn, they respond quickly to instructions, and concentrate very well. Pupils feel the school is a safe and secure place to be. Playtimes are happy and productive. Pupils use the new play equipment responsibly for healthy exercise and enjoy the wide range of sports available. The school's system of using pupils to help and support each other is good, helping resolve issues which upset or concern pupils. This contributes effectively to developing personal responsibility. The school has introduced fresh healthy school lunches, which have a good take up, and has achieved several health awards.

Attendance is good and has improved since September 2005 due to more rigorous procedures, including computerised records and early contact with parents.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Recent improvements are having a significant positive effect on pupils' learning and the progress they now make, so that the pupils, especially

the older ones, are catching up on things they have missed in the past. Teachers use assessment information well to identify strengths and weaknesses and to plan work for pupils of all capabilities, although occasionally work does not meet the needs of the most able pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are sensitively and soundly supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are given good information about how to improve their work during lessons, but marking and target setting are less consistent and pupils frequently do not know what their targets are. Some comments on pupils' work are difficult to read and do not set a good example for pupils.

Improvements in managing pupils' behaviour have led to very good relationships, good behaviour and high levels of concentration by pupils. The improving links between subjects motivate pupils by adding relevance to what is being taught. Lessons are lively and interesting and teachers encourage pupils to participate and to think more deeply. Teachers use a good range of techniques to ensure that pupils learn in the way that best suits them. In the most effective lessons, skills are built up step by step and practised, so pupils are confident throughout. A clear emphasis on talking about their work using good subject vocabulary helps pupils assimilate and remember what they are taught.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and opportunities for including literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in all subjects are improving and are increasingly effective in raising standards. Pupils are given an excellent variety of experiences in the arts and physical education. The curriculum is further enhanced by a wide range of interesting visitors and visits that engage pupils and increase their enthusiasm. Pupils speak animatedly about lunchtime activities, which include games and the use of playground equipment that are frequently run by pupils themselves. The school provides an outstanding number and range of clubs for pupils so they learn to use leisure time well, whether it is through caving, playing chess or building a fantasy football team! Good attention to personal, social and health education throughout the curriculum ensures that pupils learn to be happy, safe and healthy. The inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities is particularly successful.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Adults are attentive to pupils' concerns and pupils are confident they will receive help if they need it. The school is a safe and secure place. Child protection measures are sound and understood and implemented consistently. The school counsellor and outside agencies help to ensure that pupils receive appropriate help and that information is shared effectively. The school also provides good support for those families needing help. There have been recent improvements in the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress, though pupils

are not yet as well informed about what they need to do to improve as they could be. Pupils with learning difficulties have action plans that are tailored to their needs.

Induction procedures for reception children and those who join at other times are very good and help new pupils to settle into school quickly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Excellent leadership by the headteacher and senior staff are leading to improvements in all aspects of the school's work which in turn are helping to bring about rapid improvement in pupils' achievement. Leadership and management of subject areas is improving and increasingly contributing to improvement planning. The keys to the fast improvements have been the increased consultation between staff and governors, shared understanding of the school's weaknesses, joint planning and high levels of commitment to improvements. The extremely good support provided for staff has contributed to improved attendance of teachers and staffing stability. In particular, the school has successfully tackled undemanding lessons leading to poor behaviour. There are effective systems to support parents and pupils, particularly those pupils arriving after the start of the school year. There has been a recent marked improvement in parents' views of the school, which are now good. The school has effective means to take the views of teachers, parents, pupils, governors and the community into account and relationships with the local community are good.

The school's capacity to improve is good. It has made an accurate evaluation of its weaknesses and set itself demanding targets that it recognises need to be met with some urgency.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

We very much enjoyed our time at your school. You made us feel very welcome and many of you spoke to us in meetings, lessons and around school and helped us gain a clear impression of your school.

The best things about your school are:

- Your headteacher and staff are really determined to make sure that you enjoy being in school, work hard and make good progress.
- Almost all of you now make good progress and the standards you reach are getting better all of the time.
- There is an excellent range of activities that you can take part in during playtimes, lunchtimes and after school.
- You behave well and enjoy school. You work hard. You are thoughtful and responsible, support each other really well and you treat adults with respect.
- The way the school takes care of you is good and the school is a safe, happy place to be.
- Teaching is good and the range of activities you can take part in out of school time is excellent.

We are suggesting to your school that governors and staff should now:

- Raise standards even more by continuing to improve teaching and learning and to make sure work is hard enough for you.
- Make sure that you are kept fully informed about what you need to do to improve even more, and that you can understand what teachers write on your work.