



St Michael's-on-Wyre Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119544
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280587
Inspection dates 7 November 2005 to 8 November 2005
Reporting inspector Geoffrey Yates

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hall Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		St Michaels-on-Wyre
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Preston, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01995 679268
Number on roll	110	Fax number	01955 679268
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs J Eckersley
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2000	Headteacher	

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 7 November 2005 - 8 November 2005	Inspection number 280587
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school situated in the village of St Michael's-on-Wyre. Age groups vary in size but are all below 20. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. Most children come from owner occupied property but around 20% come from rented property. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below average. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and none is at an early stage of learning English. Pupils start school with broadly average attainment. The school has received awards for successfully promoting healthy lifestyles.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Michael's Church of England Primary School is a good school with a number of outstanding features. The assessments it makes about itself are accurate but provision for pupils' personal development is better than good, it is outstanding. Pupils make good progress and the school provides good value for money. Almost every pupil reached the expected level in English and science in the 2005 national tests. In mathematics, all pupils met it. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was more than double the national average in mathematics, in line with the national average in English but slightly below in science. Good improvements made in information and communication technology (ICT) since the previous inspection have resulted in standards above those normally found. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good and so is the curriculum overall. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in scientific investigations. The care, guidance and support that pupils receive are good. As a result, from their first days in the reception class (Foundation Stage) children make exceptionally good progress in their personal development. All pupils' academic development is monitored well but teachers do not always ensure that the pupils act upon written comments made when work is marked. The headteacher and governors lead the school well. Teachers and non-teaching staff work very well together as a team and under the headteacher's leadership the capacity to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to take part in scientific investigations.
- Ensure that the written comments made by teachers when marking pupils' work are acted upon by the pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement and standards are good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Attainment levels on entry to school cover the full range of abilities but are average overall. From starting school to the end of Year 2, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, the percentage of children achieving the expected level is above the national average. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6. They meet their targets and the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level is 100% in mathematics and 95% in English. In English, a third of the age group achieved the higher level in 2005 and, in mathematics, double the national average number of pupils achieved the higher level. Standards appear higher than in the previous year because, in 2004, the impact on overall percentages (with fewer than 20 children in an age group) of one pupil missing the English and science tests and another pupil having severe learning difficulties adversely affected the overall results. All pupils achieve the expected standard in science with two fifths of the age group achieving the higher level in the

subject. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to carry out their own experiments in science and their skills in this aspect are not as good as their subject knowledge. All pupils achieve well in developing their ICT skills and standards are above average by the time they leave.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's provision is outstanding. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in class, and around the school, are exemplary. They are keen to succeed and enjoy school. Attendance is around the national average. Pupils' relationships with each other and staff are very good, reflecting the school's Christian ethos. The pupils play happily together and say that instances of bullying are very rare. They show initiative, for example, by organising fundraising events in support of charities, and take on a range of responsibilities. Pupils' awareness of environmental issues is an outstanding feature of the school's provision. For example, when asked what they cared about one pupil replied, 'I care about the amount of landfill and want people to recycle'. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. One parent commented that this school provided healthy food before Jamie Oliver made it a national issue.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding; their spiritual development in particular is a very strong feature of the school. Pupils respect each other and have a very clear sense of right and wrong. They have a very good understanding of the cultural tradition of others which is developed through activities such as visits made to a school in a totally different socio-economic area and pen pal letters to a school in Nepal.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The key to successful teaching is the very good relationships that exist in all classes. Pupils with learning difficulties are given good support by capable teaching assistants and make good progress.

Teaching is successful in helping pupils to learn well and is especially strong in mathematics. In science, subject knowledge is taught well but pupils have too few opportunities to carry out scientific experiments for themselves. Accurate assessment of pupils' progress enables teachers to understand and cater for their different needs well. However, in the two junior classes, opportunities are sometimes missed to organise teaching groups by ability across the two age groups within the class to enable even more effective use of assessment information. Some good written comments are provided when books are marked to help pupils improve their work. Teachers do not do enough to ensure that pupils take due notice and act on what is suggested for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is of a good quality but investigative aspects of the science curriculum are not sufficiently developed to give the pupils a wide enough range of practical experiences. A very strong Christian ethos underpins everything the school does. There is effective provision for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The curriculum strongly promotes pupils' learning of basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, but offers far more than that. Provision for personal, social and health education is of a high quality and includes drug awareness. The school has received local and national awards including the Green Flag award in recognition of very good environmental awareness, the sports Activemark award and Healthy Schools awards. The curriculum is enhanced greatly by an outstanding range of highly popular clubs and activities. These involve pupils in sports and musical experiences that greatly extend their learning and contribute enormously to their enjoyment of school. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about all the interesting and exciting activities offered to them, especially the environmental club and the gardening club. Parents are pleased with all the school has to offer.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's provision is good. Child protection procedures are good. Pupils work in a safe environment with teachers and other adults taking every care to ensure their safety. Pupils trust staff and know whom to turn to if they need help – 'the staff are always there for you like one big family'. They show a highly developed sense of care for each other and an understanding of why it is wrong, for example, to call names. Regular school health and safety checks and risk assessments contribute to safety. Marking gives pupils adequate guidance about how to improve their work but it is not always followed up assiduously.

Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show that they know that their opinions are valued and that they will be listened to when they make suggestions. They understand the concept of healthy eating and are very proud of their school. One pupil stated that 'the best thing about this school is that it is friendly and nobody is left out'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. Staff have worked hard to make the building an exciting and interesting place for the pupils. The headteacher leads by Christian example, is very experienced and provides a very clear sense of direction and purpose. Under her direction, there is good capacity for further improvement. The very strong focus on staff knowing pupils exceptionally well as individuals ensures that they are all treated equally and fairly and experience success.

The headteacher has made assessment systems more manageable. They are used well in English, mathematics, science and ICT, but less so in other subjects. Good systems are used to check how well the school is doing and to identify where it could do better. Data from test results are used well to provide a clear overview of pupils' progress from one year to the next. Subject leaders monitor and develop their curriculum areas well and identify priorities for improvement. The Foundation Stage is well led.

The governance of the school is good. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and play an active role. For example, suggestions made by a governor to improve ICT provision have been acted upon and, as a result, provision has been improved.

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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?	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	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

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9 November 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for helping during the inspection. I would like to tell you about my findings. You will not be surprised to know that I really enjoyed being with you, talking to you, your headteacher and adults who work with you. The list below shows some of the many things I liked about your school.

You are better at using computers than pupils in your school a few years ago.

It is good to see that you raise a large amount of money for charity.

You are very good at working out the answers to problems in mathematics.

You like your headteacher, teachers and other members of staff.

You are very well behaved and get on well with each other.

It is very pleasing to see you choosing healthy meals at lunchtimes.

The people who are in charge of your school (school governors) are good at what they do and really make sure that your school continues to do well.

All the adults in school work very hard to care for you.

You enjoy all the clubs that the school provides and know more about the need to look after the environment than pupils in most other schools know.

We have asked your teachers to look at two things to make your work even better.

To try and provide you with more opportunities to carry out your own scientific investigations.

To make sure that when your work is marked, you really take notice of any comments made to help you improve your work. For example, if a teacher asks you to use full stops, I would like the teacher to make sure you do it not just in your next piece of writing but every time you write.

I really enjoyed visiting your school and meeting members of the Eco group and other children.

Yours truly,

Geoffrey Yates (Lead Inspector)

Annex B