



St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121140
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 282930
Inspection dates 8 November 2005 to 9 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Anthony Knight LI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	First	School address	The Boundaries
School category	Voluntary aided		NR34 0HT
Age range of pupils	4 to 10		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01502713425
Number on roll	32	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Claire Legg
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2004	Headteacher	Mr. William Peasley

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 10	8 November 2005 - 9 November 2005	282930

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).

Description of the school

St Michael's is a small school and there are significantly more boys than girls, particularly in the Foundation Stage. About a third of the pupils come from outside the school's immediate area. Most pupils have benefited from pre-school experience and the school has developed close links with the local pre-school group. Only a few pupils are eligible for free school meals and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average. The substantive headteacher joined the school at the beginning of September 2005 following a period in which leadership was provided by an acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In accordance with Section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school judges that the overall effectiveness of its provision is good and HMI agree. The school is providing a good standard of education for its pupils, and has demonstrated the capacity to secure further improvement. Staff, parents, governors and pupils are very positive about the happy atmosphere in the school and are working well together to provide an exciting learning environment. Pupils' personal development is excellent. They make an outstanding contribution to the school through their active participation in lessons and their support for each other. Standards are satisfactory overall and pupils are making sound progress. However, while standards are rising, there are a few occasions when the pupils' achievement is limited by gaps in their prior learning and by insufficient recording of work in some subjects. Standards in the Foundation Stage are good and children make good progress. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good. The quality of provision has improved and is good overall. Teaching is good and pupils are well cared for. The curriculum is broad and good extra curricular opportunities are provided. The school recognises that, while there is good provision in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), further work is required to ensure pupils are helped to make good progress in the other subjects. The school is aware that some of the links made between subjects are not as effective as they could be. Leadership and management are good. The governors are acting as a critical friend and parents are involved fully in the school. The school is providing good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards by ensuring that the gaps in pupils' prior learning are eliminated.
- Consolidate learning by making sure that there is sufficient quantity and quality of recorded work in all subjects.
- Ensure that pupils make good progress in all subjects and develop more effective links between them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment has improved significantly over the last two years and achievement in the National Curriculum tests is now in line with the national average. In 2005, all seven year old pupils achieved the national expectation of Level 2 and one pupil achieved a Level 3 in reading and mathematics. More pupils are on track to reach Level 3 in 2006. Pupils make sound progress and achieve appropriately challenging targets set by the school. It should be noted that the very small year groups in this school mean that the analysis of test data must be treated with caution. Standards in lessons are rising and are now securely at the level expected for the pupils' ages although gaps in past learning are inhibiting higher attainment. For example, some pupils find it difficult to write clearly in written tasks even though they are able to form letters well in their

writing practice. Some pupils have yet to fully grasp mathematical concepts such as place value and the relationship between multiplication and division. Opportunities to consolidate learning and increase progress through careful and regular recording of work are also being missed in some subjects. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and most achieve all the Early Learning Goals.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are keen to come to school. They speak positively about the school and are happy and relaxed. Outstanding attitudes are shown by pupils in the Years 3 and 4 class who contribute significantly to lessons by offering their ideas and adding further information about their work. Pupils in the Years 1 and 2 class are confident and work very well with greater enjoyment and sustained concentration than during the last inspection. Very good behaviour and attitudes were also seen in the reception class where pupils work well together and confidently talk about their work. Behaviour around the school is also very good, although sometimes slightly boisterous at play times. Attendance levels are good and there are clear procedures for following up absence. No pupil was excluded last year. Pupils are aware of healthy eating and enjoyed designing their own meals. They adopt safe practices such as wearing helmets when cycling to school. Pupils have written, and diligently follow, the Golden Rules that are displayed around the school. They contribute to the school community by being regularly involved in fund raising events. They are confident learners and increasingly take responsibility for their own learning, attributes which should support their economic well-being in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching has improved. It is good overall with some outstanding features. Positive working relationships were seen in all lessons and pupils are captivated by much of their work. The pace of teaching is excellent as pupils are given exactly the right balance of drive and opportunity to reflect on their learning. Pair and small group work are used very effectively. Pupils' work is skilfully modelled by selecting the best responses and sharing these with the whole class. Good support is provided by the very able teaching assistants. Lessons are well planned and tasks are generally matched well to the abilities of the pupils. In the best teaching, the tasks progressively develop pupils' understanding and maintain interest and personal challenge. Laptop computers are used effectively to support and extend learning as well as develop ICT skills. The interactive white board is used excellently within the Years 3 and 4 class. Good use is made of assessment data to identify areas of understanding that need further consolidation. Marking is thorough and often provides helpful instructions about what needs further improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The provision for ICT has improved significantly. Nationally produced schemes of work are used sensibly and adapted appropriately. However, the school is aware that, in a few subjects, there is insufficient detail in the planning to help pupils make enough progress. Therefore, some links being made between different subjects are too superficial. The taught curriculum is extended well through activities such as a 'Maths Week' and the Science and Creativity Project. Circle time is used effectively for pupils to talk about their feelings and discuss issues. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is good and is developed as an integral part of the school's daily collective worship. The provision for pupils' social development is excellent. Visits to local places of interest and visits from outside speakers enrich pupils' learning and provide opportunities for cultural development. The range of extra curricular activities provided for all pupils is good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All staff know the pupils very well and provide very good care and support. Most pupils are clear about their well chosen learning targets although some younger pupils are unable to read them and so cannot apply them to their work. More able pupils in Year 2 are being extended through working in the Years 3 and 4 class for literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational learning needs are quickly identified and appropriate support given, involving parents effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The recently appointed substantive headteacher has quickly established excellent working relationships with all staff who work extremely well together with a renewed sense of optimism and direction. The headteacher is ably assisted by the second full-time member of staff who has developed an effective assessment system that is being used increasingly to improve the impact of the teaching. There is regular and effective monitoring of teaching by staff, governors and LEA officers. The school's self evaluation is clear, accurate and should help further improvement. The judgements made by the school are generally sound although there is a slightly over generous view of the curriculum and a more modest recognition of pupils' personal development. Good progress has been made in all the areas identified when the school was placed into special measures and the school shows clear capacity to improve further. The governors continue to be actively involved and are providing effective support as a critical friend to the school. Meetings are well run and focus on important issues, such as academic improvement. Good links have been developed with the pre-school and with other schools in the area. Parents are increasingly involved in the life of the school. They say that their children are happy at school and that they are kept well informed through the regular newsletters and informal discussion. Parents are

increasingly helping in the classroom and supporting the school through the revitalised Friends of the School. Good support has been provided by the local authority. This continued support will be vital to the ongoing improvement of the school.

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?	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	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?	3	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	2	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

I enjoyed visiting your school and watching you learn and play together. I particularly enjoyed talking with you about your work. What I liked most about your school - I was pleased to see that you all enjoy being in school. All the adults look after you very well and make sure that you are happy. - You all wanted to make me feel welcome and were very keen to tell me about your work. - You were all very well behaved and worked hard in your lessons. I was very impressed with the way that the older pupils contributed to their lessons by offering ideas and asking thoughtful questions. What I have asked your school to do now - I have asked your teachers to make sure you have learned everything you need to make even better progress. - I would like you to record more of your work in your books and take more care when presenting your work. - I have asked your teachers to help you get better at all subjects and enjoy discovering that what you do in one subject can help you learn in another. I wish you continued success in the future.