

# Micklefield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107992
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	309563
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kath Halifax

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	99
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr M Auty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Louise Donnelly
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Great North Road Micklefield Leeds West Yorkshire LS25 4AQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 2146818
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 2320533

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This small primary school serves an area where many families experience deprivation. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number of mixed heritage backgrounds. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is average. For the past few years the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has been well above average, though this is decreasing. There are three looked after children within the school. The school has achieved the Activemark, and was the first in the authority to gain the higher level Healthy Schools Award and the Eco Green Flag.

Pupils are taught in four classes, with mixed age groups in each class. The school has experienced a turbulent three years. The headteacher is leaving the school at the end of the term to take up a post in another authority.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Since the last inspection a high turnover of personnel and staff absence have caused considerable disruption to this small school. This has had a negative effect on the provision, standards, and the school's effectiveness. Nevertheless, with good support from Education Leeds, the school has turned the corner making this a satisfactory and improving school that provides satisfactory value for money.

Even though this is a small school where standards vary because of small groups, there has been a considerable downward trend since the last inspection. The results of the 2005 and 2006 Key Stage 2 tests were inadequate and pupils made too little progress. During 2006, teachers on temporary contracts taught three of the four classes for most of the year: this had a substantial negative influence on learning. As a result of a more stable staffing and a number of initiatives, teaching and learning have improved and are now satisfactory. This is seen in satisfactory achievement and standards. From a below average baseline, children make satisfactory progress in all age groups. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are now broadly average, but too few higher attaining pupils achieve the levels expected of them, especially in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2.

Training for staff has had a positive result on improving pupils' standards of behaviour and personal development, which are good. Attendance is broadly average and punctuality has improved. The curriculum is satisfactory. To raise standards, considerable time has been allocated to numeracy and literacy, but teachers have ensured time is given to physical activities, personal, social, health and citizenship education, and to the arts. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work: the majority enjoy their learning and understand how to keep safe and healthy.

Parents' views of the school are variable. Most agree with inspection findings that their child receives good care, support and guidance, but some are troubled at how the number of temporary cover teachers has affected their child's education. For a considerable time, links with the community suffered. Relationships are now improving, with the school's contribution to 'Micklefield in Bloom' and the twentieth anniversary celebrations. As in other aspects of school life, there have been significant changes in the leadership and management of the school at all levels. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Difficult staffing decisions have had to be made in order to balance the budget. Policies and procedures have, however, taken too long to be put into place. Progress can now be seen in improvements to standards. Initially, improvement following the last inspection was inadequate, but because of good support from the local authority, improvement and the capacity to maintain this are now satisfactory.

Governors are willing and give freely of their time, but governance is unsatisfactory. Some positions are empty and constant changes in the chair, vice chair and committees have resulted in a lack of stability. While members have discussed standards and staffing issues, they have taken the headteacher's reports at face value and not challenged sufficiently.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

A Foundation Stage Unit has been set up since the last inspection. Children benefit from the adapted accommodation. Good improvement has been made to the outside areas for learning.

Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is below that expected of this age. It is above average in their physical development, but well below average in language, communication

and social development. Progress is, overall, satisfactory. Better progress is made in letter and sound recognition because of the phonic programme recently introduced in the school. However, children's social development remains an area for improvement. Standards by the end of the Reception class have varied since the last inspection. While this is partly attributable to the difference in groups, teacher assessment has not always been accurate. The procedures to record achievement have changed, but still need fine-tuning. Teaching and leadership of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Links with parents have improved, with over 80% attending the open afternoon. Staff recognise improvements need to be made to long-term plans for all areas of learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in writing in all age groups, and mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- Increase the amount of better teaching so all pupils in all age groups learn at the same rate.
- Build on the skills of the senior teachers and ensure senior management supports the governing body in fulfilling its responsibility to hold the school to account.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Strategies introduced by the school and local authority are having a positive effect on standards and achievement. In the 2007 Year 6 national test results, there was considerable improvement in the number of pupils reaching the expected Level 4. Furthermore, the school targets for English and mathematics were exceeded. Inspection findings show pupils are continuing to make better progress and achieve higher standards, especially in Years 1 to 4. Over three-quarters of pupils in all age groups are now achieving age appropriate levels. However, the accelerated progress is less evident in standards in Year 6 because of the legacy of weak teaching and underachievement. There is still a considerable difference between pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics. The appointment of a new literacy coordinator at the start of the school year and the expectation that pupils will write at length at least once each week is raising standards, but opportunities are missed for pupils to undertake a range of writing in other subjects.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Following a decline in pupils' attitude and a high rate of exclusion, behaviour is starting to improve. Pupils once again have a pride in their school and an interest in their work, especially the striking gardens they have created. Comments such as, 'this is my story, I'm very proud of it because I've worked hard, used a lot of adjectives and it's my first published book', demonstrate the better attitude. They speak with enthusiasm of how the school council has enhanced school life and of the work they did to earn the Eco green flag. Pupils talk knowledgeably of their cultural heritage, especially the local mining disaster. They respond well to the Christian ethos of the school, and through religious education have an awareness of other faiths. However, pupils do not have a secure understanding of diversity in today's society. Work on personal development and well-thought out activities in class have given pupils confidence, enabling them to work as part of a team and take responsibility for their

learning, all of which prepare them well for the next stage of their education and life out of school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers' planning and accuracy in assessing pupils' work have improved because of training. Classrooms are more organised, and the use of 'working walls' for English and mathematics are contributing to progress. Some teachers are very confident and this is reflected in good or better teaching. They set work that stretches pupils of all capabilities so learning is accelerated. In some lessons, however, while different tasks are set, the match of work is not always challenging, so the rate of progress slows. The work of support staff is variable. Some are very good, contributing significantly to pupils' learning. Others have not kept pace with the changing role of support assistants and, on occasion, have had a negative effect on the lesson and on pupils' learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Following the recommendation by the last inspection, the provision for information and communication technology has improved considerably and is contributing to increased standards. Pupils are confident when using the technology and have produced some high quality work. They enjoy the wide range of sports, visits, clubs and the annual residential experience. Teachers recognise, because of the focus on English and mathematics, that other subjects are not so well developed, especially when planning for mixed age classes.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Following the recommendation by the last inspection, the provision for information and communication technology has improved considerably and is contributing to increased standards. Pupils are confident when using the technology and have produced some high quality work. They enjoy the wide range of sports, visits, clubs and the annual residential experience. Teachers recognise, because of the focus on English and mathematics, that other subjects are not so well developed, especially when planning for mixed age classes.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management have improved with the support of Education Leeds and are now satisfactory. The intensifying support programme provided by the authority has enabled marked improvement, for example, standards have improved and pupils are far better behaved. The raising achievement plan is focused on the main priorities, and clear how these will be achieved. Teachers have been set suitable targets to improve their performance. These are linked to the school priorities of raising standards and achievement.

The leadership team has suffered through absence and staff changes. This is now settled with two very competent teachers leading the important subjects of English and mathematics. Their

monitoring and plans are driving standards up. In addition to their determination to improve achievement, both are exceedingly good examples as classroom practitioners for their colleagues.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

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

**Annex A**

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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**Annex B**

**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know I spent a short time working in your school. Thank you for helping me with my work and for taking time to talk to me. I think you have done a splendid job improving the garden and playground.

Micklegate is a satisfactory school. Here are some of the things you do well.

- After two years of poor test results, those for 2007 were much better.
- Your behaviour and attendance have improved over the past year.
- The adults in your school work hard to make sure you are well cared for.
- You have worked hard to gain awards such as the Activemark, Healthy Schools and the Eco flag. All of which contribute to your well-being.

Here are the things I have asked to be done to make the school even better.

- To make sure you work as hard as you can to meet your targets so you get better results in writing and mathematics.
- To make sure teaching is at least good in all lessons.
- To use the skills of your senior teachers to improve the leadership and management of the school.

I enjoyed my short time with you and wish you well for the future.