

# St Michaels-in-the-Hamlet Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133330
<b>Local Authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	316087
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graham Martin

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	424
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Steve Gray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jill Stratford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2004
<b>School address</b>	Neilson Road Liverpool L17 7BA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 7273215
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 7260522

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues in depth: achievement and standards; pupils' personal development and well-being; their care, guidance and support; and provision in the Foundation Stage. Evidence was gathered from visiting lessons, discussions with pupils, staff and governors, looking at pupils' work and analysing data on pupils' progress. School documents and parental questionnaires were also analysed. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average school, serving an area of mixed private and local authority housing. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is nearly twice the national average. The majority of pupils are White British though nearly a quarter come from other ethnic groups. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school throughout the year is higher than average. The school has the following awards: National Healthy Schools, Activemark, the Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark and a Pupil Advocacy Service award for peer support. From the local authority it has Healthy Eating, Advanced Level Inclusion and School Travel Plan awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This good school has some outstanding features and provides good value for money. The school is popular and has a strong community spirit. The quality of care for pupils' social and emotional needs is exceptionally good. The overwhelming majority of parents have very positive views about the school and are pleased that their children thrive in terms of personal and academic development because of the high quality of pastoral care the school provides.

There is a wide variation in children's levels of attainment when they join the school. Significant numbers of them have delayed speech and language development. Therefore, their skills on entry to the Foundation Stage are, on average, a little below what is generally expected. Pupils achieve well during their time in school. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is particularly good because of the quality of support they receive. However, some higher ability pupils do not make the progress they are capable of because their learning targets are not sufficiently challenging. Pupils' comments confirm this when some say that they find their English and mathematics targets too easy. In 2007, standards in Key Stage 1 were average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In the 2007 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, standards were above average, although standards in English and science were higher than in mathematics. This represents good progress given pupils' starting points. School leaders have initiated suitable action to improve writing standards. Pupils say they enjoy opportunities to write about things that are meaningful to them. It is too early to evaluate the impact of recent work to raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are very sociable and well behaved. They are happy in school, saying that their teachers make learning fun and always encourage them to try their best. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive. Pupils' great enjoyment of school shows in their willingness to talk about their learning and in the good quality of work in books and on display. Attendance is satisfactory. The school has effective procedures to respond to any poor attendance. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have an exceptionally good understanding of the importance of good nourishment and a healthy lifestyle. They glow with pride when explaining how their display of healthy lunchbox items won first prize in a local competition.

Pupils benefit from a good curriculum that meets their needs well. They particularly appreciate the many opportunities their school provides for sports, arts and cultural experiences. These include singing at the Philharmonic Hall and exciting residential visits to outdoor education centres. Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements in sporting competitions and celebrations of their work in the arts. They make an outstanding contribution to their community. The school has strong links with a number of community partners that help pupils very effectively to appreciate their wider social responsibilities. An enduring local community spirit and outstanding partnerships with local organisations enhance this. Pupils develop exceptionally good economic awareness, such as through the opportunity to run a small 'enterprise shop' business, learning how to manage stock turnover and keep expenditure, income and profit margin accounts.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make lessons enjoyable and create a good climate for learning by displaying pupils' work attractively. Teachers' marking of work is supportive but does not always show higher ability pupils how well they have achieved their individual learning targets. New and more challenging targets for such pupils are not set frequently enough. Academic support is good overall and the support for pupils with learning difficulties

and/or disabilities is particularly helpful in keeping them on track to achieve their learning targets. Pastoral care is outstanding. Parents overwhelmingly compliment school staff on this day-to-day attention they give to children's needs. Systems to ensure pupils' safety and protection from risks are suitably robust.

Leadership and management are good. The school thrives because leadership responsibilities are clearly defined and the whole leadership team is committed to continuous improvement. Self-evaluation is very methodical and extremely reliable, identifying accurately what most needs improving and the action that will be taken. Governors are as determined as school staff to improve the school and play a good part in this. They support fully the work of the temporary acting headteacher during the period before a new headteacher takes up post. Targets to raise standards are realistically challenging. Extensive tracking of pupils' progress is used well to target extra support and boost the achievement of most pupils, though some are not challenged well enough. The school has improved well since the last inspection, particularly in its provision for learning using computers and interactive whiteboards, much valued by the pupils. It has good capacity to improve further.

### **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

#### **Grade: 2**

Children start the Foundation Stage with a wide variation in their level of skills, though growing numbers arrive with delayed language and speech development. Parents report how well their children settle into school and how happy they are to learn. Children make good progress in all aspects of their learning, including their speaking, listening and mathematical skills. By the time they leave the Reception class most children are meeting the expectations for their age. Teachers plan a good balance between informal and closely supervised learning for children. There is an excellent partnership with parents that enhances children's learning. Parents acknowledge the high quality of information they receive about their children's good personal and academic development. The curriculum is well planned, providing a variety of interesting learning activities that help children to develop their independence. The school acknowledges the need to continue to improve the provision for communication skills in response to the growing number of children who start with delayed language and speech development. Leadership is good. The coordinator has a very good understanding of early childhood learning. Her important role in the leadership team gives the Foundation Stage and its development a high profile in the school.

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

- Raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 to bring them in line with those in English and science.
- Ensure that higher ability pupils are set consistently challenging learning targets and that marking supports them in meeting those target

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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**

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed talking with you about how well you enjoy learning at St Michaels. I could see how proud you are of the good work you do, especially when you win prizes like you have for your healthy lunchbox display. Well done! I really enjoyed the conversations I had with some of the school council members and other older pupils. You were keen to tell me how well your teachers look after you. I was impressed with your artwork, the extra clubs you enjoy after school and with all the fundraising you do for local and international charities. I agree with you that you have a good school where you get a good education and learn well.

You have really good attitudes to your lessons and teachers. You behave well and I was impressed with how friendly you all are. Your teachers have good ideas about how to improve your school, such as showing the school council how the school budget works so that council members do not ask for things the school cannot afford! I am sure this will help you to understand why it is important to save up for things you really want.

To make your good school even better, I have asked your headteacher to make sure that more of you do as well as you can in mathematics. I have also suggested that the teachers make sure that the targets set for each one of you really help to move you on, and that marking always helps you to meet your targets.

You have all my best wishes for the future and I truly hope that you stay as fit, positive and healthy as you are now.