

St Michael and All Angels Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107570
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	331420
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Angela Westington HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	204
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Clem Rushworth
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Hamlin
Date of previous school inspection	July 2006
School address	Meadow Close Greenacres Estate Shelf Halifax West Yorkshire HX3 7QU
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector. The inspectors visited twenty two lessons or part lessons, two assemblies and three registration periods. They held meetings with members of staff, the chair of governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation including minutes of the governing body, safeguarding procedures and records, the school's development plans, the systems for monitoring pupils' progress, internal data on examination results and attendance, external reviews of the school's work and a range of the school's policies. Inspectors looked in detail at the progress made by vulnerable groups of pupils and examined case studies that illustrated how the school works in partnership with parents and other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. They also scrutinised questionnaires that were completed by eighty three parents and eighteen members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The academic standards reached by pupils and their overall achievement.
- The academic progress made by specific groups of pupils.
- The outcomes achieved by pupils.

Information about the school

St Michael's and All Angels CE Primary School is situated on the boundary between Calderdale and Bradford, taking in pupils from both local authorities. It serves a mixed area with some economic disadvantage. There are more girls than boys in the school. The school established and manages "The Angels" before and after school club to support working parents and established the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pre-school provision which is run and managed by a parents' committee.

The school has achieved an Active Mark Gold and a National Healthy School Award.

Further information about the school

	School's figures	School's figures compared with other schools
School size	197	Slightly below average
Free school meals	9.6%	Below average
Proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	18.3%	average
Proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups	7.1%	Below average
Proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language	0%	Well below average
Proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	3%	Above average

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Michael's and all Angels School is a happy and caring school where the children feel well looked after. Parents are highly supportive of the school and its work and pupils enjoy their time here. Academic achievement is satisfactory and many outcomes are good. The school's curriculum is good: the recent revisions to the curriculum have increased pupils' enjoyment in the different subjects. The school knows its pupils and families well and provides good pastoral care and support for its most vulnerable pupils. The quality of teaching and learning is variable. There is some good teaching but there is also some that is less effective, particularly in challenging the more able pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of the focused help they receive. There are significantly more girls than boys in some classes, but girls do not always reach the standards of which they are capable. The school has successfully met the points for development from the last inspection and has improved its systems for tracking pupils' progress. However, it has not yet embedded the use of this information into daily practice in all lessons. The school has yet to address satisfactorily its duty to promote community cohesion. Nevertheless, it has shown that it has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the level of challenge for more able pupils by sharpening teachers' use of assessment within their lesson planning and increasing the range of structured opportunities to enable independent learning and decision making.
- Make more rigorous the monitoring, evaluation and review processes conducted at all levels across the school so that they have a greater impact on the raising of standards.
- Ensure statutory requirements for community cohesion and aspects of the equalities duties are met.

How well does the school meet the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils?

3

By the age of eleven, pupils at St Michael's reach academic standards that are broadly average. This represents satisfactory progress given their starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, their progress is uneven: they

make faster progress in some classes than they do in others. This means that a significant number of children, particularly the more able, experience some underachievement and do not reach the higher standards in their class work, and in the national tests, that they are capable of reaching. Additionally, some girls do not make the progress that they should be making. In contrast, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good and more rapid progress because of the well focused help they receive.

Pupils say that they enjoy school and parents confirmed this view. Attendance is in line with the national figure and there are no children for whom persistent absence is a problem. Pupils' behaviour is good; pupils are caring and supportive of each other. One girl in Year 4 excitedly informed an inspector that she "couldn't wait for lunchtime because she was going to look after the little ones". Pupils say that they feel safe and that bullying has been known but was swiftly dealt with. They enjoy the pedestrian training and the road safety work they undertake. Pupils are aware of the importance of good health; they enjoy and appreciate the importance of sports and physical exercise but, despite the school's best efforts, some pupils are less keen than others on eating healthily! The take up of the school's healthy cooked meals is around 50% and not all lunchboxes brought to school contain contents that are in line with the school's healthy lunchbox policy. Despite this, pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 enjoy their daily fruit.

Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school, the parish community and the locality. Many take on posts of responsibility, for which they apply formally, complete application forms and attend interviews. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 undertake the Young Leaders training and use what they learn on this course to help out with the younger pupils. Each class is involved in the Investors in Pupils Standard, as a result of which classes agree the rules for the year and compile an induction booklet for newcomers. Pupils organise fundraising events such as bring and buy sales to support charitable appeals. Pupils' spiritual and moral development are strengths of the school. They respect the school's Christian ethos and respond very positively to the message in assemblies.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

Pupils' attendance and punctuality	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is good practice but also some which is less effective. The variation in quality from class to class in Years 1 to 6 results in an erratic pattern of progress for some pupils: they have periods of strong progress followed by periods of weaker progress. More able pupils are affected most by this variability. The curriculum is good. The school has recently reviewed the way in which the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and pupils have responded very positively to this change. A variety of extra-curricular activities are on offer, which pupils enjoy and the main curriculum is enhanced through regular trips and visitors.

A particular strength of the school is its commitment to, and well-organised arrangements for, the care of its pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and vulnerable pupils are particularly well looked after; the school works well with other agencies to provide for their needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	3
Effective assessment and academic guidance	3
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	2
Support, guidance and care	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The overwhelming strength of the leadership and management of the school is the commitment it fosters from staff. Managers at all levels and governors are highly committed to the pupils in the school and seek constantly to improve. The headteacher and her senior staff have correctly identified the areas of strong and less effective teaching, and certain groups of pupils whose progress has not been as good as expected. However, the management systems to effect change in the quality of teaching, although improved since the previous inspection, are not yet sufficiently rigorous to maintain consistent high performance and improvement. The school has yet to respond to newer statutory duties regarding community cohesion and some aspects of equalities legislation. Nevertheless, the school makes a very strong priority of tackling discrimination. The school has good links with parents, who are widely appreciative of its efforts, particularly the "wrap around care" which was established by the school. The school has some well-established links with the community and it has good links with a nearby specialist secondary school.

The before and after school club is much appreciated by parents. It is well organised and satisfies current legal requirements. The documentation in place indicates good attention to the care and welfare of pupils; the staff who supervise in the club know

what these policies require of them. The planning for the club indicates that suitable attention is given to the needs of the Reception children who attend. The needs of older children are also appropriately met at the club and relationships between the adults and children are good. The breakfast club ensures a secure start to the day for all pupils who attend.

At the time of this inspection, all statutory duties in respect of safeguarding were met. Risk assessments are up to date and the school has clear policies to ensure the safety and well being of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to report any concerns or worries they may have.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvement to outcomes for pupils	3
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	3
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	3
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	4
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

From starting points which differ year on year, but are generally below those expected for their age, children in the EYFS make good progress and achieve well, so that by the end of the Reception year they are working at levels higher than expected in many areas. On entry to Reception, most children have well developed social skills but weaker skills in communication, language and literacy and in calculation and shape, space and measures. Good provision enables children to make good progress and is particularly effective in developing their skills in linking sounds and letters. As a result, many children in Reception have made great gains already and are exceeding expected levels for their age. Children enjoy the Reception activities and are interested and involved. This is because the adults know them well and provide activities that are well matched to their needs. Accurate assessments are used carefully and effectively to challenge individuals and take their learning on at a rapid rate. Those children with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress. Safeguarding requirements are met and good care is taken of the children. Links with parents and other agencies promote the children's welfare effectively. Parents are positive about the support offered by the school to help them manage their children's behaviour. The setting is well organised to provide the children with a variety of activities and opportunities and good use is made of the outdoor area; for example, on the days of the inspection, children were well supported and encouraged to play in the snow. On occasions there are missed opportunities for children to practise and reinforce what they have been taught, for example to apply their knowledge of

letters and sounds in writing activities or of space and measures in the water tray. Those children in Reception who attend the out of school club before and after school enjoy the activities which are planned to meet their needs. The EYFS is well led and managed to ensure that all staff are effective in meeting the children's needs.

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?*	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?*	2
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?*	2
How effectively is the provision in the EYFS led and managed?*	2

* Common judgements made across all inspections of the EYFS

Views of parents and carers

Eighty three parental questionnaires were received, of which 38 had written comments. The overwhelming majority of parents were highly appreciative of the work of the school and in particular praised the school for the level of care shown to their children; they expressed their pleasure in the fact that their children enjoy school and reported finding staff approachable. A small number of parents raised concerns about the level of academic challenge presented to their children.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2006-7, 14% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2006-7, 46% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing for its pupils suitably. In 2006-7, 34% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2006-7, 6% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.

4 December 2008



Dear Children

Inspection of St Michael's and All Angels, Shelf, Halifax, HX3 7QU

As you know, I visited your school recently with Mr Gray and Ms Godman. I would like to thank you for talking to us and making us feel so welcome.

We looked at many of the things you do in school and talked with many of you, your teachers and some of the people who help you. We could tell that you and your families are very proud of your school; and so you should be. Here are some of the things we liked about your school.

- The headteacher and your teachers work very hard to ensure that you and your parents feel part of a community. This is very important because it means that all the adults linked to your school want it, and you, to do well.
- You told us that you feel safe at school and this is very important.
- You behave well; you care for each other and take on responsibilities.
- The school cares for you well; the teachers and adults do their best to make sure that you are well looked after.
- You have some interesting lessons and you told us you enjoy these.
- The children in the Reception Class do especially well.

We have asked Mrs Hamlin and the teachers to look again at how they organise your lessons so that you all do as well as you can in your work. We think that some of you are rather clever (!!! ☺) and so could get even higher results and could do more of your work independently. We have also asked Mrs Hamlin and the governors to improve some of the ways in which they check on the work of the school and to make sure that all the important paperwork is completed.

We are sure that you will continue to work hard and will help Mrs Hamlin and the teachers when they start to make the changes that are needed.

Yours sincerely

Angela Westington
Her Majesty's Inspector

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