

# St Michael's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100044
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	335481
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gerald Griffin

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fr. Philip North
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lynn Trigg
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	88 Camden Street London NW1 0JA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, governors and some parents. They observed the school's work, looked at progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 93 pupils' questionnaires, 13 staff questionnaires and 52 parents' questionnaires and undertook a case study of several pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable.

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

- the variable rates of progress made by different groups of pupils, especially those from Bangladeshi and African families
- learning and progress in reading at Key Stage 1
- the quality of the challenge that teachers provide to secure good progress
- the effectiveness of leaders' plans, for example, to improve teaching, accelerate progress and secure higher attainment

## Information about the school

St Michael's is an average size primary school. One third of all pupils are of Bangladeshi heritage. The remainder are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who do not speak English at home as their first language is above average. Half of all pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the percentage with a statement of special educational need is greater than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also above the national average. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises of a Nursery and Reception class. The school has recently been awarded Healthy Schools Status, Activemark and Sportsmark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

St Michael's Church of England Primary provides a good quality of education within a welcoming, safe and caring atmosphere. These are the key factors in its success:

- pupils' attainment is average and improving, and their achievement is good
- the learning and progress of pupils are good overall and improving
- pupils feel safe and secure in school and their behaviour is good
- pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding
- pupils enjoy all aspects of school and their attendance is above average
- teaching is typically good
- the curriculum is good
- all pupils, including those whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable, are cared for very well
- pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities and pupils who do not speak English at home as their first language receive outstanding support
- parents are happy with the quality of education the school provides
- safeguarding is outstanding
- leadership and management are good.

Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in tackling the underachievement of the more able pupils. Pupils now make good progress in mathematics. The quality of teaching has improved. The school has successfully involved middle managers in strategic planning and monitoring school improvement and their work is effective. Additionally, attainment has risen significantly and the drive to improve attendance has been most effective. These successes, combined with largely accurate self-evaluation, mean that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

There are three key areas in which the school can become better still.

- Teaching is not outstanding because a high level of challenge is not usually sustained throughout lessons so that pupils are always fully stretched. Typically, this is because work does not always match precisely the needs of each pupil. When this happens, some pupils find an activity too easy, although others struggle because it is too hard.
- Progress in reading at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory rather than good because the teaching of this subject is not always effective in Years 1 and 2. In these years, teachers do not use the data they have on progress in reading consistently well to plan challenging next steps in each pupil's learning that ensure they make good progress. Teaching does not always ensure pupils, including those at the early stages of learning English, understand fully the meaning of the text they are reading.

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- The quality of the feedback pupils receive through marking is satisfactory overall rather than good. As a result, pupils are not always clear about what they need to do next to improve their work to accelerate their progress.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 by:
  - matching work more closely to pupils needs and abilities so that they are fully challenged throughout lessons.
- Secure at least a good rate of progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 by:
  - making good use of progress data to plan effectively the next stage in each child's learning.
- ensuring pupils fully understand the meaning of the text they are reading.
- Improve marking for pupils in Years 1 to 6 by:
  - helping pupils know precisely what they need to do to make their work better and so accelerate their rate of progress.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

The lessons observed during the inspection were almost all of good quality. Learning and progress were good overall and standards broadly average and improving. Learning and progress in writing, mathematics and science are good in all years. Progress in reading is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In an outstanding Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of the meaning of a poem about a missing person. Using drama, pupils were developing real insight into the characters described by the author and thinking of different ways the story might unfold. The work captivated the class and contributed very well to their spiritual development through opportunities to empathise with the feelings of the characters in the plot. In a good mathematics lesson seen in Key Stage 1, pupils made good progress in their learning of multiplication. Pupils used blocks to model multiplying numbers and then discussed their findings in groups, which consolidated their skill and added to their enjoyment of learning. In all lessons, relationships are very positive and pupils behave well.

Pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home as their first language, is good. The progress of pupils of Bangladeshi and African descent, which has been slower than their peers in the past, is now the same as other pupils. This is because the school has taken effective steps to improve their level of engagement by providing work that especially appeals to them. The small number of pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable achieve in line with their peers.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because they reflect most maturely on their feelings and those of others. Their crystal clear understanding of right and wrong means that they are extremely honest and do their

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very best to behave well. Occasionally the enthusiasm of younger pupils gets the better of them and they call out answers. They co-operate very well in teams, readily share learning resources and are very alert to and respond quickly to the needs of others. They have a deep respect for people who come from a background different to their own and they have a good understanding of the diversity of British culture.

The rare cases of bullying are effectively managed by the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example when they cross the road. Older pupils know how to keep themselves safe on the internet. Most pupils are committed to a healthy lifestyle by eating a balanced diet and taking plenty of exercise. Pupils generously collect for charity and are keen to take responsibility, for example as members of the school council and readily participate in the local community. All Year 6 pupils gain a good understanding of commerce through visits to a workplace. This, together with their very positive attitudes towards learning, good progress and rising standards means that their preparation for secondary school and future work is good.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Teachers' questions are challenging and make pupils really think hard. Teachers use computers and other resources such as games to promote good learning and enjoyment. Teachers do not always maintain high levels of challenge throughout a lesson because sometimes an activity does not ask enough of pupils to keep them all working hard. When this happens, progress slows a little. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home as their first language. Marking is regular and clearly shows pupils their mistakes. Where marking is good, pupils receive precise advice on what they need to do next to improve their work. This is not the consistent picture which means pupils are sometimes unclear how they can make their work better.

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. For example, the many opportunities to reflect on dilemmas in lively assemblies and in philosophy lessons are promoting pupils' outstanding spiritual development. Many educational visits to such places as museums expand pupils' horizons and add to their enjoyment of school. Year 6 pupils told inspectors how much they had enjoyed and learned on their recent residential visit to the Isle of Wight. There are a wealth of well-attended sports and other clubs such as football, choir and art that raise aspirations. The school has worked hard to accelerate progress in reading at Key Stage 1 and this term has provided extra support for pupils in this subject. While it is too early to judge the impact of this new provision, the early signs are that it is having a positive effect.

Staff use their detailed knowledge of each child expertly to provide a very high level of pastoral care. Pupils turn to adults confidently with a worry knowing that their concerns will be quickly and effectively resolved. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive most sensitive support. Accurate assessments of their needs ensure their learning programmes are effective. Pupils who do not speak English at home as their first language are also provided with outstanding support. Those at the early stages of acquiring English receive expert help from teaching assistants, many of whom speak the pupils' home languages. This means they quickly settle into school and make rapid progress in communicating in English. The school's targeted support for pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable is very effective and ensures they settle quickly into the school's routines, gain confidence and behave very well. The school's work with parents is successful. For example, attendance has risen because of its good support for families whose children had a poor attendance record.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding and the staff share enthusiastically her unrelenting drive to improve the school. Leaders check the work of the school rigorously and use their findings to highlight success and pinpoint precisely the areas of the school in need of further improvement. Leaders' plans to improve teaching have a good measure of success. For example, following checks that showed pupils' practical skills in science were a weaker area of their learning they provided effective training to sharpen staff's skills in planning science experiments. As a result, attainment in science has risen markedly in the last year. The school's work to improve the teaching of reading has been successful at accelerating the progress of older pupils in this subject, but less so for younger ones. The school reviews pupils' progress towards their challenging targets rigorously and provides effective support if their progress slows so that they can catch up missed work. Governors support the school well and have a good grasp of data. They are using this well to challenge the school robustly over the quality of education it provides.

Child protection procedures are robust and of high quality and fully meet current safeguarding requirements. Systems are extremely effective in ensuring that pupils are safe. The checks that the school makes on the suitability of adults to work with children and pupils are most rigorous.

The school is thoroughly committed to ensuring equal opportunities and ensuring all pupils make outstanding progress. The good progress of pupils overall shows plans are largely effective.

The school has evaluated its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context thoroughly, and the contribution it makes to community cohesion is good. The work it has undertaken in helping families from all ethnic backgrounds to support their child's education at home is having a very positive impact in school, which is a happy and harmonious community. Links with schools in the United States of America and France are developing quickly and are starting to provide pupils with an insight into communities abroad.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with skills and knowledge at the levels below those typically expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach standards that are nearer to average when they start Year 1. Children really enjoy school. They are polite to each other and to adults and their personal, social and emotional development are very good. Their development in reading, writing and number is also good but not as rapid as that in other areas. This is partly because many pupils are still developing their understanding of English. However, adults do not always make sure that children regularly practice reading, writing and number work in their chosen activities. Teaching is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Best learning is in the Reception where highly skilled teaching and support staff ensure children are challenged very well by work that closely matches each child's needs. In the Nursery class this aspect of planning is not yet as well developed and children's progress is not as rapid. Children are very well cared for and are very safe in the classrooms and the outdoor learning areas. Parents appreciate the regular and detailed feedback they receive about their child's progress.

Effective use is made of the outdoor learning areas, for example in promoting children's gaining of independence. The small size of the Reception area hinders some aspects of children's physical development.

Leadership provides effective training to sharpen adults' Early Years Foundation Stage teaching skills. Good use is made of outside agencies to promote children's welfare and education. Judgements made about the quality of aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage are occasionally over-generous which mean that some areas for improvement do not receive a high enough priority.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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## Views of parents and carers

A quarter of all parents returned a questionnaire. The questionnaires show that parents are mostly happy with the quality of education the school provides. One parent wrote, 'The school provides a safe and healthy environment in which my daughter excels'. Most of them say their child is happy at school. Parents feel well informed about their child's progress and that the school helps them effectively so that they can support their child's learning. Nearly all think that the school is led well. Inspectors agree with the positive statements of parents. A small minority of parents said they had concerns about their child's progress. Inspectors found progress to be good overall but that progress in reading for younger pupils to be slower than in other subjects. A small number of parents felt that the school does not respond well to their suggestions. The inspectors found that the school readily welcomes parents' views and looked at several examples of how the school had followed up parents suggestions. Several parents said that they did not think the school keeps children safe. Inspectors found safeguarding, at the time of the inspection, to be extremely robust.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Michael's Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspectors received 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	54	23	44	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	56	19	37	3	6	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	54	23	44	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	42	25	44	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	52	24	46	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	52	21	40	2	4	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	42	27	52	3	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	42	25	48	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	38	27	52	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	40	30	58	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	33	29	56	3	6	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	20	38	27	52	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	54	21	40	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



3 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St. Michael's Church of England Primary School, London, NW1 0JA

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially liked listening to your enthusiastic singing in assembly. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. We think that St Michael's is a good school and that it is improving.

- You make a good start to school in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Good teaching helps you make good progress in your lessons.
- Standards of attainment are average in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- Your behaviour is good and your attendance is above average.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you try hard for them.
- The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits which you enjoy.
- Adults look after you very well and are always ready to help you.
- The headteacher and staff are working hard to make the school get better.

We have asked the school to do three things to help you do even better in your learning.

- Make sure teachers keep you all working hard so that you make even better progress.
- For those of you in Years 1 and 2, we want your teachers to make better use of information about your progress to plan what you need to do next to improve your reading and to make sure you understand the meaning of the text you are reading.
- Tell you precisely what you need to do to improve your work and improve your progress.

You can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons, attending regularly and behaving well.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector

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