

# St Michael's Church of England Controlled Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116332
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338796
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Reid

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	267
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Victoria Rogers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Mathias
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 February 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons taught by 11 teachers and attended one assembly. In total 60% of the inspectors' time was given to looking at learning. They held meetings with governors and staff, and spoke to groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies and plans, minutes of meetings and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also analysed 101 questionnaires from parents and carers as well as staff questionnaires.

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

- the current levels of attainment and progress for all groups of pupils
- how well the school helps to build a cohesive community within and beyond the school
- the accuracy of school self-evaluation and the features of leadership which demonstrate the capacity to further improve the school.

## Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average infant school which serves a wide catchment area. Since the previous inspection there has been a new headteacher and deputy headteacher appointed. A very large majority of pupils attending the school are from a White British background, although an increasing number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, with the majority identified with speech, language and communication development needs. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below average. The school has received a number of national awards for its contribution to outcomes for children, particularly those relating to healthy lifestyles, including enhanced Healthy School 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 C of E Controlled Infant school is a good school. It offers a high quality of education and a nurturing environment where all children can succeed. The balance between high attainment, good progress and some outstanding personal outcomes means that pupils achieve exceptionally well. While there have been significant changes in leadership since the last inspection, the focus on outcomes for pupils has been maintained and the school is aware of improvements that will make the most difference. This view is confirmed by the highly positive responses of parents and carers. One parent commented, 'My son is flourishing due to the teachers' encouragement and support.'

Through high quality teaching of literacy and numeracy, and the recent developments in the curriculum, the pupils achieve well. The use made of the Thinking Actively in a Social Context Wheel (TASC wheel), encouraging pupils to explore their learning through creative, flexible problem-solving strategies, has helped pupils to focus and extend their learning. Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are appropriate for their age. By the time they leave the school in Year 2 they are working at levels in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above those in other schools nationally, having made at least good progress. The teaching of some other subjects such as information and communication technology (ICT), while at least satisfactory, is not as strong, which results in some pupils making relatively slower progress. However, recently revised curriculum plans, while not yet having had a full impact, are showing signs that pupils' progress is improving across all subjects.

The outstanding care, guidance and support help pupils to develop positive relationships with others, as seen by their exemplary behaviour and attitudes. They have an excellent understanding of the need to eat healthy foods and take regular exercise to stay healthy. They enthusiastically put this knowledge into practice through the twice-daily 'Activate' and the engagement with the 'Huff and Puff' sessions in the playground.

The new headteacher and her staff have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development through rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's effectiveness. This is informed by regular pupil progress meetings which monitor the attainment of all pupils. The school has correctly identified that a greater focus on promoting community cohesion is required to ensure the school community has a greater knowledge of different cultures and religions. While the leaders, staff and governors realise there is more to do, it is the strong quality of school self-evaluation and resultant action planning which give the school a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- By December 2010, ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good or better across all curriculum areas, but especially ICT, through well-planned differentiated tasks that extend the learning of all pupils.
- Develop ways to assist the pupils in understanding their place in a multicultural society, through:
  - raising awareness of different cultures and religions
  - extending the curriculum to provide opportunities to experience other cultural activities
  - monitoring the impact the school community has on influencing community cohesion within the local, national and global community.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Pupils show great enthusiasm in their lessons and most of them, including those with special educational needs and from minority ethnic groups, make at least good progress. Pupils are rightly proud of their work and are keen to explain what they are learning. Attainment at the end of Year 2 over the past few years has been high, particularly in literacy. In 2009, there was also an improvement in the attainment in numeracy, especially for the more able pupils. The school's data show that many current Year 2 pupils are already working at levels above average in literacy and numeracy, ensuring that the good progress continues. Their skills in the use of ICT are developing, although not as quickly because of the more limited opportunities they have had until recently owing to problems with the hardware and to some lack of challenge in the activities they are given. However, given the high levels of literacy and numeracy skills, combined with some excellent aspects of personal development, the children are well prepared for their move to the next stage of schooling.

Pupils say they feel very safe in school. One pupil said, 'Our teachers help us to keep safe.' Behaviour is excellent and pupils cooperate extremely well with each other. They willingly undertake a range of responsibilities in caring and supporting others, and the role of the school council continues to grow. The School Charter of 'rights and responsibilities' is an example of the growing voice of pupils in the decision-making process.

Attendance is now above average and indicates the extent to which the pupils enjoy school. One pupil said he 'likes coming to school to learn' and another said she 'likes choosing books from the library'. The percentage of pupils with persistent absence is extremely low and improving all the time.

Pupils display a strong sense of right and wrong and show tolerance and friendship to others. They exhibit excellent spiritual, moral and social awareness. However, their understanding of cultural diversity is not as well established and with a growing minority ethnic school community the school recognises this is an area for further development.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
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>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Most of the teaching seen during the inspection was good, with none inadequate. The expertise of senior leaders is used well to model and develop the high expectations for quality learning. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support learners who need extra help. Teachers have good subject knowledge and their use of assessment to inform planning is generally good, with targeted activities to extend pupils' learning. However, this is not always consistently used across the school and across all subjects. In lessons that were less effective, the tasks were not always focused on the lesson objective and it was difficult for the pupils to judge how well they had achieved. Technology is not consistently used to engage learners.

The themed curriculum provides an exciting platform for learning and motivates the pupils well. Their learning is placed within relevant tasks and promotes a creative approach within which the pupils can develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The effective use of the TASC wheel in Key Stage 1 enhances learning through problem solving. It is now being implemented in the Early Years Foundation Stage to further support the transition across the school. The use of ICT in promoting learning and as a

<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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tool for learners is not as well established as it should be. However, there are early indications of this improving with the recently opened ICT suite.

There are excellent arrangements in place to support and care for pupils and to help them develop and learn. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the support their children receive from the school, especially those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The high quality of individualised care given to pupils was clearly evident during the inspection. The school has recently developed better transition procedures which are effectively supporting pupils entering and leaving the school. For example, the weekly provision of the Rainbow room which hosts the mother and baby session has improved the partnership with a local children's centre, and there are planned opportunities for supporting children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage.

*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	2
<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>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and deputy headteacher communicate their high expectations well. They set challenging targets for improvement in all outcome areas for pupils. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and informed through continued monitoring of pupil progress, lesson observations and work scrutiny. Many middle leaders play an active role in communicating high expectations, although they are not always proactive enough in leading improvements in their areas of responsibility. Where this is strongest, a robust action plan has been implemented and within weeks there is a step change in the quality of provision and assessment. The governing body is supportive and focused on continual improvement. They meet all statutory responsibilities and are rigorous in monitoring the effectiveness of care, guidance and support. Excellent and robust safeguarding procedures ensure the health and safety of all staff and pupils. Recently, they have been fully tried and tested and not found wanting. The school has developed outstanding relationships with parents and carers, who 'feel that the school values the support of parents and encourages their involvement with school developments and supporting their child's learning'. Partnerships with outside agencies are also particularly strong in contributing to the achievement and well-being of pupils. The improved partnership with the local junior school and other schools has resulted in older pupils reading with younger pupils and joint planning and moderation opportunities. These and other partnerships have started to develop different parts of the local community,

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although the extent to which the school influences the celebration of a more diverse ethnic and religious community is still limited. However, the school does effectively promote equality of opportunity and this has ensured there are relatively few differences in the outcomes of any particular pupil groups and no discrimination of any sort.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of the good and improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage most children make good progress, leaving Reception with attainment above that which would be expected for their age. This provides them with an excellent start in Year 1. The vibrant learning environment supports learning in all areas of the curriculum and there is a particularly good balance between adult-led and child- initiated learning.

Children play well together and learn good social development skills ' their behaviour is excellent. They are enthusiastic in their learning. The children responded particularly well to the theme of pirates and developed their ideas into imaginative play. As a result of the good care they receive the children have a growing awareness of keeping themselves safe. For example, two children are selected each day to carry out a risk assessment with the outdoor equipment, if the weather is inclement, and report to the rest of the class. Most children need little reminding of personal hygiene and usually remember to put on their coats when going outside.

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was at least good as a result of the planning and assessment procedures now in place to extend learning. Following the dip in attainment in 2009 the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has now



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implemented a detailed action plan which has improved the monitoring of children's progress. She has developed effective procedures to ensure children are well supported, and parents and carers are becoming more involved in their child's learning. The new attainment on entry proforma is an example of this. It combines parental observations with those of the previous setting and those completed in school, all of which provides a more accurate judgement. There are good partnerships with relevant agencies and children with identified speech and language or emotional needs receive high levels of targeted support.

*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

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are united in their highly positive support for the school. They feel their children enjoy school and are kept safe. They say they are well informed of their child's progress and believe the school is led extremely well. The parents' and carers' views expressed through their returned questionnaires reflect the findings from this inspection.

### 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 Controlled Infant 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 inspection team received 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 267 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	75	74	26	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	81	80	20	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	58	42	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	67	33	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	77	76	24	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	68	67	33	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	60	39	39	0	0	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)	59	58	34	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	60	38	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	61	60	38	38	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	57	42	42	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	81	80	20	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	88	12	12	0	0	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.**



4 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Michael's Church of England Controlled Infant School, Aldershot GU11 3PU

Thank you all for making us feel so welcome in your school and for telling us about the things you enjoy. You were all very polite and were obviously very proud to tell us all the good things about your school. We were delighted that you enjoy school so much and are keeping yourselves fit and healthy. You are all working hard, especially in literacy and numeracy. We have said in our report that your school is a good school and there are many reasons for this.

- Your teachers know how to make sure you keep safe and learn to play well together. The good job that they do in this can be seen clearly in your excellent behaviour and the way you help and support each other.
- The teachers plan exciting lessons which you enjoy and help you to make good progress. We will ask teachers to help you to do this in all subjects so that you can gain lots of knowledge and experience to use when you move schools.
- The headteacher and rest of the staff are completely committed to making the school better and better. They want all children to be happy, enjoy coming to school and to achieve the best they can. We have asked your headteacher to help you all understand the differences between children from different cultures and religions better so that you can join with them in celebrating these differences.

We all hope you continue to work hard and enjoy learning.

Yours sincerely

Susan Reid

Lead inspector

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