

# St Michael's Church of England Controlled Junior School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116333
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338797
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Angela Konarzewski

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	369
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Claire Bampton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynne Hignett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane East Aldershot GU11 3SS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 322933
<b>Fax number</b>	01252 331688
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-michaels-jun.hants.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	338797

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 12 teachers in 13 lessons. Parts of many other lessons were also seen during brief visits. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, senior staff and the school council. They observed the school's work and looked at school documentation including improvement plans, governors' minutes, data on pupils' progress and a range of policies and procedures, including information about how the school keeps pupils safe. Inspectors also looked at questionnaires returned by staff, pupils and 74 parents and carers.

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

- action taken to raise attainment and accelerate progress in English and mathematics especially for boys in writing
- the impact of strategies to improve the progress of children entering the school with low attainment and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- action to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection
- the impact of new initiatives to enhance the curriculum
- the effectiveness of the new leadership and management in driving school improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection, including to the leadership and management of the school. The new headteacher has been in post since January 2009, and she has appointed a new senior leadership team. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body are also newly appointed.

Most pupils are of White British background, but the school population is representative of the cultural mix of the area. The most prominent of these groups are of Nepali, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Philippino and Eastern European origin. Some of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, and has significantly reduced recently.

The school holds the National Healthy School Award and the Activemark.

**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?**

**3**

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

**2**

### Main findings

The remarkable improvements in this satisfactory school are largely due to the vision and determination of the new headteacher who has effected significant change in a relatively short period of time. In doing this, she has been well supported by governors who are now more proactive in holding the school to account. Her drive and enthusiasm have ensured the commitment of pupils, parents and staff. As one parent wrote on a questionnaire, 'This is a lovely school. The new headteacher is making a big difference.' All staff say they are proud of their school and they feel involved in what it is trying to achieve. The attainment of pupils when they join and leave the school is broadly average, representing satisfactory achievement for most groups of pupils. As a result of the shared vision and commitment, the quality of teaching is improving and pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate, particularly for pupils entering the school with lower attainment. Much teaching is good and some of it is outstanding, especially in science. However, in some lessons, teaching is not always well matched to children's needs, interests and abilities, so progress is more limited. Also, teachers' marking does not consistently show pupils how to improve.

The strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of the school's work and has a positive impact on pupils, both morally and spiritually. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school and they are well cared for, so their attendance is above average. The atmosphere in the school is calm and behaviour is outstanding. Progress in lessons is enhanced by pupils' behaviour and attitudes, even when teaching is not fully engaging their interest. Pupils are thoughtful and considerate towards one another and their social development is a particular strength. Cultural development is also a strength because of the many opportunities provided by the school to develop an understanding of other faiths and cultures beyond the school's immediate context. The curriculum currently lacks creativity, and links between different subjects are not yet firmly embedded, so it does not inspire learners or promote their learning as effectively as it might at times. Good care, guidance and support, particularly for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and newly-established systems for intervening early when underachievement is identified, mean the school is well placed to ensure progress for all groups accelerates.

The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis and planning for improvement is generally good. The governing body is now more proactive in fulfilling its responsibilities. The headteacher has generated high expectations which have resulted in a strong and shared vision for school improvement, ambition and accurate self-evaluation processes. There is clear evidence of the effect of this vision on the improved progress for pupils over the last year, although it has not yet had a full impact on higher attainment. All this

**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

points to a school which is well-placed to improve further.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress so that at least 80% of pupils across the school reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by July 2011 by ensuring that:
  - teaching is at least good in all lessons so that all groups of pupils make good progress
  - marking and target-setting consistently tell pupils how to improve their work.
- Plan a rich, creative, skills-based curriculum which promotes children's motivation and engagement by:
  - building systematically upon pupils' prior experiences and preparing them well for the next stage in their learning
  - making more links between different subjects to help pupils to see the relevance of their learning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

The quality of learning reflects the quality of teaching, so that progress overall is satisfactory. Where work is suitably challenging and motivating, pupils approach their work with enthusiasm and commitment, as was seen during the special science day where pupils' good achievement in science was clearly evident. Where tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, particularly in some English and mathematics lessons, their progress inevitably slows. Pupils in the current Year 6 are attaining at broadly expected levels. A significant minority of lower attaining pupils are now making good progress, so that the majority attain in line with national averages in English and mathematics by the time they leave. Progress of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is also improving through better systems for identification, but not yet as rapidly.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and they have a good understanding of a healthy diet and lifestyle. This is supported by the school's provision, recognised in its national awards. The school council is active and pleased that pupils are now encouraged to have a say in the running of the school. They told the headteacher they would like to have animals in the school and a new fish tank containing tropical fish has been installed at their request. Pupils' attendance is above average and this, together with their outstanding behaviour and personal qualities, results in good development of workplace skills. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as demonstrated in assemblies and in their considerate approach to one another. They make a strong contribution to the school community through the many ways in which they support one another and in the good reputation they have locally. Consequently, the school is over-subscribed.

**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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

In the outstanding lessons, most notably in science, learning and progress were exceptional because of teachers' excellent subject knowledge and the advanced resources used. Exciting opportunities to carry out investigations into flying rockets, acids and alkalis, electrical conductors and animal and plant cells, using equipment borrowed from a local secondary school, inspired pupils. However, where teaching is less successful, particularly in some English and mathematics lessons, tasks do not suitably challenge all pupils to make good progress in their learning. Interventions to support lower attainers have been successful, so that they usually make good progress from their starting points. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also improving. However, low expectations of presentation and handwriting often hamper pupils' opportunities to demonstrate progress in their work books. Other adults in the classroom often give satisfactory support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but they do not always use their time to support children further by observing and assessing their responses in order to plan future learning for these pupils. The curriculum is undergoing a review to make it more creative and engaging, but

<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.

**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

improvements are still at an early stage. Enhanced provision to improve reading, writing and mathematics skills of lower ability pupils has been effective. The focus on improving boys' writing has also had a positive impact so that the gaps in attainment between boys and girls have been closed. For example, 'myth quests' have replaced 'fairy stories' to engage boys in reading and writing in Year 3. French is taught and enjoyed by most pupils. Recent improvements in provision for information and communication technology ensure adequate access to computers around the school to support learning in a range of different subjects. Cultural and creative enrichment are provided through a range of visits connected to curricular themes and links, and there is also a range of after-school clubs.

Pupils benefit from good pastoral care. The special educational needs coordinator has effective systems in place for identifying the needs of individual pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities and ensuring they are met. Vulnerable pupils are particularly well supported. The school fosters a sense of personal responsibility among pupils, so that members of the school community have a shared sense of belonging.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has ensured that the school now has a clear and unrelenting focus on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement. The revised mission statement, 'to promote the learning of every individual within a safe, stimulating and inclusive community which has Christian values and ethos', has had a significant impact on the ambitions of its pupils, staff and parents. 'Building Bridges, Opening Doors', the new school motto, underpins the vision for a cohesive community locally, nationally and globally. The process of defining a new mission statement has ensured a strong, shared ambition for the school and its pupils. This drive for school improvement has been effectively supported by governors who are beginning to know the school well. The newly-appointed Chair and Vice-Chair are committed to supporting senior leaders and to holding the school to account.

Safeguarding procedures have improved this year so that all regulations and duties are met. Required checks on those who work with pupils are carried out and recorded. The school has a strong, shared sense of community and pride. It actively promotes equality and tackles discrimination. As a result, pupils are happy to come to school and they behave exceptionally well. Pupils from different backgrounds get on noticeably well with

**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

one another. The school is a very cohesive and supportive community and positively engages with a range of organisations locally, including feeder schools and businesses, nationally and internationally. This work includes supporting a teacher in Africa as well as exploring global issues linked to the World Cup. Links with local churches, the cathedral and Christian charitable organisations enhance good promotion of community cohesion well.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>3</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>3</b>

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are generally satisfied with what the school provides. A very large majority agree that their children enjoy coming to school, that they are safe and that the school is well led and managed. A few parents/carers would welcome more help with supporting their children's learning and plans are in place to involve parents and carers in learning and teaching events where they can accompany their children. A few expressed concern about how effectively the school meets the individual needs of pupils. While not being able to investigate individual cases, inspectors judge that support for individual learning is satisfactory and improving through good leadership and management of teaching and learning. A few also expressed concern about communication issues relating to planned school events. The school has taken this on board and has plans in place to establish a new 'Parent Forum' for two-way, face-to-face communication between home and school, as well as fortnightly newsletters.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St. Michael's C of E (VC) Junior 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 376 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	53	33	44	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	51	36	49	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	29	48	66	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	32	39	53	10	14	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	28	38	40	54	5	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	24	44	59	12	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	27	52	70	2	3	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	30	45	61	5	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	30	43	58	8	11	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	23	44	59	11	15	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	19	47	64	11	15	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	24	32	41	55	4	5	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	41	35	47	7	9	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



24 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Michael's C of E (VC) Primary School, Aldershot GU11 3SS

Thank you for making me and my colleagues feel so welcome when we visited your school recently, and a special thank you to the school council and to other pupils who spoke to us during the inspection. The information you gave us about the school was very helpful in reaching our judgements. We were pleased to read in the questionnaires many of you completed that you feel you learn a lot in lessons and that adults in the school help you and show you how to improve your work. We agree that your headteacher has done a good job since she was appointed and that the school is now in a good position to improve further. These are the things which most impressed us.

- Your behaviour, which is outstanding, even though some of you are unsure about this because your expectations are so high. You are very polite and exceptionally thoughtful towards one another.
- The headteacher and senior staff are doing a good job. They are working hard to raise attainment and accelerate your progress so your learning in English and mathematics can be as good as it is in science.
- We liked the way you are developing the use of your school grounds to create more opportunities to learn outside.

Your headteacher and staff are keen to make things even better for you. We have asked them to do two main things which will help.

- Attainment in reading, writing and maths could be higher if all teaching could be as good as the best we saw. You can help by telling your teachers about your learning in lessons.
- We have asked teachers to give you clearer feedback in marking and target setting, and we would like to see higher standards in the presentation of your work and your handwriting so you can take pride in your work.
- School staff are in the process of planning a more exciting way of providing you with learning opportunities by making links between different subjects. You can support them by telling them about your own needs and interests.

Yours sincerely

Angela Konarzewski

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**