

Inspection of St Michael's Church of England Academy

Flanshaw Lane, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 9JA

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Faz Islam. This school is part of Enhance Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Randall, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Townley.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Michael's is a highly inclusive school where the needs of pupils are put first. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive support from staff who know them well. Staff go the extra mile to ensure that pupils' needs are met well.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. They display respect and tolerance for each other and towards the adults in the building. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes embody the school's Christian values of happy, growth, independence, trust and ambition. Pupils are happy at St Michael's.

Pupils have a thorough understanding of different faiths and beliefs. They speak enthusiastically about their learning from educational visits to a local mosque and temple. Pupils learn how to stay safe when working and playing online, and when out in the local community. They make the most of the wide range of clubs that are on offer at lunchtime and after school. These include yoga on 'Well-being Wednesday', film club, drawing club and sports clubs.

In early years, there is a shared vision among staff that all children will be empowered to be successful. Children excel in early years because of a curriculum that provides no limits to their learning.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious for pupils. The knowledge that pupils have to learn is carefully mapped. Pupils build up a deep range of knowledge and skills over time. The school has ensured that the curriculum builds logically from the earliest possible starting points in early years through to the end of the summer term in Year 6.

Teachers check pupils' knowledge effectively as they progress through the curriculum. They identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and use this information to plan future lessons. Most teachers have strong subject knowledge. A small number of staff lack the subject knowledge needed to deliver some curriculum content as effectively as they could.

The school is determined that all pupils will learn to read. Children learn pre-phonics skills in Nursery. Formal phonics lessons are delivered well in Reception and beyond. Leaders quickly identify pupils who struggle with reading. These pupils receive extra support, including one-to-one teaching. This high-quality support ensures that these pupils catch up quickly.

The early years provision at St Michael's is exceptionally strong. Children demonstrate high levels of self-control, concentration and resilience. They are curious about their environment. The learning environment has been expertly put together to ensure that all seven areas of the early years curriculum, such as

physical development, are covered. Adult interactions with children are rich, focused and purposeful. These interactions strongly support the early years vision of developing communication and language. Staff are knowledgeable about the teaching of early mathematics. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to build their mathematical understanding and confidence. Children are fully prepared for key stage 1.

Pupils with SEND are identified early. Teachers make careful adaptations to their lessons to ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum fully. These adaptations meet the pupils' individual needs and enable them to be independent and fully involved in school life.

Pupils are usually enthusiastic about their learning. Occasionally, low-level disruption does occur. When this happens, adults deal with it swiftly and effectively using the systems in place. As a last resort, the school does suspend pupils. On pupils' return to school, staff support their reintegration successfully. The school employs a wide range of strategies to sustain and improve pupils' attendance. This includes offering challenge and support to families where appropriate. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, attend school more often.

Pupils learn about personal development and the wider world through personal, social and health education lessons, collective worship and religious education lessons. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the protected characteristics, such as race, religion and marriage. They are provided with meaningful opportunities to debate issues. Many have leadership responsibilities in school. The 'Collective Crew' of pupils plan and present collective worship, which helps to build pupils' confidence and communication skills.

The school engages positively with parents and carers through activities such as coffee mornings, parent and pupil story time, and home visits. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at St Michael's Academy. Governors and the trust have a thorough understanding of the strengths and areas that require further development at the school. Governors and trustees hold the school's leaders to account well. The school works closely with the local diocese. This collaborative work has helped to shape the vision for the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not have the subject knowledge to deliver curriculum content effectively. As a result, some pupils are not making sufficient progress. The school

should ensure that all members of teaching staff have the required subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum content confidently and expertly.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	139279
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10255595
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	484
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Townley
CEO of trust	Mark Randall
Headteacher	Faz Islam
Website	www.stmichaelsceacademy.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Michael's Church of England Academy is one of the 14 schools that make up Enhance Academy Trust.
- The school is part of the Anglican Diocese of Leeds.
- The school received a statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools in October 2017, when it was judged to be good.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils.
- The school's early years provision caters for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the trust, members of the local governing body (including the chair) and the CEO of the trust. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the diocese.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils about behaviour and bullying. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school's programme of personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Chris Sergeant, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Dughall McCormick	His Majesty's Inspector
Sharon Stelling	Ofsted Inspector

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