

St Michael's Church of England Primary School, Sandhurst

Address: Lower Church Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 8HN

Unique reference number (URN): 150159

Inspection report: 15 September 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children in Reception get off to a very positive start in this school. This is a result of the strong practice within early years. Leaders' high expectations of what children can achieve underpins this.

Leaders ensure that children learn a curriculum that is highly effective. It equips them with the core knowledge and skills they need. The learning environment ensures that children benefit from plentiful opportunities to learn the curriculum through a broad range of high-quality learning activities. Almost all children sustain their interest in these activities.

Adults prioritise interacting with children at every opportunity. They ensure that interactions are of high quality and adults precisely model correct articulation and pronunciation of sounds to children. This means that children develop high levels of oracy.

Staff know children and their individual needs very well. Effective transition and positive partnership work with parents and carers helps staff to identify children who may need additional support at a very early stage. This includes children who may have a special educational need and/or disability.

The number of children who achieve a good level of development at the end of the reception year is higher than the national average. Children, therefore, begin Year 1 being very well prepared for their next stage in education.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils achieve well at this school. This shows in the published outcomes of pupils' achievement in national assessments, which are above average.

Pupils gain core knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with other barriers to learning, who generally receive the support they need to make suitable progress from their starting points. Leaders ensure that reading is prioritised and that children learn phonics from the moment they begin Reception. By the end of Year 1, almost all pupils meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check and read with increasing fluency.

Pupils typically achieve well in subjects outside of reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders recognise, however, that pupils could develop a more detailed knowledge and understanding of other areas of the curriculum. This would further ensure that pupils are very well prepared for their next stage of education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Attendance is a strength of this school. The attendance of all pupils is above that of other schools nationally. This is because leaders establish high expectations. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those with other barriers to learning, attend school often.

Pupils arrive punctually and ready to learn, greeted by staff, who create a welcoming environment. Leaders make effective checks on pupils' attendance. This enables them to identify any concerns early.

Leaders have established an environment that is calm, settled and conducive to learning. In lessons, many pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively and are motivated to learn.

Staff know pupils well and understand their individual needs. Staff ensure that pupils who need additional support, including those with SEND, receive this. Skilled adults support these pupils to manage their behaviour so that they can access the curriculum with increasing success.

Pupils interact positively with one another in all aspects of the school day. Instances of bullying are rare.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of curriculum and teaching. They know what is working well and they take effective action to both identify and address any areas that require further development.

Pupils develop their knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects. Leaders ensure that pupils' learning is both progressive and sequenced to enable pupils to build their knowledge over time.

Teachers generally deliver the curriculum well. They have secure subject knowledge of the subjects they teach. Teachers explain new learning clearly and make checks on what pupils understand. Pupils who require additional help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, typically receive the support they need to access learning. This may be through additional adult support or adaptations to learning. Sometimes, teachers' adaptations to learning tasks lack precision and are not well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, some pupils access learning less well than they otherwise could.

Early reading is prioritised. Children learn phonics from the moment they start Reception. Leaders ensure that well-trained staff teach phonics effectively. This ensures that almost all pupils develop the skills needed to become increasingly fluent readers.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those with other barriers to learning, can achieve.

Leaders ensure that staff accurately identify pupils who face additional barriers to learning. Leaders carefully consider strategies to reduce these barriers. This may be through in-class support or additional intervention. Leaders keep the impact of these strategies under regular review. This ensures that pupils typically receive the support they need. While these inclusive strategies have become more embedded, leaders recognise that refining this area of the school's work would ensure that pupils with additional barriers to learning consistently receive precise support to access learning.

Leaders have recently adjusted the learning environment to include the 'Lighthouse' and 'Sunshine' rooms. These spaces enable staff to work closely with pupils who require additional support.

Leaders work effectively with parents and carers to understand the individual needs of pupils. When required, they work proactively with other professionals.

Additional funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are aware of the barriers that these pupils face and ensure that these pupils receive the help they need.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and those responsible for governance are rightly proud of their school and their community. Leaders describe the school community as a 'family'. Parents and carers typically speak positively about the school. They value leaders' work to create a welcoming environment.

Leaders' checks ensure that they understand what is working well and that they identify the right areas to further improve the school. Effective support and challenge from within the trust helps leaders to plan how to address these areas for improvement.

Those responsible for governance, including trustees and local governors, seek the assurances they need about the school's performance. They do this through receiving reports from school leaders and visiting the school. As a result, governors understand the school's context, its strengths and leaders' priorities. Those with governance responsibilities also ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

Leaders ensure that staff receive meaningful opportunities for professional learning. Leaders typically match training to the school's priorities. They also ensure that staff have access to professional learning provided by the trust. Staff value these opportunities.

Leaders ensure that they support staff well. Staff are positive about leaders' actions to support their workload and wellbeing. Those responsible for governance are also committed to protecting this.

Leaders ensure that they work proactively with parents and other professionals. This helps ensure that pupils, including the most vulnerable, receive the support they need.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a coherent programme to support pupils' personal development and wellbeing. It is suitably broad and ambitious. Leaders ensure that the curriculum for personal, social and health education meets statutory requirements. Pupils typically develop an age-appropriate understanding about what they learn. Leaders recognise that the programme could better develop pupils' understanding so that it is more detailed.

Pupils learn about ways they can stay physically and mentally healthy, about gender equality and healthy relationships. Pupils learn about the importance of the fundamental British values through the school's assembly programme. This helps pupils to know the difference between right and wrong and develop an appreciation for the rights and beliefs of others.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn ways in which they can keep themselves safe from harm, both online and offline. Pupils learn about the importance of not talking to strangers online and what to do if they experience cyber-bullying. Pupils also learn about water safety and road safety, including how to keep themselves safe when cycling on the road.

Pupil leadership roles, such as house captains and climate ambassadors, enable pupils to make a positive contribution to the school. Pupils enjoy attending the trips and visits on offer. They particularly enjoy attending residential visits in upper key stage 2 and the 'Wow' trips that the whole school attend altogether, including a visit to the beach. Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular activities. These include sports clubs, chess club, choir and 'Bible bites'. Leaders ensure that these opportunities are available to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with other vulnerabilities.

Leaders ensure that the school's pastoral offer is effective in meeting the needs of pupils. Well-trained staff provide pupils who require additional pastoral support with the help they need.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They very much see themselves as part of a welcoming and friendly community.

Pupils are guided by the school's motto of 'Let your light shine'. Alongside this, the school's Christian distinctiveness and values of compassion, courage, community and creativity encourage pupils to conduct themselves with kindness and respect, and to make the right choices.

Pupils behave positively in school. They play co-operatively with one another during social times, move sensibly through the school and show positive attitudes to learning in lessons.

Bullying happens rarely. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with any worries quickly. This helps pupils to feel safe in school.

Pupils enjoy lessons and show an eagerness to learn. These positive learning habits are established in the early years, where children in Reception get off to a strong start. Pupils of all ages typically achieve well, as reflected in published outcome data. They learn to read with increasing fluency and develop oracy skills from the moment they begin school. Pupils learn a broad range of subjects. Teachers help them to build their knowledge and skills in these subject areas over time. Pupils with additional barriers to learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, typically make suitable progress through the curriculum from their individual starting points.

Pupils are greeted warmly by staff who know them and their families well. This means that they develop a sense of belonging to the school community. As a result, pupils attend often and punctually. Pupils' attendance is above the national average.

Pupils appreciate the wider opportunities available to them. They enjoy taking part in extra-curricular clubs and representing the school in pupil leadership roles. They 'love' the 'Wow' trips and talk enthusiastically about some of the exciting places they have visited as a whole school.

During their time at St Michael's Church of England Primary School, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in education.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that their inclusive strategies are systematically implemented with greater consistency so that pupils with additional barriers to learning are better supported to achieve well.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently make precise adaptations to the curriculum that are very well matched to the needs of pupils.
 - Leaders should further strengthen the school's broader curriculum so that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, develop a detailed knowledge of the subjects they have been taught and produce work that is of high quality.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Keys 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), Hester Wooller, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Horrocks.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. This inspection took place on 15 and 16 September 2026.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the head of school, executive headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with the CEO, representatives from the board of trustees, the local governing committee and the diocese.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Oxford. Its last section 48 inspection was 12 June 2023.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The executive headteacher is Amanda Ruthven.

Head of School: Jo Lanfear

Lead inspector:

Luke Graham, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

William James, Ofsted Inspector

Anneka Fisher, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 15 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

199

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 268

School capacity

218

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

6.03%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

4.02%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

6.03%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25 (final)	90%	62%	Above
2023/24		61%	
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25 (final)	90%	75%	Above
2023/24		74%	
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25 (final)	93%	72%	Above
2023/24		72%	
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25 (final)	93%	74%	Above
2023/24		73%	
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24		46%	
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24		62%	
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24		58%	
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24		59%	
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24		67%	
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		80%	
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24		78%	

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		79%	
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	3.8%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.5%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.3%	14.6%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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