



SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

INSPECTION REPORT FOR MICHAEL HOUSE SCHOOL

DfE No: 830/6010

The key inspection judgements for this school are:

The quality of education	Inadequate	4
Pupils' personal development	Inadequate	4
Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety	Inadequate	4
Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of the Early Years' provision	Good	2

Compliance with the Independent School Standards:

The school does not meet the regulatory requirements of schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010:

The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

Compliance with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

The school meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Date of inspection: 24-26 January 2017

SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The school does not meet the requirements of the independent school standards. Leaders and managers have not acted on the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection in 2014 and the progress noted during a monitoring inspection in 2015 has not been maintained. Pupils' learning and achievement are inadequate because they do not make consistently good progress in all lessons and subjects. Pupils' writing skills are not sufficiently well developed in many classes and they have too few opportunities to write at length and in a range of genres. This has a negative impact on their achievement in all subjects. In 2016 outcomes in GCSE examinations declined significantly. Outcomes in the English Language examination were particularly low. The school believes that this was due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEN and disabilities) in the cohort. There are no measures by which pupils' progress can be assessed because they do not take Key Stage 2 standard assessment tests (SATs). Evidence from work scrutiny and lesson observation suggests that pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities and those with English as an additional language (EAL), do not make consistently good progress as they move through the school because there are weaknesses in the teaching of some subjects, particularly, but not exclusively, of GCSE courses.

Teaching and assessment are inadequate. There is some teaching which is good or better but there is a significant proportion which requires improvement or is inadequate. Teachers have not received enough support, training and guidance in recent years and this has had a negative impact on their work and the provision they make for pupils. The school has recently reviewed and improved its systems to assess pupils and check on the progress they make but the implementation of these is at a very early stage. As yet the school does not have systems to check the data collected or to ensure that teachers are using the information in lesson planning. Pupils do not always receive effective feedback about their work and the books of older pupils are not marked well enough.

The curriculum is inadequate. The school follows the Steiner Waldorf curriculum and there is a curriculum statement. Staff understand what should be taught in Classes 1 to 8 and their subject knowledge is usually good. There are policies and schemes of work for some subjects and classes but this is not the case for all subjects. The schemes of work are of variable quality. As a result the curriculum is not well enough adapted to the needs of the most and least able and those with EAL. The school does not offer GCSE courses in humanities subjects, which limits pupils' choices at A Level.

Pupils' personal development is inadequate because they are not well enough prepared for the next stage in their education or for life in modern Britain. Main lessons provide effective moral and social teaching and pupils learn about the British values of democracy, equality, liberty and the rule of law but they are not given enough information to help them to understand the different cultures and faiths in modern Britain. Most pupils behave well but they do not always acquire independent learning skills. Pupils' attendance is low. The school believes that this is because families take holidays in term time but it does not have effective strategies to deal with this.

Arrangements for safeguarding and ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are inadequate. Pupils are not taught how to stay safe when online; this was a concern to a number of parents and pupils. Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are effective.

The premises and accommodation do not meet all of the independent school standards because some areas of the school have not been regularly maintained and there are no showers or changing rooms for pupils over the age of eleven. The admissions and attendance registers are not suitably maintained. The school provides a reasonable range of information for parents but it does not make clear how the needs of pupils with EAL will be met.

Leadership and management are inadequate because those responsible for leading and managing the school have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met and they have not actively promoted the well-being of pupils. The management of special educational needs does not have enough impact on the provision made for these pupils but the school complies with its statutory duties in respect of pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. School leaders have started to tackle some of the most serious weaknesses in the school but this work is at a very early stage and it is too soon to see any impact from the actions that have been taken. The provision made for children in the kindergarten is good because the provision is well led and managed and as a result children make good progress in all aspects of their development. The personal development, behaviour and welfare of the children in the kindergarten are major strengths.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

To meet the independent school standards, the proprietor must:

- ensure that appropriate plans and schemes of work are drawn up for all subjects and implemented effectively(paragraph 2(1)(a));
- ensure that curriculum plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan (paragraph 2(1)(b)(i));
- provide personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aims and ethos (paragraph 2(2)(d)(i));
- provide personal, social, health and economic education which encourages respect for other people paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii));
- ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(2)(h));
- ensure that pupils are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraph 2(2)(i));
- ensure that teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3(a));
- ensure that teaching fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves (paragraph 3(b));
- ensure that lessons are well-planned and that there are effective teaching methods, activities and the management of class time (paragraph 3 (c));
- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of the pupils and ensure that these are taken into account when planning lessons (paragraph 3(d));

- ensure that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3(g));
- actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraph 5(a));
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultures and traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures (paragraph 5(b)(v));
- ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (paragraph 7 (a));
- ensure that arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7(b));
- ensure that the school complies with relevant health and safety rules by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11);
- ensure that admissions and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15);
- ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy (paragraph 16 (a));
- ensure that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16 (b));
- provide suitable changing accommodation and showers for pupils aged 11 and over at the start of the school year (paragraph 23(1)(c));
- ensure that the school premises and accommodation are maintained to a standard such that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 25);
- ensure that parents are provided with information about the educational and welfare provision made for pupils for whom English is an additional language (paragraph 32(3)(b));
- ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1)(a));
- ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities at the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1)(b)); and
- ensure that the well-being of pupils is actively promoted (34(1)(c)).

SECTION B:

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. It follows the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE). The school was given two days' notice of inspection.

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed lessons throughout the school in a range of subjects. They examined samples of pupils' work. They observed the life of the school including at break and lunchtimes. They examined the school's documentation, records and website. They held discussions with pupils, parents, staff and trustees. They took account of the views of parents.

The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Mrs Christine Graham
Team inspectors:	Mr Peter Jones, Mr Ted Cohn
Steiner Community Consultant:	Mrs Helen Weatherhead

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:

Michael House School was founded in 1934. It moved to its present site in 1977. It is situated close to Heanor in its own grounds adjoining the Shipley Country Park in Derbyshire. It caters for boys and girls aged from three years and six months to 16. The kindergarten classes include children from three and a half to six. Those aged three to five follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum with agreed modifications and disapplications. The number of pupils on roll has declined significantly in recent years. At the time of the inspection there were 95 pupils on roll, 71 in the main school and 24 in the kindergarten. The school has identified one pupil as having special educational needs and disabilities (SEN and disabilities) and one pupil has an education health care plan (EHC plan). Three pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), they are visiting pupils, enrolled in the school for a three month period. The school follows the Steiner Waldorf curriculum. Steiner's philosophy and his views on child development and psychology underpin the school's educational approach. The school aims to provide an environment and education that will allow pupils to become creative, responsible, and confident adults who are well equipped to face the many challenges of life. In common with other Steiner Waldorf schools there is no head teacher and leadership and management rests with the trustees, the collegiate (a body made up of teachers, staff and the school manager) and the school administrator. A new board of trustees was appointed during 2016. The school manager was appointed in December 2016. The school uses the Steiner Waldorf

system of naming classes and these names are used throughout the report. The corresponding National Curriculum years are shown below.

Steiner Class Names	National Curriculum Year Groups
Kindergarten	Nursery, Year R, Year 1
Class 1	Year 2
Class 2	Year 3
Class 3	Year 4
Class 4/5	Year 5/6
Class 6	Year 7
Class 7/8	Year 8/9
Class 9	Year 10
Class 10	Year 11

SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is inadequate.

Pupils' learning and achievement

Pupils' learning and achievement are inadequate. Children make good progress in all aspects of their development in the kindergarten and they are well prepared for main school. They do not progress as well as they move through the school. Pupils in Class 1 have had a difficult start to the current academic year. They started the year in a combined mixed aged class with Class 2 and moved to a separate class in January 2017. This change has had a detrimental impact on their learning and behaviour. Pupils in Class 2 have not been as badly affected by these changes but their achievement remains below that expected for their age. Pupils in Class 3 and Class 4/5 make good progress because teachers have high expectations for all aspects of their work and development and they ensure that the tasks provided for pupils meet their needs. Pupils in these classes receive effective feedback and guidance which helps them to develop new skills and consolidate previous learning. Their books show that pupils of all abilities make rapid progress from their individual starting points although their overall achievement remains below that of their peers in other schools. The progress made by pupils in Classes 6-10 is inconsistent because the work they are given does not always meet their needs. Pupils' writing skills are not sufficiently well developed in Classes 6, 7 and 8. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write independently and in a range of genres in English lessons. This has a negative impact on their work in all subjects. Teachers do not provide pupils with enough feedback, support and guidance and some of the pupils' books are rarely marked. In some classes and subjects teachers do not expect enough of pupils so the quality and quantity of pupils' work shows a marked decline from that completed in previous years. In many subjects pupils' achievement remains below that expected nationally. In 2016 outcomes at GCSE declined significantly in all subjects. Less than a quarter (22%) of pupils attained A* to C grades in both English and mathematics, there were no A* to A grades in any subject and less than a quarter (22%) of pupils attained five or more grades at A* to C. Outcomes in English Language, additional science, art and German were particularly low. The school believes that the decline in results is due to small cohorts and a much higher than average proportion of pupils identified as having SEN and disabilities. However, evidence from lesson observations suggests that pupils are not achieving as well as they might because they are not sufficiently aware of their predicted grades and what they should do to achieve them. Older pupils do not always develop effective learning skills because opportunities to work independently or as part of a group, to undertake research or to work on investigative or problem solving tasks are limited. When pupils are given these opportunities they respond well and make very good progress. Pupils of all ages are very articulate and they respond well in discussion, although if not well managed these discussions can be dominated by one or two pupils.

The quality of teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is inadequate. Although there is some teaching which is good or better, a significant proportion requires improvement or is inadequate. Teachers have not been provided with any professional development, peer

mentoring or appraisal in recent years and this has had a detrimental effect on their teaching skills. Teachers of GCSE subjects have not attended any examination board training in the last two years, although some have accessed online training, so they are not always fully aware of the changes to GCSE examinations. The quality of teaching in the kindergarten for children aged five and six is good. It provides them with an appropriate range of activities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Where teaching is good pupils make rapid progress and enjoy learning. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Class 7/8 the teacher had good subject knowledge, the lesson was well organised and pupils were given very effective feedback which helped them to develop problem solving skills and become independent learners. Pupils' discussed their ideas and tested different ways of solving problems. As the lesson progressed one pupil began to coach his peers and the discussion between pupils helped both parties to refine their ideas and consolidate their understanding. All pupils were enthusiastic, enjoyed learning, were highly motivated and showed genuine excitement when they solved a challenging question. There are very few lessons of this quality. All teachers have a secure understanding of the tasks and content of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum but they do not always ensure that the tasks provided for pupils and the organisation of the lessons meet the needs of all pupils in the class.

Teachers do not routinely use information from assessment or marking to plan tasks for pupils which would help them close the gaps in their knowledge and understanding. The pace of lessons is often very slow and teachers' expectations of pupils' achievements are often too low; this is especially the case for the most and least able pupils and those with EAL. In many classes pupils do not produce work of good quality because teachers accept badly organised and presented work. Older pupils do not receive sufficient, good quality marking and feedback to help them make progress. Evidence from the work scrutiny and lesson observations indicates that pupils are not given predicted or aspirational GCSE grades and pupils in Class 9 and 10 are not provided with information on how to answer questions effectively in order to improve their grades. They are not always taught how to organise their work for revision purposes. In an English Literature lesson, pupils did not have exercise books and could not find any work they had completed since the start of the academic year. The school did not include any work completed in GCSE English lessons in the work sample so it is possible that no such work exists in school. There is no evidence to suggest that pupils' progress is checked as they move through the course that their examination results are evaluated against their predicted grades or that teachers are held to account for pupil performance.

A very basic analysis of the 2016 results is kept by the examinations officer and was not in school at the start of the inspection. The analysis lists the grades achieved by pupils in each subject, there is no analysis against predicted grades, prior attainment, gender or SEN and disabilities or EAL. This analysis is not rigorous enough for the school to be certain that pupils are achieving as well as they should.

The school has, rightly, identified that its previous systems for assessing pupils' achievement and tracking their progress were not fit for purpose. A new assessment and tracking system has been developed. If used consistently by all staff the new assessment model should allow teachers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and plan work which is well matched to the needs of individuals. School leaders have not checked that all assessments required at the end of the autumn term have been completed or that the information collected is of good quality. The use of

assessment data in teachers' planning or the impact of these assessments on pupils' progress has not been evaluated. Marking and feedback to pupils is inconsistent because school leaders have not made clear their expectations in this area.

The quality of the curriculum

The curriculum requires improvement. The school applies the Steiner Waldorf principles of intellectual, physical and spiritual development. The school follows the curriculum described in the tasks and content of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum. There is a curriculum statement. Schemes of work are available for some but not all subjects, these are of variable quality and there are no checks to assure the quality or availability of curriculum documents. There is no overall guidance in policy documents and schemes of work to support teachers in planning the curriculum for the most and least able pupils and those with EAL. Subject content is appropriate for the age of pupils and there is progression from year-to-year but in many lessons there is too little challenge for the most able pupils and those with SEN and disabilities and EAL do not always receive work which helps them to learn and make good progress. Most teachers produce lesson plans for each subject. The plans show some awareness of the need to plan different work for the different abilities within the class but this is not based on previous assessment so the tasks are not accurately matched to pupils' learning needs. The GCSE options available for Classes 9 and 10 are limited, they do not take humanities subjects and the options offered do not always meet the needs of pupils with SEN and disabilities. The school does not make use of visiting speakers to deepen pupils' understanding of life in British society or to enrich the curriculum and there are very few visits to places of interest or extra-curricular activities.

The kindergarten curriculum is good. Children make good progress in their learning and personal development. Teachers make effective provision for five and six year-olds by extending their learning tasks so that they are suitably challenged. They are given extra responsibilities, so they progress in their personal development. Planning and teaching clearly identify various ways and opportunities to enhance the children's educational experience.

2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pupils' personal development is inadequate. The school does not meet the standards for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Weaknesses in the curriculum, teaching and learning and achievement are key limiting factors in the personal development of the pupils. The school makes provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) through main lessons and citizenship, but the coverage and outcomes are not sufficiently monitored and evaluated for the school to be confident of its impact on pupils' personal development. Pupils are usually self-confident and are able to express ideas and feelings clearly. This is helped by the presentations they make in festivals of work, where they speak about their achievements and, for older pupils, through debate in class. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others in the school and relate well to their peers. They show no evidence of bias or intolerance and are accepting of the differences between people. They know right from wrong and show respect for British law, equality, liberty and the democratic process. The school's links with wider society are not as well advanced as they should be, senior leaders recognise the need for development in this area. Pupils show some appreciation of cultural traditions but this lacks breadth and depth, given their age and ability and there is not enough awareness of the multi-faith and multi-cultural nature of modern Britain. Pupils' behaviour is generally good. Their attendance is below that

expected nationally and all absence is authorised by parents. Staff have discussed this with parents but the school does not have effective strategies to reduce absence rates. Pupils undertake some responsibilities in class but these are limited as is their contribution to the local and wider community. There is no school council and a minority of older pupils felt that the school did not listen to their views. The provision made for extra-curricular activities lacks consistency, and is not well enough developed to contribute fully to personal development. Pupils feel that they are well known to their teachers and receive good support. Older pupils say that they are given advice on destinations after school through helpful talks and presentations, and through the preparation of CVs.

3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school's provision for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is inadequate. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is a senior administrator who has received appropriate and up to date training. She is supported by a suitably trained deputy. A member of trustees took on the responsibility for safeguarding in October 2016. At the time of the inspection the trustee was scheduled to receive safeguarding training in March 2017. Staff have received safeguarding training, including keeping pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism, but awareness of the importance of safeguarding is variable, as for example the failure to store safeguarding-related records securely and away from less sensitive pupil information.

Safeguarding documentation is not accurate enough, so, for example, contact details for outside agencies in the published Child Protection Policy are incorrect, despite the document having been signed off by senior staff and trustees. The school does not provide parents and pupils with enough information about e-safety; this was noted in both parent and pupil questionnaires.

The school has a suitable policy to promote good behaviour. Pupils say that there is no significant bullying in the school, and that teachers generally deal effectively with bad behaviour. Teachers' tolerance of mildly disruptive behaviour varies, and this is confirmed by observation of lessons.

The school administrator maintains thorough records relating to the suitability of staff, trustees and volunteers. A mixture of electronic and hard copy documents enables her to ensure that requirements are met, with all necessary checks carried out and recorded, including DBS and overseas checks. The administrator has also carried out the required prohibition checks.

The required information about fire drills and fire equipment checks is collected but lacks systematic organisation and detail to allow the school to adequately monitor its fire safety arrangements. The school has suitable arrangements for First Aid and there are sufficient adults with First Aid training to ensure that requirements are met. The school keeps a record of any accidents and informs parents when necessary.

Risk assessments relating to health and safety lack rigour and result in serious safety concerns. The science preparation room contains old and badly stored containers of hazardous and corrosive substances, some of which are on shelves at and above head height, with others, including mercury, in a cupboard which was unlocked at the time of

inspection. The school does not make use of these substances, has no clear information about their age, condition or purpose, and has taken no action to remove them. A store room adjacent to the science and woodwork rooms is dangerously cluttered and presents a health hazard. The woodwork room is poorly organised with sharp tools left out on benches in the unlocked room when it is not in use. Sawdust and wood shavings littered the floor of the room during the inspection and there was no evidence that the room was routinely swept. Where risks have been identified, for example traffic moving through the school site, school leaders have not put safety measures in place although pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtime and they know the boundary of their play area.

At the beginning of the inspection the admissions register did not include key information about previous schools attended by pupils. Attendance registers are maintained with variable accuracy: there are instances of errors such as the register being kept in pencil and incorrect use of symbols. There is no evidence of attendance registers being monitored. The school is aware that absence rates are above those in other schools but they do not have effective strategies in place to deal with this.

4 LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Leadership, management and governance are inadequate. Those responsible for leading and managing the school do not provide it with a clear educational direction. They have not ensured that the independent school standards are met, that the school provides a good education for its pupils and that the welfare, health and safety of pupils is promoted. Most of the significant and often very serious issues identified during the inspection are the result of failures over time. Leaders and managers have not acted on the weaknesses identified during the last inspection in 2014 and the progress noted during the monitoring inspection of 2015 has not been sustained. The school's management of information, its ability to monitor the effectiveness and impact of its work and its procedures to risk assess the buildings and grounds are inadequate because leadership roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. Where this is in place, for example for the recruitment of staff, systems are effective. New leaders and managers are proud of the school's heritage as a long established Steiner school, they have identified some of the weaknesses within the school and are taking steps to improve matters and assure the school's future. This work is too recent to have had any impact on the school's ethos or the provision it makes for pupils. They have taken constructive steps to attract new pupils to the school; this has resulted in a slight increase in pupil numbers. School leaders have ensured that older children in the kindergarten are given appropriately challenging work and teaching to enable them to make good progress and the independent school standards to be met.

The school has not managed the performance of teachers in the main school for some time. There has been no appraisal, peer mentoring or evaluation of pupil performance and teachers have had no professional development. Teachers of GCSE subjects have not received any recent subject training and although some have accessed on-line training this is not sufficient to ensure that they are confident about recent changes to examinations and the demands that will be placed on their pupils. The school does not evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' progress, particularly at GCSE. Newly appointed school leaders identified some of these weaknesses during the autumn term

and they have taken some small steps to improve matters. Peer mentoring is due to start in the coming weeks but as yet there has been no training for mentors and no discussion or agreement of what makes an effective lesson. School leaders do not ensure that the curriculum is planned in sufficient detail to enable the needs of all pupils to be met. They have not ensured that there are schemes of work for all subjects and they have not provided staff with guidance on lesson planning or marking and feedback.

The judgements made in the school self-evaluation tool (SET) are too generous and there is no evidence that they were based on a systematic and robust analysis of the school's provision. The SET identified one pupil with SEN and disabilities, but without an EHC plan, evidence from lesson observations and meetings with staff during the inspection confirm that a significant number of pupils are known to have such difficulties but these were not identified in the school's self-evaluation. The trustees, school manager and administrator are aware of some of the areas that require improvement. A new school improvement plan was written during the summer term 2016 and implemented in September 2016. This provides a clear analysis of some of the significant issues facing the school, including the school's financial position. The plan provides some information about the weaknesses in the education provided by the school but there is no information as to how these weaknesses will be eradicated. Information from the school improvement plan was not included in the SET and the two documents provide contradictory views of the school.

Most pupils say that they enjoy school. Some parents commented that their children were thriving since joining the school and they were very supportive of the school's ethos and provision. However, a number of parents are dissatisfied with some aspects of the school and they correctly identified some of the weaknesses in provision. Documents seen in school indicate that communication with parents was an issue in the past but, to the credit of new leaders and managers, the school is resolving this and some parents reported that communication has improved.

The school does not meet the standards for premises and accommodation. The school is set in pleasant grounds and classrooms are spacious and have good natural light. However, the premises are in poor decorative order, and the accommodation and facilities are not well maintained. Some outdoor areas are pleasant and well suited to pupils needs and there is suitable space for physical education but several outdoor areas accessible to pupils contain old and discarded equipment and rubble and are hazardous. The school's arrangements to manage traffic driving through the site require improvement. The school has brokered an external assessment of health and safety but this was not carried out by a company with experience of education so some of the most serious health and safety issues were not identified. Toilets meet requirements for the most part, although one of the boys' urinals is malodorous and a staff toilet is in very poor decorative order with rusty piping and peeling plaster. Pupils have access to drinking water but one of the sinks from which pupils access water is in poor condition and was dirty at the time of the inspection. Heating in the school is ineffective in some areas and this affects learning. A number of pupils were observed wearing outdoor clothing in indoor lessons. The fire exit door from the science room was locked during the inspection. The school does not have suitable changing accommodation and showers for pupils aged 11 and over; this is a standards failure which was identified in the previous two inspections and has not been resolved.

The school does not meet the standard for the provision of information because parents do not receive information about the support that will be provided for pupils with EAL. The school meets the standard for handling complaints.

Governance

There is a new board of trustees. The trustees are not sufficiently well informed about the independent school standards or their responsibilities in this area. Since all trustees are newly appointed there are no existing board members with the relevant expertise. The trustees are committed to the school and have spent a great deal of time identifying and resolving some longstanding issues. They are realistic about the challenges facing the school and they have implemented some changes, for example the appointment of the school manager in the autumn term 2016, in order to improve leadership and management. The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders have been identified, however the restructuring of leadership and management responsibilities is too recent to have made any significant impact on the weaknesses within the school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS' PROVISION

The kindergarten provision for children aged under five is good and enables them to make consistently good progress. Staff are particularly effective in promoting the emotional and social development of the children, helping to ensure that they are happy, safe and secure. The safeguarding requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are met fully and all staff have a clear understanding of and take full responsibility for their roles both individually and collectively.

The leadership and management of the EYFS are good. The head of the registered nursery leads the provision very effectively. She provides staff with effective support and guidance and ensures that they have access to relevant professional development. The supervision of staff is well managed and rigorous. Staff appraisals are thorough and closely linked to further improvement in professional practice. She ensures that all staff have high expectations of the children in their care so that all children make good progress and are well prepared for school. This effective leadership has ensured that children behave well and are thoughtful and caring towards others so that there is no bullying or discrimination. Equality and diversity are promoted. The head of the nursery is the designated safeguarding lead. She is appropriately qualified and knows most children in the kindergarten well, but she is given no time allowance to carry out this role.

Teachers collaborate closely on all aspects of the provision and form highly effective teaching teams with their teaching assistants. Staff have high expectations of their children, particularly in relation to personal development. They are appropriately qualified and have benefitted from relevant professional development.

The school has exemptions from and modifications to some of the EYFS requirements, in common with other Steiner Waldorf schools. Taking account of this, the curriculum has the appropriate range and depth to meet the statutory requirements and is particularly strong in the areas of creative and spiritual development. The provision made for five to six year olds is effective and helps them to learn and make progress.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Staff have a deep professional understanding of the principles of Steiner-Waldorf education and how these can be delivered effectively, particularly in relation to the personal development of children. They are effective in creating a learning environment both in and outside the classroom that encourages investigation, experimentation and collaboration, with learning opportunities of different types and levels, so that children enjoy what they do, find it stimulating and make consistently good progress in their learning. Staff encourage and help the children to develop their concentration, so that they focus intensely on particular tasks, such as painting, thus developing a key learning skill. Planning and assessment are good. Effective use is made of learning diaries and the Steiner-Waldorf profile, with comments identifying very clearly what children know, understand and can do through the perceptive use of specific examples. Relationships with parents are excellent and they are encouraged to take part in supporting their children's learning through the learning diary and regular informal dialogue. In some instances the learning diary has been used for highly productive dialogues between parents and teaching staff.

The personal development, behaviour and welfare of children are major strengths of the kindergarten. Children are kept safe and secure through thorough safeguarding arrangements, which are implemented effectively. Staff provide an excellent model for children's behaviour through the courteous and respectful way in which they interact with children, whilst maintaining a gentle firmness that helps to inculcate clear and well-founded moral values. This relates to all activities, including snack time for instance, where children learn the good manners of family meal-time and social eating. Staff also create an empathetic ethos where children find it easy to express their emotions and they are very alert to any child who is momentarily at a loss or upset, providing highly effective support in addressing their concerns and reintegrating them into the class. This helps recent arrivals to settle quickly into their new learning environment. Healthy eating is encouraged through discussion and food at snack-time, whilst the importance of exercise, especially outdoors, is a key part of the curricular provision. Staff and children bring a rich variety of cultural experiences to the kindergarten, which are shared productively, during cultural and religious festivals. They celebrate religious and cultural differences and respect the differences between people, helping children to develop an understanding of diversity in modern British society and providing a strong bulwark against radicalisation. The outcomes for children are good and they make consistently good progress in their learning, so that they are well prepared for their future lives.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Michael House School			
Address of school:	The Field Shipley Heanor Derbyshire DE75 7JH			
Telephone number:	01773 718050			
Email address:	admin@michaelhouseschool.com			
Web address	www.michaelhouseschool.com			
Proprietor:	Michael House School Association Ltd			
Person registered with DfE as proprietor under paragraph 20 of Part 4:	Michael House School Association			
Head Teacher:	N/A School Manager Ron Waddell			
Early Years Manager	N/A School Manager Ron Waddell			
DfE Number	830/6010			
Type of school	Independent school			
Annual fees	£2212 - £6088.50			
Age range of pupils	3.5 – 16 years			
Gender of pupils	Mixed			
Total number on roll	full-time	71	part-time	23
Number of children in registered nursery		0	23	
Number of children under-5	Boys:	6	Girls:	11
Number of compulsory school age pupils	Boys:	40	Girls:	31
Number of post-compulsory pupils	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need and EHCP	Boys:	0	Girls:	1
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Boys:	3	Girls:	0
Type of inspection	Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008			

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk.