



ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) FIRST SCHOOL

"Together we will give our children
the roots to grow, and the wings to fly"

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Headteacher: Mrs Teresa Gilbert

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Dear Parents,

I am pleased to be able to share the outcome of our recent Ofsted inspection with you so you are fully informed of priorities for the school going forward.

As you will see from the inspection report attached, this was a graded inspection following the ungraded inspection that took place in February 2023. It is important that the current inspection report is read with this previous inspection in mind. The grading didn't change in February 2023 but it was indicated that the school may not be judged 'good' in a graded inspection. Whilst the school has been working hard to address the areas for improvement since that report, it was anticipated through our evaluation of the school that some areas still require improvement.

We are pleased to celebrate the good outcomes in Behaviour and attitudes, Early Years provision (Reception) and Personal Development. We accept that we need to continue to improve in the areas judged to be 'requires improvement' and are committed to doing so.

Overall, the inspection report celebrates the school ethos and the fact that children enjoy attending the school and are keen to do well. It also identifies that 'Relationships are positive. Staff are friendly and warm and they know the pupils well. Pupils know that there are adults in school that they can talk to if they have a concern. This means they feel safe'. This recognition is valued because we pride ourselves in the way that we develop positive relationships with the children and in doing so, create a positive and supportive environment for the children to develop and learn within.

We are pleased that progress made with putting in place our new behaviour expectations has been recognised as positive steps for the school and children. Whilst the report indicates that there is still some work to do on consistency, they recognised the school as 'a welcoming and nurturing environment. The values of kindness, safety and respect underpin the ethos of the school'.

The Early Years Curriculum and the progress that the children are making is good due to the quality of the mapped out curriculum and strong focus on early reading and maths. This judgement celebrates recent development and progress made in this important stage of the school.

The personal development of pupils has always been a strength of St John's due to the enriched curriculum and additional experiences provided at the school. This has again been recognised and celebrated within the inspection outcome.



At St John's CE VA First School the health, safety and wellbeing of every child is our top priority.
We expect all staff, governors, parent/carers and visitors to share this commitment to safeguarding our pupils.

Inspectors have recognised the progress made with safeguarding pupils since the last inspection. Although this isn't very detailed in the report, their verbal feedback indicated they were pleased that staff training and school procedures are more rigorous and ensure children are being kept safe. They recognised that the Designated Safeguarding Leads make effective use of other agency support for children and families and that the culture of safeguarding at the school is positive and effective.

Areas identified for improvement focus very much around some areas of the curriculum and support for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). We have been aware of these areas for development, and as the report recognises, we have been working on them and have welcomed some external support to do so. There has been a lot of change in the last year and whilst this has enabled some improvements to happen rapidly, some actions have been slower than we and Ofsted would have liked but we are continuing to address that. Through school development plans that are currently in place we have made changes to support plans for children, led by Mrs Senior (SENCo). We now need to keep monitoring and focusing on actions to continue to improve the support provided for some SEND pupils.

We have been working to ensure that the teaching in classes reflects the agreed mapped out curriculum and that assessment is consistent to address feedback in the previous report. The next step, already started, is to review the curriculum and make changes to ensure that every subject has small steps of learning detailed and that children gain a depth of understanding within each subject. Recent training has been undertaken and this is leading to changes to ensure that the reading curriculum is mapped out more clearly for children when they move on from our phonics scheme, Read, Write Inc. We also have a plan to put in place more detail to the curriculum map for writing to ensure that this leads to consistently high quality writing across the school.

The inspectors verbally fed-back to us that they recognised leaders have high ambition for all children at the school, which we do. We need to continue on the journey started last year to ensure that this is fully realised in order that the quality of education and overall judgement of the school returns to 'good'. We plan to increase communication with you about progress being made on areas for improvement and will maintain this communication through subject specific newsletters.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank families for their ongoing support and for the many positive comments fed-back to the inspectors during the inspection and to those parents and carers who took the time to complete the Ofsted Parent View Survey. I would also like to thank staff members and governors for their support and hard work. The overall grading is 'requires improvement' but I know that everyone works hard on a daily basis for the children and families in our school and will continue to do so in order to address areas identified for improvement.

If you have any questions to ask in relation to the report please do speak to a member of staff. As I am currently out of school, please speak with Mrs Simenton or Mrs Senior in my absence or wait until I return to school.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Teresa Gilbert
Headteacher

