



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

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

Christchurch Street East,
Frome, Somerset BA11 1QG

t: 01373 462251

w: stjohnsfrome.co.uk

e: office@stjohnsfrome.co.uk

Acting Interim Headteacher: Mrs Jo Greathead

21 March 2023

Dear Parents,

Please find attached a copy of our Ofsted report following our inspection on 7th and 8th February. I would like to thank all our staff, governors, parents and children for their hard work and support during the inspection and say thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the staff, pupil and parent view questionnaires.

I am pleased to let you know that the report states *"there has been no change to the school's overall judgement of good as a result of this inspection"*. However, the inspector felt that some areas of the school were not as strong as they could be, so we are expecting another graded inspection in around 1-2 years.

We are really proud that the report acknowledges that good relationships are prevalent throughout the school and that *"there is a caring environment where pupils feel happy and safe."* This was also celebrated in our SIAMS inspection and clearly a strength at St John's.

The inspector recognised that pupils behave well and focus on their work, and rare occasions of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The report celebrates our strong provision for the wider development of pupils. *"Pupils thrive on the student council and as eco-warriors. They gain experience of being active citizens, who contribute to improving their school environment."*

Ofsted always highlight areas for development after an inspection. These are set out in the *'What does the school need to do to improve?'* section of the report. Some of these were areas in which we are already working hard to drive progress and we look forward to sharing our developments with you over the next year.

Our curriculum journey is ongoing and further developed in some subjects than others. *"The personal, social and health education curriculum is well structured and sequenced. Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should learn and when. Pupils enjoy learning about local history. Leaders and staff make effective use of the rich neighbourhood to bring history alive."* Our next steps for the curriculum journey will be to ensure we have detailed and precise knowledge and skills mapped out for all curriculum areas and a systematic assessment schedule to regularly check pupils' progress.

As you will already be aware, phonics and early reading is a key area for school development this year including external training and regular in-school coaching for all staff. Some children have made greater than expected progress between the scheme's prescribed assessment points and these children will now be assessed more frequently than Read, Write, Inc suggests to enable us to precisely match their reading books to the sounds that they know. We will continue to ensure we prioritise staff training in phonics, along with regular monitoring, to ensure that all lessons are delivered with rigour and consistency.



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.

We are prioritising SEND staff non-contact time to ensure that paperwork is in place to evidence the support given to pupils in class and the progress that they make. We have also taken advice from the area Inclusion Manager whose team is supporting us with identifying and meeting all children's needs. The Somerset Graduated Response tool* is new to schools and will take time to be embedded in our practice.

Over recent years the school's governing board has been very small, running under capacity and during 2022 particularly, it was significantly under 50% capacity. Increasing the size of the board has been a priority in order to increase the capacity and efficiency of the board. A number of new governors joined the board in December 2022 and February 2023 which has increased the board's capacity and will enable them to work together, in partnership with the Headteacher and leadership team, to drive the school forward positively, decisively and strategically.

The inspector recognised that Safeguarding is effective and that staff work effectively to keep pupils safe. Reflecting on feedback during the inspection, procedures were immediately updated to ensure our record keeping was rigorous and consistent.

The inspector found that staff are loyal to the school and "*Staff are proud to belong to the St John's family.*" Both parent view and pupil surveys were very positive with 98% of parents saying that their child was happy and 95% said would recommend our school to others.

As associate Governor this term, Mrs Gilbert was able to hear the Ofsted feedback on the second day of the inspection. An Ofsted inspection is only one of many methods used to assess and prioritise school development, with the upcoming transition in leadership, together Mrs Gilbert and I, along with the senior leadership team, have written an Action Plan which prioritises school development, training and actions needed to continue to move the school forward. We are meeting over the coming weeks for Headteacher 'handover' to ensure the transition in leadership is handled carefully and sensitively for all staff and children.

Thank you again for your continued support and involvement with our thriving St John's family. If you are interested in supporting the continued development of the school and would like to join the Governing body, please contact the school office.

Kind regards,

Jo Greathead

Acting Interim Headteacher

*The [Somerset Graduated Response tool](#) sets out the barriers to learning that children and young people may have and the strategies and provision that could be in place to support them



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.