

Inspection of St John's Church of England Primary School

Priory, Wellington, Somerset TA21 9EJ

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to St John's Church of England Primary School. They describe the school as a kind and welcoming place where everyone wants to help one another. Pupils understand how the school's values and Christian ethos help them to be respectful, compassionate and friendly.

The headteacher and his staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct. Should disruption occur, staff deal with this quickly and effectively. Pupils are polite and courteous. They understand the school rules and follow them well. This starts in the early years, where children listen to instructions and play well together.

Pupils feel safe. Parents agree. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. This is particularly the case for pupils who find it difficult to manage their emotions. Pupils say that bullying is rare. If it were to happen, they are confident that adults would deal with it quickly.

Pupils enjoy the range of clubs on offer to them, such as netball, football and choir. They value the opportunities they have to become well-being champions, pupil chaplains and members of the school council. Pupils say that these roles make them feel proud and enable them to make decisions that improve the school.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. They have responded well to address the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Leaders have created a curriculum that is designed well. They have carefully considered what pupils need to know and when they need to know it. In subjects where published outcomes are below national expectations, leaders have taken effective action to strengthen the curriculum. For example, they have made sure that staff implement the reading curriculum consistently across the school.

Reading is a priority for the school. Pupils say that reading helps them to 'open new spaces in their minds' and learn new words. Children begin phonics as soon as they start school. They learn and remember new sounds well. Staff benefit from the training they receive to develop pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds they are learning. If pupils fall behind, they receive support to help them to catch up quickly. As pupils move through the school, they read a range of texts with increasing fluency and expression.

Leaders have put in place a well-structured mathematics curriculum. Starting in the early years, staff develop children's mathematical vocabulary well. As a result, children confidently describe patterns in number. Teachers routinely check on pupils'

learning in mathematics. They ensure that pupils use their mathematical understanding and knowledge well to tackle more complex problems.

In some wider curriculum subjects, the systems to check on what pupils know and remember are new. Teachers do not routinely check on what pupils have remembered over time well enough. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. For example, in history, while pupils can recall their learning about the history of their local area, they struggle to recall in detail historical knowledge beyond this. This slows the progress that pupils make. In addition, some subject leaders have taken on new roles. They have had limited opportunities to check on their subjects. As a result, they do not yet accurately understand how well pupils learn the intended curriculum.

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils with SEND can achieve. Staff know pupils well. They quickly identify pupils' individual needs. Staff work well together to ensure that pupils are well supported. As a result, most pupils with SEND learn well across the curriculum.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They behave well in lessons and during social times. Children in the early years take turns and are eager to learn. The environment in classrooms and around the school is calm and purposeful.

Leaders support pupils' personal development well. Pupils talk confidently about fundamental British values such as tolerance and democracy. They understand that people are different and why it is important to treat everyone equally. Pupils develop their sense of character through raising money for a local charity. They say that this helps them to help others in their community.

Governors, including the newly appointed chair, are ambitious for the school. They ask challenging questions to help the school improve. Staff feel valued and describe the school as a 'family'. They appreciate the support they receive from leaders, particularly with regard to their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. Staff use their training well to spot quickly pupils who are at risk. Leaders are diligent when following up concerns. Governors regularly check the accuracy of safeguarding records. Leaders work well with professionals and other agencies to help vulnerable pupils and their families. They carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in the real and online world. They understand the importance of not sharing personal information and of reporting any concerns to a trusted adult.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is in its infancy in some subjects. Sometimes, it is not used well enough to check that pupils have remembered the knowledge they have been taught. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and do not build their knowledge well over time. Leaders need to ensure that teachers use assessment effectively across all subjects and use this information to inform future learning.
- Subject leadership is not yet fully developed. As a result, not all leaders have a well-informed view of their subjects or know what impact the intended curriculum is having. Senior leaders must develop subject leaders' expertise to ensure that subject leaders have precise information about how effectively the curriculum is taught and how well pupils learn.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	123900
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10240113
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Brian King
Headteacher	Oliver Priestley
Website	www.stjohnscofeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November and 1 December 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school which is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The last section 48 inspection took place in April 2017, where the school was judged to be outstanding.
- The school has a learning base, known as the 'Nurture Room', which supports pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- There have been some changes to the governing body since the last inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, groups of staff and pupils. The lead inspector also held a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. The lead inspector also scrutinised the school's single central record.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ben Jordan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cameron Lancaster

Ofsted Inspector

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