

St John's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infants School

High Street, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9DR

Inspection dates

2–3 July 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has established a whole-school ethos of inclusivity and respect that permeates all that the school does.
- Senior leaders have taken decisive actions to rectify previous weaknesses. School improvement has been rapid. Pupils' progress and attainment are increasingly strong.
- The governing body provides effective challenge and support. Governors know the school well and undertake their roles diligently.
- Through the introduction of effective training procedures and curriculum design, senior leaders have developed an effective teaching team.
- The arrangements for safeguarding and securing pupils' welfare are strong. However, leaders' communication with parents to ensure that pupils attend regularly is not strong. Too many pupils are absent from school or late too often.
- Leaders' strong focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports pupils' good behaviour and conduct.
- Parents have a high level of confidence in the school's work.
- Teachers use their skills well to motivate pupils and develop their knowledge and skills. The most able and disadvantaged pupils are challenged well and make strong progress. However, pupils' use of reasoning skills in mathematics is still developing.
- The teaching of phonics and reading leads to high standards. However, on occasions, pupils' reading books are not well matched to their knowledge of phonics. This slows their progress in reading, particularly that of least-able pupils.
- Teachers plan thoughtfully to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, for a few pupils with complex needs, specialist support and in-class support are not coordinated well enough. This hinders the momentum of the progress they make.
- Teachers set high standards of pupils' work in writing and mathematics. Pupils do not achieve as well in science as they do in other subjects.
- Children in the early years make good progress so that they are ready for Year 1. However, boys' writing in the early years is less well developed than other areas of their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by further developing communication with parents and carers so that they bring their children to school regularly and on time.
- Improve the quality of teaching and achievement, so they are further strengthened by:
 - ensuring that there is consistency in the approach to support pupils who receive specialist SEND support
 - making sure that the books pupils read help them to practise the sounds they have learned, and do not contain words that cannot be decoded using phonics
 - developing pupils' knowledge and enquiry skills in science
 - further promoting pupils' mathematical reasoning skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have tackled all the weaknesses that were identified at the previous inspection unequivocally. Their swift response has brought about strong improvements. For example, pupils' attainment by the time they leave St John's is now at least in line with, and often better than, the national average. In addition, the deployment of pupil premium funding has had a significantly positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' attendance and progress.
- The headteacher has shaped a teaching staff who are dedicated to sharing her vision. Consequently, school improvement activities gather momentum quickly because everyone understands their role.
- Confident and able leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and implement appropriate plans that have strengthened the school's work to date.
- Senior leaders have welcomed external support and have followed local authority guidance. The local authority has been successful in brokering the support of other local schools, which has further strengthened the school's journey of improvement. School leaders have prioritised high-quality professional development for all staff. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and is now securely good. Staff feel well supported and are enthusiastic and committed in their roles. Morale is high.
- The leader of special educational needs ensures that pupils with SEND are accurately identified and suitably supported. The school's inclusive approach supports pupils who have struggled in other schools to gain confidence and integrate into school routines well. Leaders continue to review the support for some of the most vulnerable pupils with SEND so that greater gains are made in these pupils' academic development.
- Leaders are currently reviewing the school's curriculum to ensure that 'creativity, independence and aspiration' are at the centre of all that pupils learn. The curriculum focuses strongly on the development of reading, writing and mathematics. However, improvements to the curriculum are ongoing, as leaders recognise that some activities do not build pupils' skills sequentially and, when this occurs, pupils' understanding diminishes, as for example in science.
- Leaders ensure that pupils experience wide opportunities to develop a keen interest in other subjects such as history and geography. Carefully chosen stimulating experiences such as visits to SS Great Britain, help to deepen pupils' understanding of life in times gone by. In addition, creative projects linked to 'learning quests' encourage parents and pupils to work together on homework projects.
- Leaders have created a nurturing and calm school where staff give careful attention to celebrating faith, culture and learning. Leaders ensure that staff teach pupils to understand what it means to be a good citizen of a global community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Leaders and staff value reading as a lifelong habit. Many displays and learning areas promote the value of books and reading. Pupils read widely and are read to often.

- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is carefully managed to ensure that the school sustains high-quality teaching in this aspect. Participation rates are high in after-school clubs and pupils are enthusiastic about the different activities on offer. Pupils benefit from the teaching of swimming in the school's own on-site pool.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. However, leaders are not complacent, and governors continue to challenge senior leaders on the effectiveness of communication. Parent workshops in art have been particularly effective in engaging parents with their child's learning.

Governance of the school

- Governors of the school fulfil their duties diligently and effectively. Governors have specific responsibilities and play a strong role in monitoring the work of the school. They understand their roles and responsibilities and communicate as a team to hold school leaders to account for ensuring that agreed actions bring the desired improvement. This enables them to have a secure and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
- Governors are articulate and passionate about promoting high standards. This is evident in the improved, and now highly effective, way that additional funding is used to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and improve their progress.
- In addition, new governors have been appointed. This has widened the range of relevant knowledge and experience available to the governing body and strengthened its ability to contribute to school improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are well trained to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Governors make close checks on leaders' work to ensure that statutory duties are met. Training for all staff is up to date, reflecting all the latest advice and guidance from the Department for Education. Staff spoken to during the inspection knew what to do if a safeguarding incident were to be disclosed to them. They were able to recognise the signs and symptoms of any pupils at risk of abuse or radicalisation.
- Any reported incidents are followed up immediately with external agencies. Reporting is detailed and thorough and records are secure.
- Leaders are persistent in their pursuit of support for vulnerable pupils and their families and escalate their concerns where they have concerns that the local authority and/or external agencies are putting pupils at risk because of slow response times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning is securely good across the school. Leaders have strengthened the focus on raising pupils' achievements and have provided effective training to develop teachers' and teaching assistants' expertise.

- Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. The whole-school focus on widening pupils' vocabulary lies at the heart of pupils' strongly improving progress.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use assessment effectively to get to know what pupils can do and understand so that they can challenge pupils effectively. These aspects underpin the teachers' ability to ensure that disadvantaged pupils learn at least as well as others and that the most able pupils excel.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Leaders provide regular training to ensure that the staff's skills are well honed. Pupils make strong progress in their knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will apply this knowledge to their writing. Consequently, pupils spell accurately.
- Teachers make effective use of what they know pupils can do and understand so that pupils make strong progress in mathematics. Teachers' effective use of questioning ensures that pupils are able to recall and apply their knowledge of number. However, the teaching of reasoning in mathematics is not as firmly embedded.
- Teachers consider carefully the range of topics pupils learn about and plan them to meet pupils' specific interests. For example, a topic on Isambard Kingdom Brunel was extended because pupils showed a keen interest and wanted to know more.
- Teachers ensure that learning environments are well organised, with a range of high-quality resources to support learning. Pupils enjoy collaborative work and they cooperate well. The atmosphere in classrooms and around the school supports pupils' learning effectively.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are extremely positive. Staff are enthusiastic and encouraging. They have high expectations of pupils' conduct during lessons. Adults' positive language and their use of praise help pupils to develop their confidence and belief in themselves. As a result, pupils try hard, ask questions and do not fear making mistakes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils grow in confidence to become self-assured learners. Pupils take pride in their work and are proud of their school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, as is reflected in the good progress they make.
- Pupils welcome additional leadership responsibilities. For example, pupil ambassadors model good behaviour. Pupils recognise the privileges that additional roles bring and aspire to fulfil these positions. Due to their strong understanding of democracy, pupils recognise that they have to earn the right to take on any additional roles in school.

- The school offers a caring environment where pupils feel safe and well looked after. Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They say that incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are rare and that, if they do happen, staff resolve them quickly.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and looked after in school. They say other pupils and staff are 'kind and understanding' and 'always there for you'. Pupils are clear on how to stay safe inside and outside school. For example, pupils know how to use computers safely and say that they would not provide personal information when using the internet.
- Pupils have a strong understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. The school's high-quality teaching of physical education encourages pupils to be fit and lead a healthy lifestyle.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' good conduct reflects the school's high expectations and efforts to promote an orderly and nurturing environment. Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the school day, including lunchtimes. They respond quickly to instructions in the classroom. Consequently, there is little low-level disruption.
- Pupils who struggle to regulate their behaviour are supported well. The school is highly inclusive. Children who have struggled in other schools settle well in St John's because of highly skilled staff. The school works hard and successfully to include them. Challenging behaviour is managed well. Consequently, pupils are able to engage in learning and gaps in learning close. Challenging behaviour is managed well and there is evidence of impact. The school works hard to include these pupils effectively.
- Pupils' attendance remains below the national average. Leaders are deploying strategies to tackle this. For example, a school minibus collects pupils so that they are in school on time. However, too many parents take their child out of school for holidays or bring their children to school late. This negatively influences pupils' achievement in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school experiences high levels of pupil mobility. However, those pupils in key stage 1 who have been in school for more than one year make strong progress. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' attainment has continued to improve since the previous inspection to be at least in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils make good progress. In addition, many of the children who leave the early years with the skills and knowledge expected for their age make strong progress to exceed expectations by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' phonics knowledge and skills continue to improve. Published outcomes continue to be in line with the national average, even those of pupils who joined the school at

other times than in the Nursery or Reception Year. Pupils apply their phonics skills well to their reading and writing.

- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress at every stage of school. There are few differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of others. Where there are differences, they are diminishing.
- Pupils make improved, and now good, progress in developing their writing skills. Pupils are widening their vocabulary well and incorporate increasingly complex words to deepen the meaning and expression in their imaginative writing.
- Pupils make consistently strong progress in mathematics and show fluency in using basic number skills to calculate and solve problems. However, pupils' ability to reason and explain their thinking in mathematics is less well developed.
- Pupils who receive SEN support for their academic needs make good progress. Pupils with complex social and emotional needs receive high-quality support in specialist groups. This supports their emotional development well. However, the transition from specialist nurture to classroom support is sometimes not smooth. Consequently, these pupils do not sustain good progress.
- Although the proportion of pupils exceeding standards in reading is above the national average, too few of the least able readers make the progress they need. For a small group of low-prior-attaining pupils, tasks are not well matched to their ability. When this occurs, pupils spend too long trying to decipher words. Consequently, their understanding of the text wavers and their progress slows.
- Pupils' attainment in science has remained lower than in other subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- The leader responsible for the early years is knowledgeable, skilled and enthusiastic. She has developed a competent team. Consequently, even from low starting points, children make good progress and catch up so that they are ready for Year 1.
- Staff develop children's skills well through a stimulating range of learning activities. They provide timely and effective challenge and support, including for the most able children. Adults know the children well. They take care to identify the children's learning needs, especially for those with SEND, and then build their confidence to 'have a go'.
- Effective leadership develops particular strengths in supporting children's personal, social and emotional development and in advancing the children's communication, language and literacy skills. Staff have high expectations and children respond well to this and behave well.
- Teachers' effective use of assessment for structuring learning is supporting children to make big strides in their progress across most areas of learning. There is no difference between the attainment of disadvantaged and other children. However, for some boys, the development of their writing skills lag behind the girls.
- Staff model positive behaviours and help children develop their social skills. Children take turns and listen well. Relationships between adults and children are caring, and

even affable, across the provision. As a result, children are inquisitive and motivated to learn.

- The early years curriculum at St John's helps children learn to respect and celebrate each other's differences. Their behaviour demonstrates a good understanding of diversity.
- Adults are very patient and attentive so that two-year-olds can express their ideas. Adults are gently talkative and not put off when there is no response.
- Children's welfare is well supported. Children feel safe and are willing to take appropriate risks through their activities. The provision meets statutory requirements and the safeguarding of children is of the same good quality as elsewhere in the school.
- Staff work determinedly with families so that they know how well their children are progressing. Parents are encouraged to contribute to teachers' ongoing assessment of their child's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	123759
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10088304

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery and infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Trwoga
Headteacher	Wendy Turner
Telephone number	01458 832085
Website	www.stjohnsinfantsglastonbury.co.uk
Email address	stjohnsglastonbury@educ.somerset.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized nursery and infant school.
- The governor-run Nursery includes provision for two-year-olds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- As a voluntary controlled School, St John's is part of the Bath and Wells diocese. The school last received a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in March 2015 and received a judgement of good.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across all year groups and visited all classes more than once. A large proportion of observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1 and 2. The inspectors talked with pupils about their school and looked at pupils' books while visiting lessons.
- The team scrutinised a large sample of pupils' work jointly with subject leaders to gain a view of the impact of teaching over time.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders, including leaders responsible for the provision for pupils with SEND, English, mathematics, science and the early years. A meeting was held with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a local authority officer.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. We also considered the 46 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text responses from parents.
- The inspectors observed pupils across the school day, including at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plans, external reviews, information related to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, and the information published on the school's website.

Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Horsnell

Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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