

# St John's Church of England Primary School

URN: 106105 | Inspected: 02 December 2025

## Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

## Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, achieve well in subjects across the curriculum. From the early years to Year 6, pupils speak confidently about what they are learning. Older pupils make links to their prior learning, for example when exploring themes across history and geography. Pupils make assured progress through the curriculum. Pupils with SEND progress appropriately from their starting points. Typically, pupils produce high-quality work. In reading, writing, and mathematics, pupils' outcomes in national tests at the end of key stage 2 are often above the national average. Pupils are generally well prepared for the next stage of education. Nevertheless, some key skills which pupils need, such as handwriting and spelling, are not being supported effectively enough. This compromises the quality of pupils' writing across the wider curriculum.

## Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders and staff foster a culture of high expectations, encouraging all pupils to reach their potential. Leaders design and deliver a curriculum which outlines the key knowledge that pupils should know. The curriculum includes clear end points for each year group that builds on prior learning. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular professional development so that they typically have the knowledge and confidence to teach the curriculum successfully. Staff check pupils' progress and understanding through the curriculum. This effectively guides their

next steps

in teaching. On the whole, staff use precise explanations, modelling, and questioning to deliver the curriculum well. Pupils generally receive the teaching they need to secure essential knowledge in reading and mathematics. However, this is not as evident in some aspects of writing as it is in reading and mathematics, indicating that teaching in some areas of writing require a greater focus. Staff deliver inclusive lessons that fully involve pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other barriers to learning. They make skilful adaptations to the curriculum to meet individual needs effectively. This includes supporting pupils who need to catch up quickly.

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## Early years

### Expected standard

Leaders have implemented a comprehensive curriculum that is delivered effectively by skilled staff in the Reception Year. In most areas, clear end points for children's learning are defined, and the sequence of learning is carefully planned to build knowledge and skills. From time to time, the clarity of these end points or the precision of sequencing is less secure. There is a clear focus on children developing essential language and communication skills. Speech and language screening takes place to pinpoint each child's areas of need. Staff model and repeat the language and important vocabulary they want children to learn through their interactions with them. Staff generally teach the curriculum effectively, taking children's ages and stages of development into consideration. Children, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well from their starting points. A well-organised phonics programme is delivered throughout the Reception Year. Any children who find reading more difficult receive effective support to keep up and catch up with their peers. Most reach expected outcomes by the end of the Reception Year. Staff share this information with Year 1 teachers to ensure a smooth transition to key stage 1. Staff form warm, nurturing relationships with children to ensure they feel safe, secure and happy. Staff build trusting connections with parents and carers from the outset. Both parties work together to support children's progress.

## Inclusion

### Expected standard

Leaders know their pupils well. They identify the needs of disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who face other barriers to their learning, quickly and accurately. They pinpoint the individual needs of pupils and address these so that each pupil can thrive. This ensures that teaching and classroom environments are inclusive. Leaders keep up to date with training and local partnership strategies. For example, their work on an oracy project with the local authority ensures communication and language development remain a focus in school. Leaders embed a clear pathway for supporting pupils with additional needs. They work closely with external agencies and specialists to establish the support required for each pupil. Trained staff then deliver this support effectively. On the whole, well-tailored adaptations enable pupils with SEND to succeed. Leaders check the progress of pupils with SEND and those who are vulnerable, including those in receipt of pupil premium funding. Through the pupil premium strategy, staff implement targeted support that improves outcomes for these pupils and promotes equity across the school. The inclusive culture across the school enables pupils who face barriers to learning to flourish academically and personally at St John's.

## Leadership and governance

### Expected standard

The last year has brought a period of change for the school, including to both leadership and governance.

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Through this transition, leaders have continued to model high expectations and professionalism. They are closely attuned to the life of the school, identifying and prioritising actions for improvement. Leaders, staff and governors are committed to ensuring that pupils benefit from a rich academic and personal development offer. Staff are given meaningful opportunities to share their insights and collaborate as part of any changes made. They feel valued and heard. Staff undertake regular professional development. They say it is high quality, relevant and purposeful. Training is aligned to the ongoing school priorities. It provides staff with a breadth of opportunities, from leadership qualifications to classroom practice, and demonstrates a strong culture of professional growth. Staff welcome the consideration that leaders show of their workload and wellbeing. Governors, although some are newly appointed, know their school community well. They have the knowledge and skills to carry out their statutory duties effectively. Governors have needed to take some difficult decisions recently that are in the best interests of pupils. Governors hold school leaders to account successfully for the quality of education that pupils receive. Relationships with families are long-standing, open and supportive. Leaders and governors build constructive relationships with parents and carers, as well as the wider community, to foster trust and support pupils' achievement and sense of belonging.

## What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are rightly proud to be part of this friendly and welcoming school. Members of the school community refer to it as a place 'full of love'. From the Reception Year to Year 6, pupils eagerly come into school in the morning. Staff nurture and care for pupils, knowing them well. This helps pupils feel safe and settled. The school has high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other barriers, generally live up to or exceed these expectations. Most pupils achieve well across the curriculum and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Staff support pupils with barriers to learning effectively so they can succeed. In lessons, pupils engage well in their learning. Child-friendly characters are used to remind pupils of behaviours for learning, for example taking responsibility and showing perseverance. Pupils speak confidently about what they are learning and how it links to what they have learned previously. Pupils typically behave well. The school values underpin the expectation for respectful behaviour. Pupils learn to cooperate and reflect on their own and others' behaviours. Themed initiatives such as 'cool to be kind' week supports this learning. Pupils demonstrate a deep understanding of fundamental British values in the way they show empathy, tolerance and encouragement towards each other. They are friendly and courteous, and engage well with visitors. St John's prioritises pupils' wellbeing and personal development as highly as their academic success. Pupils take full advantage of the wide array of enrichment opportunities woven through the curriculum. They take enormous pride in their regular musical shows and theatre performances. For example, members of the steel pan band speak enthusiastically about performing at local events.

## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers across all phases make informed and effective decisions about how and when to deliver and monitor writing content in the curriculum, so that pupils consistently experience the best possible learning.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils secure strong foundations in spelling and handwriting, so they are

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consistently able to achieve greater accuracy and proficiency in their writing across all subjects.

## Personal development and wellbeing

### Strong standard

The school's personal development offer is extensive. It is tailored thoughtfully to pupils' needs. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who face other barriers, demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of equality. This includes knowledge of the protected characteristics. Pupils welcome everyone to their school warmly, regardless of their background. They learn about different faiths and cultures, which supports their understanding of the fundamental British values. Pupils build their confidence and independence through charity work, community engagement activities and leadership roles such as school councillors and buddies. Pupils plan and organise events independently, including fundraising activities. They participate in aspirations week, where Year 6 pupils write CVs and meet visitors from different professions. These experiences help pupils become confident, resilient and well prepared for life beyond school. Pupils demonstrate the essential knowledge they need to stay physically and mentally healthy and to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They show clear awareness of how to sustain positive relationships and how to recognise when this is not the case. Pupils understand how to manage aspects of their own safety, both online and in the community. They feel confident that they know how to seek help if they have concerns. Leaders and staff understand their pupils and families deeply and provide highly effective pastoral support, particularly for those who are vulnerable. Pupils, including those with SEND and those who are vulnerable in other ways, take full advantage of the wide range of opportunities and experiences on offer. For example, they attend clubs such as those for sewing, coding, and American football. Pupils undertake visits planned into the curriculum to bring learning to life, such as to Chester during their Romans topic. Those in key stage 2 go on regular residential trips which they enjoy. These opportunities extend pupils' learning and nurture their talents and interests. Expected standard

## Attendance and behaviour

### Expected standard

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' attendance at school. Pupils arrive at school happy each morning. Staff build positive relationships with parents and carers to ensure that families receive the support they need to reduce absence levels. The school secures a sense of belonging for all. The school's actions for improving attendance are effective. Leaders maintain high attendance rates and are successful in reducing absence for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff model and promote the behaviour they expect through positive relationships and clear routines. Leaders regularly update their behaviour policy to reflect this. Pupils are immersed in a culture of encouragement and optimism. The rules are applied effectively by staff. Pupils understand them and agree that they are fair. Any incidents of alleged bullying or discrimination are dealt with promptly and with sensitivity to those involved. Pupils define bullying accurately and say that it doesn't happen at this school. Pupils typically show positive attitudes to their learning and participate fully in their lessons. A minority of pupils need reminders to do this. In these instances, leaders act

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quickly to minimise any disruption to teaching. Pupils move around the school calmly and sensibly. In discussion with adults and each other, pupils are friendly, polite, and engaging.

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**For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:**

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/st-johns-church-of-england-primary-school-stockport>