

# St John's CofE School

**Address:** Boreham Road, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 9JY

**Unique reference number (URN):** 144854

## Inspection report: 3 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

### ✔ **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.

#### **How we evaluate safeguarding**

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

## Strong standard ●

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

The school prioritises attendance. Leaders take a relentless approach that 'incentivises collectively and gently'. Through this, they have secured high attendance for nearly all pupils. Leaders ensure that the school is a place that pupils value. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with each other and staff, which encourage them to attend every day. Leaders thoroughly analyse attendance patterns. Any variation or dip is quickly addressed. Leaders work closely with families to overcome barriers to attendance and build positive attendance habits. They provide practical and pastoral support where needed. Leaders ensure there are high levels of punctuality.

Leaders have established a well-defined behaviour curriculum underpinned by the values of St John's Way. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently and sensitively. Pupils live out the staff's high expectations. Classrooms have a distinctly purposeful and studious atmosphere. Pupils listen carefully, work hard and are supportive of each other. Playtime routines are well established. This enables all pupils to belong and flourish. Pupils play harmoniously across all year groups. Incidents of poor behaviour are infrequent and addressed swiftly. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils enjoy the rewards they receive for demonstrating positive behaviours.

### Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

There is a clear and coherent rationale underpinning the school's personal development and wellbeing offer. It is firmly grounded in the school's distinctive values. Leaders have designed it to meet the specific needs of pupils. They also ensure it is sufficiently responsive to address emerging needs as they arise. Alongside staff, leaders analyse pupils' engagement and their social, emotional and mental health needs. This helps them spot pupils who need extra pastoral support. The support provided is highly effective. The views of the most vulnerable pupils are carefully considered when shaping the school's clubs and wider offer. As a result, all disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend clubs and extra-curricular activities.

The pupils' views and conduct mirror the leaders' clear sense of moral purpose. Pupils are extremely well prepared for life beyond school. They demonstrate a secure understanding of, and respect for, differences within society. Pupils have a sophisticated grasp of the importance of fundamental British values. They know that discrimination is unfair and explain with confidence how an individual's rights are protected in law. They articulate what different faiths and cultures have in common and make intelligent connections in their understanding of religions. Pupils speak confidently about socio-economic and climate change issues. They know what actions they can take to make a positive impact. Pupils show thoughtful understanding of people's differences. They articulate empathetically about the impact of war and the challenges faced by those living in conflict zones.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests, such as through the school's golf club. Leadership opportunities lead to real changes in school life. For example, pupils' views have successfully influenced the quality of school meals and the music played at the start of the day.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of contexts. They understand what to do if they see or hear something that causes them concern. Older pupils understand respectful relationships and the principles of consent.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils typically achieve in line with national expectations or do better. Published outcomes at the end of key stage 2, the Year 1 phonics screening check and the Year 4 multiplication table check score reflect this. Pupils are generally well prepared for the next stage of their education. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make positive progress from their starting points. There are high expectations for pupils. However, writing outcomes dipped at the end of key stage 2 in 2025. Leaders have carried out a precise analysis of the barriers that some pupils face when learning to write. They have taken appropriate steps to address these. Pupils now benefit from targeted support that helps them to catch up swiftly. That said, there remains more to do in early writing to ensure that pupils successfully build on previous learning.

### Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum offer. It is now broad and ambitious. Subjects are carefully sequenced to build pupils' knowledge and understanding over time. Leaders have clearly identified the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Leaders ensure that staff have the expertise needed to deliver the curriculum effectively. Staff know and support the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who face other barriers to learning, effectively. Consequently, pupils generally recall what they have learned. Typically, they gain the knowledge that they need for their next steps. They are able to apply new and existing knowledge, when working independently. For example, in history, pupils make links between the development of society from the Stone Age to the Iron Age.

The curriculum and teaching extend pupils' written and spoken language. As a result, pupils develop a rich vocabulary. This enables them to express their ideas with increasing accuracy and confidence. Strategies to check for understanding generally identify and address gaps in learning. However, in early writing, teaching does not identify errors in transcription and spelling precisely enough. Consequently, pupils do not build secure and accurate knowledge as effectively as they should.

### Early years

Expected standard 

The school has a clear vision for providing children in the early years with the care and support they need. Leaders have implemented a carefully considered and constructed transition process. This establishes a sense of belonging for families right from the start. Staff work closely with parents and carers. This helps them to get to know the children as

the individuals they are. Children settle quickly and enjoy their learning. Most are well prepared for Year 1.

The early years curriculum makes clear the important knowledge that children need to learn. Clear routines and behaviour expectations help children feel safe, secure, engaged and happy. Barriers to learning are accurately identified. Staff work with parents, carers and external professionals to remove these barriers for children's personal and academic development.

Staff prioritise the use of stories, songs and rhymes to help children rehearse and repeat language. They interact effectively with children, introducing new vocabulary in simple, meaningful ways. Staff develop children's vocabulary further through effective modelling and scaffolding throughout the school day. Consequently, children develop their vocabulary and comprehension well. Reading is a priority in the Reception Year. Staff routinely check children's phonics understanding and address any gaps in learning. This helps children read with increasing fluency and understanding.

## **Inclusion**

**Expected standard** 

The school is inclusive. Leaders commit to meeting the needs of all pupils. Staff swiftly identify, assess and address the needs of disadvantaged pupils, and pupils with barriers to their learning. The school works closely with parents, carers and external professionals. Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the targeted support they require. Pupils with an education, health and care plan benefit from staff regularly reviewing their learning and personal development targets. However, in a minority of cases, targets are not precisely matched to pupils' needs. This hinders the progress some pupils with SEND make through the curriculum.

Leaders have ensured that staff have the appropriate training to support pupils with different needs. Learning is carefully adapted to ensure that pupils with SEND generally access the same curriculum as their classmates. Leaders monitor pupils' progress and assess the impact of interventions and support strategies. Most pupils with SEND make positive progress from their starting points.

The school uses its pupil premium funding effectively. Targeted support helps pupils with gaps in their learning to catch up quickly. Pastoral provision ensures support for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders ensure that when they use alternative provision, it is safe and of high quality to meet pupils' needs.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Expected standard** 

Leaders are skilled and knowledgeable. They have a clear vision for inclusion and belonging that aligns with trust principles and the school's distinctive ethos. They understand the school context. Leaders identify and address priorities while maintaining strengths. Leaders have helped build positive attendance habits and reduced persistent absence. This work has increased overall attendance. Their high expectations and aspirations have led to improvements in curriculum design and teaching. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing. They ensure that staff benefit from high-quality professional learning programmes and opportunities to collaborate. Consequently, staff develop their expertise over time. Staff

are proud to work at the school and value the close relationships and shared vision they maintain.

Leaders foster a culture of openness and trust. They have well-developed relationships with parents, carers and the wider community. Parents speak very highly of the school. They recognise and appreciate the nurturing environment and support that leaders provide.

Trustees and academy councillors share leaders' ambition for pupils. They ensure that the school meets its statutory duties. By working together, they provide support and challenge to leaders. In addition, they ask direct, purposeful questions about staffing, curriculum decisions and the use of additional funding. Inclusion is a key, continued priority. Leaders and those in charge act in the best interests of pupils consistently. This is especially true for those facing learning barriers and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders make decisions that put pupils' learning, safety and wellbeing first, so that pupils can thrive.

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

Pupils at St John's Church of England Primary School arrive to a calm and welcoming start to the day. Staff greet them and their families warmly. The school's nurturing ethos and commitment to St John's Way values are lived out by pupils. They attend well and show care and kindness towards one another. Parents and carers appreciate the school's 'family feel'. Clear routines help pupils settle quickly into learning. Some pupils join at different points of the school year. Whenever they join, each new pupil gets the help they need to settle in swiftly. New pupils adjust well to this. They quickly learn the school's behaviour routines that help everyone learn well.

Staff have ambitious aims for pupils' achievement. Pupils enjoy their learning and generally achieve well. The school's published outcomes reflect this. Where pupils have gaps in their learning, leaders improve provision and offer appropriate support. Disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils with barriers to their learning generally receive carefully planned support to access learning.

Pupils trust adults to help them if they have a worry. They feel safe. Pupils have positive relationships with staff. They know that adults notice them and understand their needs well. The school has high expectations for behaviour. Pupils rise to meet these and behave well. Bullying and unkind behaviour are rare.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They make a meaningful contribution to the 'Pupil Personal Development Passport'. For example, their active involvement in fundraising is purposeful. It reflects a growing sense of social responsibility. Pupils enjoy a wide range of broader experiences. They benefit from the wide range of clubs available to them, from sports to the Spanish club. Opportunities such as these help pupils develop their talents and interests.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff precisely identify misconceptions or gaps in transcriptional knowledge in writing, so that pupils build securely and accurately on what they already know.
  - Leaders should ensure that all targets for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are precisely matched to their needs, so that pupils more consistently make the progress of which they are capable.
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## About this inspection

This school is part of Acorn Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Rob Price, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Middleton.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and school staff during the inspection. The lead inspector met with a trustee, the CEO of the trust and a member of the local academy council. Inspectors also met with other central trust directors.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is part of the Diocese of Salisbury. It received a section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character in November 2025.

The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Headteacher: Daniel Hortop

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### Lead inspectors:

Dale Burr, His Majesty's Inspector

Liz Geller, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspector:

Jo Hicks, Ofsted Inspector

## Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 3 February 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**106**

Well below average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

### School capacity

**147**

Below average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

### Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

**22.64%**

Close to average

### What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

### Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

**4.72%**

Close to average

### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

### **Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

**9.43%**

Below average

### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

### **Location deprivation**

**Below average**

### **What does this mean?**

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

### **Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)**

**No resourced provision**

### **What does this mean?**

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

### **All pupils' performance**

#### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	67%	61%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	45%	62%	Below
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	70%	61%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	83%	60%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	89%	74%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	82%	75%	Above
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	91%	74%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	92%	73%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	78%	72%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	55%	72%	Below
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	83%	72%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	92%	71%	Above

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	80%	73%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	64%	74%	Below
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	87%	73%	Above
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	83%	73%	Above

## **Disadvantaged pupils' performance**

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	44%	46%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	47%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	46%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	44%	S

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	89%	62%	Above

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	63%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	62%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	60%	S

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	56%	59%	Close to average
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	59%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	58%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	58%	S

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	78%	60%	Above
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	61%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	59%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

## Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	44%	68%	-23 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	69%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	67%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	66%	S

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	89%	80%	9 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	81%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	80%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	78%	S

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	56%	78%	-22 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	78%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	78%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	77%	S

### **Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National non-disadvantaged score</b>	<b>School disadvantage gap</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	78%	80%	-2 pp
<b>2024/25 (revised)</b>	S	81%	S
<b>2023/24 (final)</b>	S	79%	S
<b>2022/23 (final)</b>	S	79%	S

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## **Absence**

### **Overall absence**

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	4.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.6%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.0%	5.9%	Below

## Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	6.4%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.9%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.5%	16.2%	Below

## Our grades explained

### Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

### Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

### Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

### Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

### Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

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