



Newsletter 18

Friday 31st January 2020

February

Monday 10 th	500 Words Competition (all week) Safer Internet Week
Friday 14 th	Crazy Day – fun fundraiser from FOSM - £1 donation T2 Ends
Monday 24 th	Training Day #4 TD#4) – no children in school
Tuesday 25 th	T4 Starts – children back to school

Great news

At the end of November 2019 the school was visited again by [Challenge Partners](#) as part of our trust-wide commitment to being the best we can be. The team of five spent three days in schools with children, teachers, leaders and governors to quality assure us. It's all well and good us saying how effective we think our school is, but it's also important to let other professionals come and see, and tell us whether they agree or not. The review confirm the school is effective, in a strong position and continues to improve.

November 2019

We were judged to be 'effective' (aka good) in all areas reviewed (Overall; Leadership at all levels; Quality of provision and outcomes; Quality and provision of outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs)

Some highlights/quotes include:

- The school is extremely well-led. The clear vision of the leadership team sets high expectations for all pupils regardless of their background and ability. Leaders know their school well and the school development plan (SDP) and self-evaluation form (SEF) drive improvements
- Senior leaders have developed a curriculum which fosters a love of learning across a broad range of subjects...the school's broader curriculum links directly with its positive outcomes and prepares pupils well for secondary education
- The quality of teaching and learning has led directly to very strong outcomes
- The dynamic leadership of English and mathematics has had a direct impact on raising outcomes
- Disadvantaged pupils perform well because the expectations of them are high. The in-school difference between these groups has diminished significantly over time
- Leaders have similarly high expectations for the quality of learning for pupils with additional needs. Learning has been supported by high quality coaching from the SENCO, who regularly shares best practice
- There is a culture of strong relationships between all members of the school community through a focus on 'pulling together' for the community
- Local governors play a key role in support monitoring and feedback and they have developed a wide perspective on the next steps for St. Mark's
- Attitudes to learning are very positive because pupils are fully focused and engaged in their learning. This is as a result of teachers' high expectations for behaviour and learning

The previous visit was last academic year:

February 2019

We were judged to be good in all areas reviewed (Overall; School Improvement Strategies; Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Outcomes)

Some highlights included:

- A distinctive school culture with a welcoming and friendly atmosphere.
- A dynamic, effective and inspirational team...energetic, enthusiastic and very committed.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour and work ethic are high and they are modelled well by staff.
- Learners, who work hard, are proud of their school and learning. They are happy and safe
- Pupils are productive, for example, regularly producing substantial pieces of writing.
- Pupils feel valued and show great confidence when speaking or explaining their work to peers and visitors.
- Teaching is improving quickly and securely through a strong monitoring programme combined with effective sharing of practice. New approaches to teaching are having a positive impact on all pupils' progress.
- Senior Leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas of improvement and use accurate school evaluation well for improvement planning.

These reviews make me enormously proud of our school and everyone who works, volunteers and learns here. The hard work and commitment of the team continues to be a hallmark of our journey. External validation is always welcome as it can become easy to become complacent and blinkered by our efforts day-in day-out. At two recent meetings I shared

some earlier information about how the school compares locally. For children in KS2 meeting or exceeding the national standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (one key measure of secondary readiness) St Mark's was second again compared to Salisbury schools (2019 and 2018). In 2017 we were in ninth position. Although this is only one measure of success it does show how far we come. For the second year running we have been the fastest improving school in the county.

Data is only one piece of the picture, as are quality assurance review or OfSED judgements. We don't exist to climb league tables or keep quiet when we change our ranking. Our raison d'être to provide the best education we can for your children. We want to provide the best deal we can for every child. Our school vision, launched back in November, is "Believing in better". We didn't choose this because it is easy to remember or catchy. It is based on Jeremiah 29:11 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' We believe in better teaching, better outcomes, better experiences and we will continue to provide this. What do you believe in?

Friends of St Mark's (FOSM) News

Crazy Day – Friday 14th February

Children are invited to wear something crazy to school in exchange for £1; this can be mismatched crazy clothes, nail polish, crazy hair or a combination of them. If all else fails treat it as a MUFTI day!

Parking Meeting

Many thanks to all the parents who attended our first meeting to help avoid some solutions and help us find better ones. Two emerging themes are:

- how to get children and their parents to avoid walking in traffic walk on the paths
- how to keep the drop-off zone clear of parked cars so the traffic can flow safely and smoothly

I will arrange another meeting in the near future to share further ideas etc.

Praying Parents

They meet on a Monday from 9-9:30 am in Hub 3. They empty the prayer box and pray for the pupils, the staff and the school. This has been a long standing and positive group we would love to keep going. If you would like more information please contact the headteacher.

Parent View

Our next parental survey is not due until May 2020. We have always included the standard questions OfSTED ask as part of their surveys using [Parent View](#). The questions have changed subtly (there are now 14). The survey asks parents to respond to 14 statements and questions.

1. My child is happy at this school.
 2. My child feels safe at this school.
 3. The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
 4. My child has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively.
 5. The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year.
 6. When I have raised concerns with the school they have been dealt with properly.
 7. Does your child have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)? (yes or no)
- If yes, the survey asks parents how strongly they agree with this statement: 'My child has SEND, and the school gives them the support they need to succeed.'
8. The school has high expectations for my child.
 9. My child does well at this school.
 10. The school lets me know how my child is doing.
 11. There is a good range of subjects available to my child at this school.
 12. My child can take part in clubs and activities at this school.
 13. The school supports my child's wider personal development.
 14. I would recommend this school to another parent. (yes or no)

Unless otherwise specified above, all the answer options to the statements are:

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree
- don't know

For statement 4, 'My child has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively' parents can also select 'My child has not been bullied'.

For statement 6, 'When I have raised concerns with the school they have been dealt with properly' parents can select 'I have not raised any concerns'.

Why not fill yours in now ([Parent View](#)) rather than wait until OfSTED visit? We expect them to visit in the next nine weeks as that is when our timeframe was (30 month return for RI schools). Last time 93 parents responded in less than 24 hours. Ideally I would like as many parents to respond. In the follow up meetings after OfSTED 200 parents attended. Achieving that number of responses would be awesome and representative. Thank you in anticipation.