



St. James' CE First School

Headteacher: Mr D Lawford

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Friday 7th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

What a week! We knew our time was coming but when Mrs Clayton stood on the steps at 09.30 Monday morning and told me I had a phone call, it could only mean one thing. Whilst I'm not able to share specific feedback or outcomes of our report until it officially lands, I can take this time to share my thanks for both your messages of encouragement and support and to your children for always being so wonderful. Whenever Ofsted come to a school, there is always a sense of pressure and expectation on the whole community; this is both a reflection of how much we all care about St James' but also how much the team have invested in ensuring this educational provision continues to flourish. It is my first as a headteacher and I wanted to be able to shine a light on all that is fantastic at St James', and we were certainly able to do that!

So firstly, a thank you to all my wonderful staff who continue to serve faithfully, giving their all in every moment. They have all been observed teaching and many have prepared interviews and presentations to demonstrate the work we have done to cement our curriculum and outcomes for the children. The inspectors asked widely about Safeguarding and other areas of upmost importance and there is always a genuine worry about saying the wrong thing. But the reality is they all know their stuff and help to shape St James' into a unique place to work.

Secondly, I want to thank your children. They make the school the fun place that it is, and they are so valued. We know that they are always fantastic, but on Tuesday and Wednesday this week, they raised their game even further and were able to reflect the values of our school in abundance. Many of the children were also spoken to in small groups and were able to share their learning effectively. They all seemed tired come Thursday and are in need of a half-term break.

Finally, thank you to all those who filled out their Parent View surveys. The lead inspector commented on the results as probably some of the best he has ever seen. He highlighted some of the qualitative feedback, which I don't get to see, and celebrated the sense of community that was exemplified in these. These results are a stark contrast to the results of a parent survey 3 years ago and once again reinforce the journey of growth the school has been on.

The formal part of the inspection is now finished, and the lead inspector will spend the next few weeks compiling his final report. There is a period of review and quality assurance that takes place before this is finally ratified, likely in April. The final report will celebrate all that we know to be great and help signpost the next phase of the school development as we strive to provide the best possible start for all the children of our community.

Yours faithfully

Mr Lawford
Headteacher

Believe & Achieve "I will show you my faith by my deeds" James 2:18

Love | Hope | Truth