



St Mary's C.E. Middle School

A Church of England Academy

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LEADERSHIP TEAM

Mr M HILBORNE B.Ed (Hons), NPQH – Deputy Head Teacher

Mrs J THOMAS BSc (Hons), Ad Dip SEN – Assistant Head Teacher

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HEAD OF SCHOOL

Mr D AYLING BSc Ed.(Hons) NPQH

Monday, 8th May 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you will be aware, St. Mary's C.E. Middle School was inspected by Ofsted just before the Easter holidays and we are now able to share the finalised report with you. The full report will be published on the Ofsted website on Friday 12th May.

A new and more rigorous inspection process was introduced in September 2016. Under this framework, which is significantly different than the previous version, the school has been judged as **requires improvement**. It should be noted that this means that, although there are many areas of the school which are good or better, there are some key areas for the school to work on.

The team identified many strengths within the school. As a church school, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and the values that the school are based on are very important to St. Mary's and we are pleased to see that these have been commented on as being strong. The newly reintroduced P.S.H.C.E. curriculum has also been highlighted as being effective in developing these areas and is evidence of the combined effort of all staff within the school to make this a success.

We are proud to see that throughout the report, the behaviour of the pupils has been recognised as being a strong feature of the school and they are safe and well cared for. We are also pleased to see that the hard work of all staff involved in the pastoral care of the pupils, from the Senior Leadership Team through to the teaching assistants, has been recognised in making this judgement.

The outcome given for **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** is requires improvement and this is explained by having School attendance assessed under this category and, despite much work and a rapidly improving picture, there are some key groups of pupils where the school is not yet meeting the government's target attendance level. We are confident that with the introduction of more stringent monitoring and use of the Dorset County Council attendance strategy, this can be improved. We know from direct feedback from the inspection team that, had the attendance levels in these groups been higher, this area would have been judged as at least good.

We provide a full and varied curriculum and we were pleased to see this recognised in the report. We had feedback from the inspection team that this is producing some great results in the pupils' learning and were happy to see many of the foundation subjects highlighted in the report.

We are already targeting achievement in Key Stage 2 leading up to SATs, both within our school and across GTAT. Previous results, particularly in writing and maths, have not compared strongly with other primary schools. We anticipate rapid improvement in these results which will be reflected over the next few years.

Science is strongly featured as a curriculum area that requires significant improvement. This was already acknowledged by the subject leader and the school's management team. We are already working alongside other schools to secure rapid improvement.



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St. Mary's have had significant issues with the staffing of Science lessons over the last few years and this has led to a need for curriculum reform in this subject. This will be a major element of the school's improvement plan for the future.

Whilst we were pleased that many of the things that we felt were strong features of the school were recognised and that the areas for development were already things the school was working on, we did not totally agree with every statement in the report. In particular, I felt that the inspection team failed to recognise how much support is offered to me by all members of my senior leadership team (my deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and two key stage leaders). I have full confidence in my senior team and that we have all the staff resources in St. Mary's to bring about the rapid improvement needed. We work as a team and the judgements, positive and developmental, on the report are based on all our combined efforts.

In summary, we are satisfied that the report has given us clear indications of where to focus to move the school forward and that by the time we are re-inspected, within the next two years, we will be able to show significant improvements to return the school to an overall effectiveness grading of good (or better). We look forward to the continued support of all the school community in achieving this aim.

We will be holding a parental briefing session to go through the report in more detail on Thursday 18th May at 5.30pm. Due to time constraints, we will be unable to take direct questions from parents during the presentation but the full senior team and some other staff will be available for one to one conversations at the end of the briefing. Should you have any specific point that you would like covered in this briefing or any other comments regarding the inspection report, we invite you to include these comments on the reply slip attached to this letter. (We will also send home a hard copy of the reply slip for those of you receiving this letter by email).

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who was involved or contributed to the inspection. The children who were fabulous and a credit to the school, the staff for their hard work and commitment, the governors and other DASP schools and parents and carers who contributed to the Parent View survey, which was extremely positive.

Yours sincerely,



Darren Ayling
Head of School



Kate Connolly
Chair of Governors

Enc. Reply Slip

