

9th February 2012

Dear Parents/Carers

As you are aware, Ofsted has recently completed an inspection of our school (looking at standards, progress and improvement since the last inspection). The overall judgement is as follows:

'The overall effectiveness of this school is satisfactory. Achievement is satisfactory, and from their starting points (which are below National average), all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. When they leave in Year 6, their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average.'

We would agree with the identified actions for improvement – indeed many strategies had already been implemented to address such issues even before the Inspection period began.

As you know St John's was last inspected almost five years ago and since then the Inspection process and the basis on which Inspectors make certain judgements have changed quite considerably. On January 1st of this year Ofsted launched a new inspection framework and process which has most certainly raised the bar for all primary schools. Headteachers, governing bodies and relevant authorities are unanimous in agreement as to how different the new inspection framework is and how it is difficult to compare judgements now with those made in previous inspections. We were the first school in the Sefton to be judged against this new set of criteria which were significantly different to any previous inspections any of us have experienced.

We were delighted to see that the Inspectors recognised the following:

- In all the lessons seen, the majority of pupils behaved well, were keen to learn and responded with enthusiasm to teachers' questions.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, priority is given to extending children's personal, social and emotional development and their reading, writing and calculation skills, which are often low on entry to the school. The effective and well-structured promotion of reading skills continues through Years 1 and 2. The school has been quick to introduce small, well-focussed guided reading groups and mental mathematics sessions. As a result, any gaps in learning are closing...pupils who are currently in Years 3 and 4, now make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. The majority of pupils currently in Years 5

and 6 make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics, while some make good progress.

- In all lessons, teachers have good relationships with pupils. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and teachers and teaching assistants show a good awareness of pupils' learning by reviewing their learning and understanding in lessons to check and, if required, redirect learning.
- Pupils' broadly average attainment by the time they leave in Year 6 means that they are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The school behaviour management procedures are clear and contribute to a safe school environment.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good because it is interwoven well into all the subjects that pupils study.
- Individual learning programmes and constant review of pupils' learning needs help to successfully narrow the gaps in learning
- The new Headteacher has rapidly identified the key improvements needed to move the school forward

We, and I genuinely mean every member of staff and governor, are confident that St John's Primary School delivers a solid education, but as we state in one of our school aims – we are always striving for excellence and with that in mind we acknowledge the areas identified for improvement and are determined to work together to provide a truly excellent educational experience for all of our children. We are very fortunate to have a highly dedicated team of professionals and Parents/Carers who are eager to support their school and its community. These are exciting times for St John's – we are proud of our achievements and of our strengths, but we should all be eager to work together to ensure that St John's becomes a shining beacon of primary education within its locality and throughout Sefton.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of the report confidentially with myself or a Governor representative, please contact me or Mrs Smithson to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely