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Colette Firth
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Firth

Urgent inspection of St John's Church School, Spirit Federation

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 2025, I write on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss the school.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for urgent inspections. The inspection was carried out because His Majesty's Chief Inspector wished to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school. Also, concerns had been raised with Ofsted about aspects of the statutory responsibilities in the early years and the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school, including those responsible for governance.

We do not give graded judgements on urgent inspections. However, if we find some evidence that overall standards may be declining, but where no serious concerns have been identified, then the next inspection will normally be a graded inspection, which will be carried out under section 5 of the Act and be brought forward. If we have serious concerns, we will deem the urgent inspection as a graded inspection immediately.

Evidence

I scrutinised the single central record and met with leaders to discuss the school's approach to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. I met with the executive headteacher, the heads of school, representatives from the board of governors and a representative of the local authority. In addition, I visited the early years setting and spoke to staff to gather their views.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Main findings

The school ensures that safeguarding arrangements and recruitment follow statutory guidance. Leaders ensure that all those involved in recruitment have completed appropriate safer recruitment training. This provides rigour when appointing staff. Regular safeguarding briefings and refresher training help to sustain a strong safeguarding culture. Staff understand the school's procedures to keep pupils safe. Staff know how to report and escalate concerns promptly. They are also confident in using the school's whistle-blowing policy if needed. Staff also understand the procedures to report concerns about other adults who work in the school. Staff are vigilant and take appropriate action to protect pupils when concerns arise.

Leaders have ensured that there are clear and robust processes in place to keep pupils safe. Governors hold leaders to account and challenge the school to ensure that safeguarding processes are helping keep pupils safe. An increased understanding of the statutory responsibilities and requirements for children in nursery settings has ensured that the school provides the appropriate resources, training and communication for staff and parents.

Leaders and governors understand their responsibilities for safeguarding and know how to assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements are strong. They carry out regular audits and check to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and ensure that there is an open culture of safeguarding. This includes reviewing records, speaking with staff and pupils, and ensuring that policies are being followed in practice. Leaders ensure that staff understand the training they receive and know how to apply it. Leaders are clear about referral pathways and know exactly when and how to involve external agencies, including the local authority designated officer, the police and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Leaders understand their statutory responsibilities in the early years. They have ensured that staff are suitably trained to meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, including those relating to welfare, supervision and record-keeping. Staff know how to meet children's individual needs and how to keep them safe. Leaders maintain close oversight of practice to make sure that safeguarding requirements are fully met and that children are well supported and protected from harm.

In the early years, staff know the children well. They use this knowledge to support high-quality interactions during play and well-established routines. These routines help children feel settled, confident and ready to learn. Children engage positively with staff and enjoy the carefully planned activities. The school has also strengthened day-to-day procedures and improved communication with parents and carers. For example, collections outside of

setting hours are now managed through the main school office. This provides greater clarity and consistency for families.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of governors, the director of education for the Diocese of Ely, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Peterborough. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Nerrissa Bear
His Majesty's Inspector