Diocese of Salisbury
Academy Trust
'Beyond expectations for all of God's children'

St. James'
CE First School







Academy Improvement Plan

2025-2026

St James' First School and Nursery

Academy Improvement Plan 2025 – 2026

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Our School Vision

Our school vision of 'Believe and Achieve' is central to everything we do and we are really proud of the 'family atmosphere' that we have cultivated in which everybody is given the opportunity to flourish and to actively make a difference in the world. We believe and, therefore, we achieve great things for ourselves and for others! Through our Vision and Values, we aim to transform our own lives and the lives of everybody within the school.

Love	Hope	Truth
At St James, we strive to demonstrate God's love in the way that we care for and serve one another and in the way that we practice forgiveness and reconciliation. We show love through our words and our actions.	At St James we aspire to be the best we can be and we are ambitious for our whole community. We regularly give children the chance to talk about ways to challenge injustice and inequality and we try to bring hope to others through everything we say and do. We regularly explore the idea that God has a plan for our lives to give us 'hope and a future'.	At St James we always aim to act with integrity. We are sincere and genuine in our interactions with everyone within our school community and we approach all we do with a spirit of honesty and openness.

Our Theological Roots

James, the half-brother of Jesus, was a founding member of early church. He wrote to the Christians in Jerusalem, and the fledgling churches in the surrounding areas with a simple message, our faith should change our actions. His letter explores this relationship between faith and actions in detail and we find our school's Bible verse as part his letter.

'I will show you my faith by my deeds.'

James 2: 18

James did not have modern technology to allow his message to be spread far and wide, so his letter would have been passed from church to church and read out by the leaders of the time. Whilst this letter is two thousand years old, it has now been passed to us and its message is just as important to all of us at St James' school. If we truly believe in our core values of love, hope and truth, they should guide all our actions. This forms the basis of everything we do at our school. We want our children to grow in love, hope and truth. However, we don't just want them to be ideas, we want them to be lived out in our actions. If our children believe deeply what love, hope and truth means for them and our wider communities, we should see it acted out in their actions; faith demonstrated by deeds.

DSAT Strategy 2030

Our Trust has set out its Strategy 2030, identifying the direction of travel between now and then, based on the needs of our children, families and staff. Our school leaders have worked with our Academy Standards and Ethos Committee (ASEC – governors) and others to identify on one page, what this might look like for our school.

Flourishing Children	Strong Communities	Thriving People	Digital Excellence
- We meet ambitious targets for educational outcomes for all children. - Every child in our school leaves as a fluent reader with a love of reading. - By the end of EYFS, the majority of children are KS1 ready. On entry, addressing and closing deficits are prioritised. - Outcomes for children experiencing disadvantage are at least as high as other children. - High quality provision means children with SEND make rapid and sustained progress. - All children access and experience an intentional, innovative, exciting and diverse co-curricular offer that is responsive to the community we serve and focuses on securing rich cultural capital. - Children's behaviour is exemplary at all times. Our behaviour curriculum is known and enacted by all. - Our children have high levels of self-efficacy and can articulate aspirational ambitions for their future. - Children leave our school with a strong moral compass; they respect diversity and difference and take responsibility for their actions. - Children are well prepared for life in modern Britain; they know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. - Children are equipped to manage their mental health and well-being.	- Our children live out our vision and values both in school and in the community as courageous advocates. - Our reputation in the community is positive; the number of children on roll consistently meets our published admission number. - Our school is a beacon of light in the community; our vision and values have an impact on the community our serve. - High quality pastoral support for parents and families negates the impact of societal challenges on children. - Our high expectations with regard to school attendance are shared by families and there are no children who are severe or persistent absentees. - Our	- Our strategic marketing of the school attracts candidates of the highest calibre. - The impact of continuous professional learning is evident in pedagogy, practice and outcomes for children. - Coaching is embedded as our model for developing our staff. - The strength of leadership and practice in the school is recognised in the category of Excellence in the Trust Improvement Model. - Our staff are widely deployed to add capacity for improvement in other Trust schools. - There is a clear career pathway for every member of staff; staff are ambitious for their future and are part of a wider succession plan within the Trust.	- Our children access the latest in technological advancements and exploit this to support their learning and lives. - Children are able to select appropriate technology to enhance their learning. - Leaders ensure all children have access to up-to-date and relevant technology for use in the classroom. - Technology is intentionally introduced and systematically mapped to the curriculum. - Children develop understanding of how to keep themself and others safe using technology. - Children make excellent decisions using technology

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Academy Improvement Plan Summary

Priority 1: Leadership and Management
To develop leaders' collective and individual efficacy in their roles, so that provision and outcomes improve and the capacity of leadership in the school increases.
Improve Leadership and Management by: 1.1 Ensuring leaders at all levels are enabled to drive their subject forwards through developing a greater shared understanding of how to sequence curriculum through unit and lesson sequencing in their subject in ensuring full curriculum offer (maths – unit planning and enacting blueprint, writing, reading). 1.2 Establishing a clear school wide approach (Curriculum Construction Framework)to connecting knowledge through all subjects, with a specific focus on 'connecting my learning' through the substantive concepts in the foundation subjects. Developing the 'subject story'. (H*istory, Geography and RE in first instance).*

Priority 2: Quality of Education
To ensure the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better across the curriculum and the school.
Improve Quality of Education by: 2.1 Embedded mastery lesson design is with a focus on metacognitive talk (with a particular focus on reading, writing, maths reasoning). 2.2 Developing effective practice, scaffolds and support for vulnerable learners (including disadvantaged and SEND) in core subjects. *Embed assessment approaches in each subject using this to identify knowledge gaps for children. (Reading deficit pathway RRR & Exit questions, QLA of NTS test, Bi-weekly arithmetic.) This will ensure that the most vulnerable children close gaps quickly and keep up.*

Priority 3: Behaviour and Attitudes
To provide a holistic education; develop the children's intellectual emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative, spiritual potential, and emotional resilience.
Improve Behaviour and Attitudes by: 3.1 Developing mechanisms for children to share their thinking in learning (whether visual representation in maths, or using an Accept, Build, Challenge approach throughout lessons). 3.2 Ensure children take full ownership of learning through editing effectively in writing and responding to feedback given both verbally and in books.

Priority 4: Personal Development
To ensure the school's vision, values and curriculum drivers are evident in the behaviour and attitudes of pupils and staff.
Improve Personal Development by: 4.1 Building children understanding and appreciation of diversity of in the world, including cities, World Religions and life beyond Dorset. 4.2 Developing mechanism for children to contribute to their school as their own environment, becoming responsible and proactive citizens. 4.3 Use agreed definition for spirituality to identify opportunities for spiritual flourishing across all subject areas – allowing pupils to express their deepening thinking in a variety of ways.

Priority 5: Early Years
To ensure that the curriculum and environment provides a broad range of interesting and demanding opportunities, that meets each child's needs and helps them to make progress towards the goals of our curriculum and prepared for the year 1 curriculum and beyond
Improve Early Years By: 5.1 Develop consistency across Nursery FS1 and FS2 as to how the curriculum is enacted. 5.2 Developing the quality and intentionality of adult interactions in FS1 to include playing alongside children by using a ShREC (EEF) approach within the provision. 5.3 Ensuring all children are given the opportunity to think critically and problem solve through continuous provision.