



Governors' Report for September 2026

The report covers the period from September 2025 to September 2026

Maths

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Overview and main focus for the year:

Mathematics has remained a strong subject across St Botolph's during 2025–26. The main focus has been to strengthen pupils' mathematical fluency alongside their ability to reason, explain and apply their understanding when mathematics becomes less procedural. This has included a whole-school emphasis on precise mathematical language, pupil talk, justification, reasoning in unfamiliar contexts, effective use of concrete and pictorial representations, and sentence stems to help pupils articulate their thinking.

A further priority has been developing positive mathematical identities and reducing maths anxiety. Through the Maths Hub work group, termly Maths Curiosity Days and whole-school fluency initiatives, pupils have been encouraged to see mathematics as something they can explore, discuss and make sense of rather than simply complete. Monitoring and data have been used to identify cohorts requiring additional support and to ensure that fluency, reasoning and challenge remain central to teaching.

CPD

Professional development has been closely aligned with monitoring findings and school priorities. Staff development has focused on mathematical reasoning and talk, including how pupils explain, justify and prove their thinking; the use of sentence stems and structured discussion; and the importance of precise and consistent mathematical vocabulary.

Training has also developed staff use of representations, with an emphasis on models being explored and discussed rather than simply shown. Questioning and adaptive teaching have been a further focus, including the use of hinge questions to identify misconceptions in real time and adapting teaching without lowering expectations.

Fluency has been developed with an emphasis on understanding why methods work, rather than relying solely on procedures. Termly staff development has also supported effective retrieval practice. The Maths Hub work group on maths anxiety has informed the wider approach to building confidence, resilience and positive attitudes towards mathematics.

Work continued with the Maths Hub for Mastering Number.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A sustained cycle of monitoring has taken place across the year, including learning walks, lesson observations, review of pupils' work and data analysis. Learning walks in February were led by the Headteacher and Maths Lead and were structured around the school's mathematics priorities: fluency, reasoning, pupil talk and mathematical vocabulary, justification, unfamiliar contexts, representations and sentence stems.

Monitoring found high levels of pupil engagement and positive attitudes towards mathematics. Pupils were increasingly confident in using mathematical vocabulary and explaining their thinking, and representations were used consistently to support conceptual understanding. Sentence stems were becoming embedded across classrooms.

Areas identified for continued development included ensuring pupils justify answers consistently rather than simply giving an answer; increasing reasoning in unfamiliar contexts; strengthening challenge for Greater Depth pupils; developing consistent use of high-quality and hinge questions; and securing greater consistency in mathematical language, particularly in KS1 and lower KS2. Findings have informed feedback and subsequent CPD, creating a clear cycle of monitoring, feedback, professional development and review.

The quality of mathematics teaching is secure and increasingly consistent across the school. Pupils generally demonstrate strong engagement, positive learning behaviours and growing confidence. Teaching supports fluency through carefully sequenced learning while increasingly giving pupils opportunities to explain methods, justify answers and make connections.

Effective use of concrete and pictorial representations is a strength, helping pupils to make sense of mathematical structures and concepts. There has been a noticeable improvement in mathematical talk, with teachers increasingly using sentence stems and purposeful questioning to move pupils beyond procedural responses.

Monitoring identified examples of particularly strong practice across the school, including secure use of representations, precise modelling and opportunities for pupils to reason. The next stage is to make this consistently strong in every classroom, particularly in the precision of mathematical language, depth of questioning and challenge for pupils capable of Greater Depth.

Learning walks were carefully structured around our key priority:

developing pupils' mathematical fluency alongside their ability to reason and think mathematically beyond procedural approaches.

Using our agreed structure, learning walks focused on:

- What pupils were doing, saying and understanding
- The extent to which pupils were engaged and thinking deeply
- How well pupils could articulate their reasoning and justify answers
- The use of representations and models
- The quality of teacher questioning and feedback

Staff/pupil voice

Pupil response to mathematics across the year has been positive. Whole-school activities and Maths Curiosity Days have generated high levels of participation and enjoyment, while encouraging pupils to persevere, discuss different approaches and recognise that successful mathematics is not simply about speed or immediately knowing an answer.

Pupils are increasingly able to talk about their mathematical thinking using appropriate vocabulary and explain how representations support them. Curiosity activities have been particularly useful in creating a low-threat environment in which pupils can explore multiple methods, estimate, reason and justify. This supports the school's work around maths anxiety and confidence.

Staff engagement with the year's priorities has been positive, with learning walk findings showing increasing use of sentence stems, representations and mathematical discussion. Feedback from monitoring has been used constructively to identify and share effective practice and agree next steps.

Data Analysis

Mathematics outcomes for 2025–26 show a positive picture overall, with strong outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 and the majority of pupils across the school working at or above age-related expectations. The data also provides clear direction for our next steps, particularly in relation to pupils with SEND and those who have not yet secured the foundational knowledge needed to access age-related mathematics confidently.

Key Stage 2 SATs outcomes were a particular strength. In Year 6, 76% of pupils achieved the Expected Standard in mathematics, compared with a national figure of approximately 75%. Even more positively, 34% achieved Greater Depth, compared with approximately 27% nationally. The cohort also achieved an average scaled score of 105.9, which was above the national average. These outcomes represent an improvement on previous school results and demonstrate that pupils were not only securing the required mathematical knowledge but that a substantial proportion were able to apply this at a deeper level.

This is particularly encouraging in the context of our work throughout the year on fluency with understanding, mathematical reasoning and pupils' ability to explain and justify their thinking. The Greater Depth figure suggests that an increasing number of pupils are able to move beyond procedural competence and apply their knowledge successfully to more demanding problems.

Key Stage 1 outcomes were broadly in line with national expectations. In Year 2, 72% of pupils achieved the Expected Standard, compared with approximately 71% nationally. Greater Depth was lower, however, at approximately 5% compared with 9% nationally. While the proportion reaching the expected standard is secure, developing greater depth earlier remains an important area for improvement. This reinforces our focus on providing pupils with opportunities from the earliest stages to reason, make connections, explain why an answer is correct and explore mathematical ideas in different ways rather than seeing Greater Depth as simply completing harder calculations.

The Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check also provides useful evidence regarding fluency. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the maximum score of 25 was around the national level, the cohort's average score was 22.8 compared with a national average of 21.6. This indicates that, even where pupils did not achieve full marks, their overall multiplication fluency was strong. Continued emphasis on automatic recall through high-quality classroom practice and initiatives such as Times Tables Rock Stars should support pupils in accessing more complex mathematics without basic number facts becoming a barrier.

Whole-school attainment

Across Years 1–6, involving 341 pupils, approximately 69% are working at or above the Expected Standard, including 12% working at Greater Depth. Approximately 29% are currently below expectation, with a small proportion significantly below. This indicates that the majority of pupils have secured age-related mathematical understanding, while also highlighting the importance of continuing to identify gaps quickly and intervene before misconceptions become embedded.

The data supports our continued emphasis on number sense, fluency and foundational knowledge, alongside reasoning and problem-solving. Where pupils have gaps in basic knowledge, these can limit their capacity to think flexibly or engage confidently with unfamiliar problems. Our approach therefore needs to continue balancing secure fluency with opportunities to apply, reason and explain.

EYFS

The EYFS data is particularly positive. Of the 54 pupils, approximately 85% are working at the expected level in mathematics, with around 15% significantly below. This provides a strong foundation as pupils move into Key Stage 1 and reflects the emphasis placed on early number sense, composition of number, practical mathematics and the use of appropriate representations.

A key priority will be to ensure that this strong starting point is built upon in Years 1 and 2, particularly by maintaining the use of representations and mathematical talk as pupils begin to encounter increasingly formal methods.

Pupil Premium

For pupils eligible for Pupil Premium across Years 1–6, approximately 71% are working at or above the Expected Standard, with 7% achieving Greater Depth. Approximately 29% remain below expectation. This is encouraging because the proportion reaching Expected+ is broadly comparable with the whole-school figure, suggesting that disadvantaged pupils are generally accessing the mathematics curriculum successfully.

There remains, however, a difference in the proportion achieving Greater Depth compared with the whole-school population. A continued focus should therefore be placed not only on pupils catching up, but also on ensuring that disadvantaged pupils who demonstrate secure understanding are routinely exposed to rich reasoning and problem-solving opportunities which enable them to achieve at the highest standard.

SEND

The clearest area for development is the attainment of pupils with SEND. Across Years 1–6, the data for 81 pupils shows approximately 35% working at or above the Expected Standard, while around 65% are below, including approximately 16% significantly below.

Some difference is expected given the range and complexity of needs within this group, and attainment data alone cannot capture the progress made by individual pupils. Nevertheless, the size of the gap makes this an important strategic priority for 2026–27.

Our focus should remain on ensuring that adaptive teaching enables pupils with SEND to access the same ambitious mathematical concepts as their peers. This will include strengthening foundational knowledge, carefully selecting representations, reducing unnecessary cognitive load, explicitly

teaching mathematical vocabulary and providing sufficient opportunities for guided practice and retrieval. Intervention should complement rather than replace high-quality classroom mathematics.

Overall evaluation

Taken together, the data suggests that mathematics is a strength of the school, with particularly strong outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2. Year 6 outcomes above national figures for both Expected Standard and Greater Depth provide strong evidence of the impact of teaching and curriculum development over time. EYFS outcomes also demonstrate strong early foundations.

The next stage of development is therefore less about introducing new initiatives and more about achieving greater consistency and equity. Our priorities should be to maintain strong KS2 outcomes; increase Greater Depth, particularly in KS1 and for disadvantaged pupils; further strengthen the progress and attainment of pupils with SEND; and continue embedding the school's approach to fluency, mathematical talk, reasoning and problem-solving.

This links very neatly with the direction established through our 2025–26 monitoring: pupils need to be fluent enough to think freely, but also able to explain, justify and apply their mathematics when a question is presented in an unfamiliar way. The 2026–27 learning walks and professional development will therefore continue to explore not simply whether pupils can obtain an answer, but whether they understand why their mathematics works and can communicate this confidently.

Enrichments

A key priority has been raising the profile of mathematics and building positive mathematical identities. A whole-school Times Tables Rock Stars day celebrated fluency, effort and perseverance rather than speed alone and encouraged regular practice in an inclusive and motivating way. Pupils also took part enthusiastically in TTRS competitions, including England Rocks, where the school achieved 23rd place out of 4,355 schools and Year 6A achieved 20th place out of 28,202 classes. In a later regional competition, Year 6A placed 3rd out of 2,554 classes.

Termly Maths Curiosity Days have provided opportunities for pupils to apply mathematics in open-ended and unfamiliar contexts. Activities such as the narrative-based dragon problem-solving investigation required pupils to select strategies independently, estimate, reason logically, use representations flexibly, compare methods and justify their thinking. These experiences have helped pupils develop resilience and confidence and have supported the school's focus on reducing maths anxiety.

Strengths

Mathematics is a strong subject with secure teaching and positive pupil attitudes across the school.

- Fluency is well established and is increasingly taught alongside conceptual understanding rather than as procedure alone.
- Pupils are increasingly confident in using mathematical vocabulary and explaining their thinking.
- Concrete and pictorial representations are used effectively to support understanding and reasoning.
- Sentence stems and structured pupil talk are becoming increasingly embedded.
- Monitoring, feedback and CPD are closely aligned, with findings directly informing professional development and next steps.
- Maths Curiosity Days and TTRS initiatives have raised the profile of mathematics and supported confidence, resilience and positive mathematical identities.
- Targeted support is being used to address identified gaps, including for pupils with SEND and cohorts below expected standards.
- Strong practice identified through learning walks provides useful models to share across the school.

Ways forward/Targets

- Prioritise improved outcomes for pupils with SEND, strengthening access to the ambitious mathematics curriculum through secure foundational knowledge, appropriate representations, explicit vocabulary teaching, retrieval and carefully planned adaptive teaching. This should be a significant priority given that approximately 35% of pupils with SEND are currently working at or above the Expected Standard.
- Continue to embed reasoning and high-quality mathematical talk across all year groups, ensuring pupils routinely explain, justify and prove their thinking using precise mathematical vocabulary.
- Maintain the strong Year 4 MTC average and increase the proportion of pupils achieving 25/25, using early identification and targeted fluency support where gaps in multiplication knowledge are identified.
- Further strengthen Greater Depth provision, particularly in KS1 and for disadvantaged pupils, through rich questioning, reasoning and deeper problem-solving rather than acceleration. This is especially relevant given KS1 Greater Depth is below national while KS2 Greater Depth is strong.
- Secure consistent and precise mathematical language and use of representations across the school, with particular attention to KS1 and lower KS2, ensuring representations are used to expose mathematical structure rather than simply support procedures.
- Sustain strong outcomes at the end of KS2 while intervening earlier where gaps emerge, particularly in foundational number knowledge, so that difficulties do not become cumulative.
- Sustain enrichment through Maths Curiosity Days and fluency initiatives, ensuring pupils experience mathematics as engaging, purposeful and accessible and have regular opportunities to apply their learning creatively.