

Dear parents and carers,

2nd November 2018

Attached is the report from our recent Ofsted inspection. I am aware that the summary page may surprise some of you, but would like to reassure you that the inspection team found nothing that we, as leaders, did not already know. Every point for development that Ofsted identified, we had already identified and have been working on as part of our school development plan. We have shared this work with you, through my blog, through tweets and newsletters. This will continue to happen. I would urge you to read the full report, as it describes the findings in more detail, but I know that 11 pages of Ofsted-speak can be heavy going, so will expand upon the key points below.

Since becoming Head Teacher, I have made clear that our school requires improvement. There had been a downward trend in data over the previous two years and I, along with the team (staff, governors and the local authority), immediately set out to raise standards. When our 2018 data has been validated and can be shared with you, you will see that, in the majority of areas, we no longer have a downward trend. Ofsted have recognised the success of our work, both in our January 2018 inspection and in this inspection. The full details of this improvement can be found in the section on **Leadership and Management**. What both inspection teams noted is that we need more time to reverse the historic decline in standards, but they acknowledge that this work is proving successful. This view is re-iterated by the local authority, with whom we are working closely.

Outcomes for pupils are improving in the majority of areas. The report contains lots of detail on this. In December, we should be able to share our validated data from last year with you and we will show you how we are reversing the historic downward trends across the school. Ofsted rightly identified, as had we, that we need to continue to improve provision for pupils with SEND. We have made many, many changes to this, which we will continue to share with you. We have also been working hard at improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and the report recognises the success we have begun to see in this area. Please read the report in full for more detail.

The inspection team judged that the **quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement. Again, I would urge you to read this section in full as it outlines in more detail what is meant by this. It is important that you know that the inspectors did **not** identify any significant issues with any one teacher or year group. What they identified is what we too, had identified - that there are some examples of effective teaching and learning across our school, but that this is not always consistent, across every lesson. We are using the expertise we have in our school, and within our local authority, to ensure that there is a more consistent approach to teaching and learning. Middle Leaders in our school have been instrumental in bringing about the improvements so far and will continue to play a vital role in this work.

The **personal development, behaviour and welfare** judgement needs further explanation. Ofsted judge this area in two parts: 'personal development and welfare', alongside 'behaviour'. Ofsted judged 'personal development and welfare' to be good and this is clearly stated in this section. Ofsted judged 'behaviour' to require improvement, which led to the requires improvement overall judgement. **It is vital that you understand how this judgement came about.**

Ofsted could not praise highly enough the conduct of our children around school. They commented on how they were polite, well-mannered and engaged the inspection team in conversation. They found them to behave well in lessons and to be fully involved in their learning. Put simply, our children behave well and it is vital that this is recognised and celebrated.

The 'behaviour' judgement is also based upon attendance and exclusions. We know that there have been too many instances of exclusions in the past and we have set about to improve this. The report recognises that our work in this area is making a difference.

We have also recognised that school attendance is below national averages. We have shared this information with you through newsletters, my blog and our social media profiles. We have set out to raise attendance in a variety of ways. It is important that you know that Ofsted made the 'requires improvement' judgement based on attendance and exclusions being higher than the national average. We will of course, continue to raise standards in our school by improving attendance rates further and will keep you informed of all initiatives and our successes.

You also need to be aware that **safeguarding** in our school was judged to be **effective**. The inspection team fed-back their praise of our approach to developing the whole child. This is important to use as we work hard to ensure that children are happy and safe, so that they can achieve well.

The final area of the inspection focuses on **Early Years** provision, which gets its own separate judgement. Last year, a major area of focus was in improving the Early Years provision in our school. We had identified that, historically, it had not been of a high enough standard and set out to change this. The entire team worked hard to bring about this improvement and we are thrilled that this has been formally recognised as **good** by Ofsted. The EYFS Team is - of course - continuing that improvement in order to provide outstanding provision!

Finally, a vital part of the inspection process is the views and information shared by parents, governors and staff. This information was shared with us and is briefly referenced in the report. We saw for ourselves, in detail, how **overwhelmingly positive** the **feedback** from you all was. The fact that there were 203 responses is astonishing and speaks volumes about how we now have true home / school partnerships in place for our children. The inspection team were keen to share your views and comments with us and we appreciate the support you give to the school.

Nothing in this report came as a shock to us. Our own evaluations of the school agree with those made by Ofsted. As we have said, our school development plan (which we had already begun to share with you) already contains improvement plans for the areas identified by Ofsted. Our local authority improvement partner commented yesterday on how we haven't got to produce a Post-Ofsted Action Plan, as we already have it in place! We began the improvement work over a year ago and, as is recognised in the report, this is making a difference. This should reassure you that we are well placed to continue to improve further - and rapidly.

I know that this is a lot of information to take in and that you may have questions or things that you wish to discuss with me. As always, my door is open and I'm more than happy to see you to discuss this. The staff, and the majority of governors, have received this report at the same time as you and so, they too, need a while to digest the information in it. Because of this, in the first instance, please direct your questions to myself or Elaine Wagg.

I would like to thank you for your continued support of the school.

Vicki Masters
Head Teacher