

15th November 2016

Dear Parents

You will be aware that we were recently inspected by Ofsted and are now able to share with you the outcomes of the recent inspection. The full report is available on the school website:

<http://www.sandhurst.kent.sch.uk/inspection-reports/>

It was a challenge for the school to be faced with an inspection so soon after the appointment of a new interim Executive Headteacher. Fortunately, even in this short time we had already identified areas that warranted further development and had implemented appropriate initiatives, with particular reference to pupil progress and levels of attainment, building on the significant progress made in the last two years. We continue to have a clear vision to build on and ensure that all pupils at Sandhurst Primary School achieve their full potential.

The school had not been inspected since 2011 and many of you are aware of the challenges faced by the school in those interim years. In September 2014 the previous Chair of Governors had warned parents that the Local Authority were concerned that the school would be listed as a failing school. Since then we have been working with the Local Authority (Kent County Council) and over the last few review meetings they have considered ours to be a "Good" school. Significant headway has been made in the last 18 months and recognized in the latest Ofsted report. Unfortunately Ofsted feel we have not made sufficient progress in some area and as a consequence consider the school to "Requires Improvement"

Whilst initially this feels a harsh and disappointing judgement, particularly as there are so many positive and good comments contained within the report, there was little in the report that the School Leadership Team and Governors felt was unfair.

Upon reading it you will, of course, reach your own conclusions about our school. Judging by the response we received from you on Parent View your feedback is extremely positive so thank you for your continued support. I would, however, like to highlight some of the key findings made by the inspectors to reassure you that numerous improvements have been made since 2013 and in many respects we are a good school.

- 1) The school is moving in the right direction.
- 2) Leaders have secured some important strengths and improvements.
- 3) The current team of teachers is committed...feel well supported and are able to hone their skills.
- 4) Teachers and leaders are positive of the benefits of working more closely with a National Leader of Education (Mrs Roberts) and others from an outstanding school.
- 5) The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is improving, showing an impact of leaders' focus in this area.
- 6) The staff team has worked hard and successfully to create an attractive and stimulating environment that is positive and conducive to learning.
- 7) Lessons are engaging.
- 8) Pastorally, this is a nurturing and caring school.
- 9) Strong leadership of the early years has ensured this is a significant strength of the school.

10) Current governors bring a broad range of skills, knowledge and experience...are committed to the school and passionate about driving forward rapid and sustained improvement.

There is much to be proud of in the report: clearly much of what we are doing is working and delivering results. Equally no complacency exists within the school and there is a desire to get better and better and we have taken on board the recommendations made and will address them.

Last year's results in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were incredibly encouraging, matching or exceeding National averages, but we need to replicate this each year and build on this success. The Ofsted report does reinforce the fact that we have a strong leader in Lindsay Roberts who, in her relatively short time in post, has raised standards and set the school on an improving trend. Myself and the other school governors are extremely pleased at the way her staff have responded to the higher expectations set and demonstrated they are more than capable of delivering consistently good and even outstanding teaching. They are more determined than ever to continue to develop and nurture the potential of all of our pupils.

The essence of a school is that children feel valued, supported and encouraged in their learning. That they are challenged to give their best, and, at times, that learning can be its own challenge. With the right people working with them who know when to push, when to pause, to celebrate, to marvel to be critical. We have staff who care about this, who see the process of turning four and five year olds into pupils who see how they work in their school affects their lives and those around them.

Sandhurst has this, it feels a good school, one that has decided to meet its challenges and recognises the need to reset goals and visions as initial challenges are met.

Should you have any further questions about the Ofsted inspection, or indeed any other aspects of the school please contact either Lindsay or myself at office@sandhurst.kent.sch.uk

Kind Regards

Simon Fisher

Chair of Governors