

Friday 8th July 2022

RE: Ofsted Outcome – meeting summary

Dear parent/carer,

I would firstly like to thank so many of you for the support we have received; being part of a community that works together is key to the success of any plans and actions. With that in mind, it would be wonderful to see you at our St Andrew's Summer Fair tomorrow, to continue to strengthen our community links. We will be on our school field, 11am-3pm; all are welcomed.

Last night, we invited parents in to hear about the action being taken following our Ofsted inspection, and to enable our community to ask any questions. This is a longer communication than normal, but I hope that it is able to clarify any questions or concerns.

The team and network of professionals in place is incredibly strong, and I was pleased to be able to introduce Peter Woodman, our Chair of Governors, to parents. Peter has recently retired from the Headship of an 'Outstanding' school, where he led the development growth of the school. I was also able to introduce the professionals at the Diocese (Trevor Cristin and Ruth Cumming) who work incredibly closely with the school, alongside our Local Authority links (Helen Gabrielides and Yasmin Maskatiya).

Peter Woodman, as a trained Ofsted Inspector, began by talking through the process of Ofsted, explaining the following:

- Ofsted work to a 'Framework'
- Gradings are limited by specific structures in place within the 'Framework'
- An 'Outstanding' grading requires all elements to be 'ticked'
- A 'Good' or 'Requires Improvement' judgement is a 'best fit'
- An 'Inadequate' judgement requires one bullet point to the 'ticked'
- If any bullet point in an 'Inadequate' judgement is ticked, the entire report's grading is limited to 'Inadequate'
- This new Framework was launched in September 2019 and required a substantial change in how the curriculum was being taught in all schools

An explanation was given about some key contextual factors, including challenging budgetary decisions required in 2021, and changes to the make-up of the school itself. This was followed by an overview of the report and the judgements made for each element, identifying the strengths within the report, and specific areas we recognise need addressing.

The inspection team, and report, identified the following are strengths of the school:

- Safeguarding of our students is excellent
- How well we teach students about diversity, relationships, safety, consent, faith, different cultures, the law

- Our careers information
- Our pastoral care
- Ensuring every child has someone at school students can talk to/tell something
- Our assemblies and tutor programme
- What we teach in each subject
- The order we teach it
- How well students engage with the work
- Quality of work in books
- Quality of our marking and feedback
- How quickly and effectively leadership take action to make improvements
- How clear our vision for the school is and how consistently it is shared in the community
- How well leaders know the issues around the school, and what actions are in place to address them
- Students' attendance

The elements identified that require improvement are:

- The consistency in structure and delivery of every lesson across the school
- How we use assessment to inform our planning
- How widely our students read
- How consistently behaviour is dealt with in every lesson across the school

The single element that places the school is 'Inadequate' is:

- Incidents of prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, both direct and indirect, are frequent. Consequently, some pupils say that this type of behaviour has become the norm and they do not feel happy. Leaders need to ensure that prejudiced and discriminatory language is eradicated.

We have formally complained about the evidence used to reach this conclusion, as the word 'frequent' is very subjective. We felt it was important to challenge this specific element of the report. No matter the outcome, it is also crucial that we address any areas that require improvement, and have therefore already put the following in place for each of the Areas For Improvement named in the report – please see the table on the final page for a summary of actions already in motion and that were shared with attendees last night.

We certainly agree that there are areas for the school to improve in terms of consistency, and we are addressing these rapidly and robustly. Our staff are committed to making our school the best it can be, and (despite being hugely disappointed in the overall judgement) recognise that there are some real strengths within our community and school.

Academisation:

There have been many questions about academisation. The government's ambition is to have every school within a Trust by 2030; this does mean we will move slightly sooner.

As a Voluntary Aided school, we must be placed in a Trust that has a majority CofE board. This limits the Trusts who can work with us. Another requirement is that a trust must have capacity to

work with the school. This could mean its location, expertise, staffing, money; a variety of things are considered.

All staff will be TUPEd over (transferred under the same T&Cs) – staff will **not** re-apply for roles.

At this point in time, we are unsure on exact timings – it entirely depends of the ‘legal’ elements of landownership and other administrative parts of the process.

Once in a Trust, we are issued a new URN (Unique Reference Number). The school is deemed as ‘new’ and the report will no longer be visible next to our ‘new’ school name on Ofsted’s website – it could still be found, but direct links are removed.

FAQs:

Will the school retain its CofE status?

- The school will firmly remain a CofE school

Will the school’s leadership team be removed?

- The leadership will remain in place

Where does accountability and decision making sit in a Trust?

- Final accountability of outcomes would fall on the Trust, but operational decisions remain with the school (staffing, organisation of roles/responsibilities) and strategic decisions remain with the SLT and governing body (in consultation with the Trust)

How will you retain and recruit high quality staff?

- Recruitment nationally is a challenge – we are, however, fully staffed for September, with some exceptional and highly experienced colleagues joining, and many excellent staff remaining
- We have hired a company to support in marketing

How well have staff been supported in being able to achieve these higher expectations?

- Raising standards within the classroom requires changes to ensure all students receive the highest quality education in every classroom; all staff have had training to enable this and will continue to undertake. There have been, and will continue to be weekly training sessions and individual support mechanisms for staff who need additional assistance

Will my child in GCSE classes have a less experienced staff member?

- GCSE classes will remain with experienced staff

Why has my child been given more Consequences recently?

- Raising standards has led to more and increased consequences for some students; this is to be expected as the raised standards embed

Will attendance still be a focus next year

- Attendance will remain a significant focus next year

What happens next?

Nothing changes significantly for our community; we will continue to ensure our students receive excellent pastoral care, deliver the best quality of education possible and implement structures to secure consistency in all areas. The leadership team will work to ensure the Areas for Improvement are addressed, and actions are in place to make the improvement required at pace.

The school will work with the relevant authorities to ensure that the right 'fit' is found for the school and a Multi-Academy Trust. We will communicate with you as often as we are able with updated information.

How can you support?

Building the collaboration and community cohesion across our wider community will be a key part of our onward journey. We would therefore encourage the following:

- Complete the parent survey (click here for the link) to give us your thoughts and feedback; this will enable us to ensure our actions are driven by our community voice. We would strongly encourage you to leave contact details to allow us to follow up any comments or queries
- Join us at our parent forums next year; we were pleased to be able to work with some parents this year's forums, but would love to broaden that input. These will run 6pm-7pm and dates for these are:
 - Thursday 6th October 2022
 - Thursday 2nd February 2023
 - Thursday 11th May 2023
- Attend our 'Education Evenings' (dates TBC) in which we hope to work with parents/carers on a joint language to support our young people understanding how they should, and should not, interact with others
- Download MCAS (My Child At School; please see the letter sent yesterday for details) and update any contact details; it is important that our communications get to you, so that we can ensure we are keeping you informed regularly and transparently
- If you have further questions about the report, or actions in place, complete the 'Additional Questions' form by clicking here; you will be contacted individually, so will be asked to give your name and contact details

We thank you for your ongoing and consistent support for the school. As I regularly say to the staff team: we are stronger together.

Yours sincerely,



Mia Lowney
Headteacher

Ofsted Area For Improvement	Actions
<p>Incidents of prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, both direct and indirect, are frequent. Consequently, some pupils say that this type of behaviour has become the norm and they do not feel happy. Leaders need to ensure that prejudiced and discriminatory language is eradicated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE curriculum reviewed, increased hours and content on diversity • Upgrade of environment to include the celebration of diversity • Tootoot – anonymous reporting app for students to 'tell' • Diversity day – celebrated diversity and educated the whole school on the law and diverse groups • Assembly and tutor time focuses on scenarios and empathy • Diversity curriculum audit has been undertaken; reviewing text and source choices, language of examples and opportunities to discuss diversity • Student voice undertaken – every single child is being invited to a one to one meeting with the Headteacher to share their voice and feedback (kept anonymous)
<p>The behaviour of some pupils does not meet the expectations that the school sets. This means that some pupils are negatively affected by the behaviour of others. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils, including the most vulnerable are able to thrive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-launch of Consequence system; reminding students of the policy • Clarity in expectations within every classroom; this ensures students are clear on what is expected and there are now consistent messages in every room • Reinforce the one way system; to ensure smooth movement around the building • Fortnightly focus; enabling all staff a stepped approach over the past months to secure specific aspects of conduct and consistent language use • Staff working party; set up and ensuring staff voice is heard and actioned • Dedicated training time is in place every week for staff, and will continue • Teaching & Learning facilitators are being appointed (internally) to support individual staff implement consistent application of policy
<p>The curriculum is not implemented consistently across the school. This slows the progress that pupils make in their learning. The headteacher's ambitious vision for providing a high quality education has not been realised. Leaders need to ensure that the planned curriculum is implemented consistently in every subject.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum are undertaken annually, and reviews continue • Dedicated training time is in place every week for staff, and will continue • Teaching & Learning facilitators are being appointed (internally) to support individual staff implement consistent application of policy • Differentiated training plan for staff is in place for 2022-23, meeting individual training needs of staff
<p>Assessment processes are not consistent in all subjects. This means that too many pupils move on in their learning with significant gaps. Leaders need to ensure that these processes are sharper and that there is consistency in the school's use of assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment policy was reviewed this year and is in place for September 2022 • New assessment calendar has been planned and in place for September • Tracking of assessment are being moved to Bromcom, therefore will be visible to parents on MCAS next academic year • Curriculum reviewed to identified elements to be assessed, why and when
<p>There is not a rigorous and sequential approach to the reading strategy. As a result, pupils do not develop fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading. Leaders need to ensure that reading is prioritized in the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy lead appointed • Reading buddies in place; readers in older years are supporting younger students develop fluency • 1000 new books purchased and are now in place in the library • An additional hour lesson for KS3 English; every student will get a library lesson every fortnight • Knowledge organisers are in creation for unit of every subject • Literacy training has already begun for all staff, and will continue