

April 25th 2022

Ref: Fairfields Primary School Ofsted Inspection

Dear Parents / Carers,

As you know, we received our Ofsted inspection on the 18th & 19th January 2022. As a school, we were all very excited by this and wanted to showcase all the amazing things that were happening in the wonderful community that, together with you as parent / carers, we have created for our children.

We are delighted that in the main, as we expected, the report quite rightly celebrates many Outstanding areas. However, we did challenge one particular aspect which, we believe, was judged incorrectly. This has led to a delay in us receiving the final report, which we have only now been allowed to share with you today.

The Ofsted inspection looked at 5 key areas:

1. Personal Development,
2. Behaviour and Attitudes,
3. Quality of Education,
4. Early Years Provision and
5. Leadership and Management.

They also explore safeguarding which they can deem only 'effective' or 'ineffective'. This all determines the overall grading of the school.

The report recognised a wide range of positive areas including rating three of five key areas as 'Outstanding'. These areas are 'behaviour and attitudes', 'personal development' and 'early years provision'. Comments in the report included that "*pupils' behaviour is impeccable*" and they "*enjoy attending this vibrant school*". A fourth area, 'quality of education', was rated as 'Good' with many outstanding features.

We are particularly proud of the many positive comments and are so glad to see the inspection team recognised how special our children are to us, they were as impeccable on the inspection days as they are every day. Particular areas noted were:

- Pupils enjoy attending this vibrant school where there is a strong focus on community.
- Pupils enjoy a very wide range of memorable experiences which support them to become confident and rounded citizens. This work is particularly effective in the early years.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well, both in lessons and at break times.
- Leaders' actions are driven by their vision to be the 'beating heart of the community'.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to meet high expectations.
- Pupils learn to read quickly as soon as they join the school in Reception, where the teaching of reading is exceptional.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are proud of their work and leaders take every opportunity to celebrate their efforts and achievements.
- Pupils benefit from an extremely broad range of clubs which cover everything from gardening and yoga, to dance and basketball.
- Staff feel well supported by a caring leadership team. There is a highly positive culture amongst staff. They are proud to be part of the school community.

Overall feedback in the online survey from you as our parents / carers was overwhelmingly positive with one parent's feelings highlighted in the report:

'The staff at Fairfields are just amazing! They show so much love, care and support to the children and go above and beyond every day!'

This feedback makes us so proud. We love the community we have here and we celebrate the ethos and culture we have collectively created.

However, the inspector offered an opinion on the level of detail recorded in a small number of isolated safeguarding cases, which he felt could have been shared with other agencies.

As a school we take the safeguarding of our pupils extremely seriously. When we were alerted to the inspector's opinion, we immediately checked all records, processes, and with safeguarding agencies to ensure that no safeguarding concerns had been missed and to understand what led the inspector to this conclusion.

We have a positive, active relationship with safeguarding agencies and the local authority and requested a second opinion also. Following swift discussions with these agencies all matters highlighted, based on procedural and administrative clarity, were rectified immediately. We absolutely reassure you that there were no instances in which a child was at risk.

The inspector commended the school on our 'strong culture of safeguarding' and this underpins our 'outstanding' personal development of pupils' judgement. We are proud that 100% of our children reported back through the child survey conducted during the inspection that they feel safe in school.

Frustratingly, the Ofsted process means that if any single area of safeguarding is not judged positively then this leads to the fifth key area, 'leadership and management' being rated as 'Inadequate'. This is regardless of Outstanding judgements in personal development, behaviour and attitudes, and early years provision and, according to the report, that 'leaders are ambitious about what pupils can achieve' and 'staff feel well supported by a caring leadership team.' Second to this, the Ofsted process again limits the overall grading - if leadership and management are judged inadequate, then the overall judgement rating is given the same.

We are naturally disappointed by this one aspect that has prevented Fairfields Primary School from being rated an Outstanding school. This is the first Ofsted report we have ever seen that rates the majority of a school to be 'Outstanding' or 'Good' yet still has an overall 'Inadequate' judgement. You may be aware that there have been numerous inconsistencies reported in the national and education press about the implementation of some areas of the new Ofsted framework and we will continue to support moves to bring about improvements in the system.

As a result of the overall grading, we have successfully implemented a short action plan which puts in place additional processes to ensure we continue to go above and beyond in the future. Together, we must continue to focus our efforts on our amazing school community and continue, as the report recognises, to be 'the beating heart of the community.'

We have already invited the Ofsted inspectors back into the school so they can see the actions we have taken and for us to be given the opportunity to achieve the Ofsted rating we deserve from our first five years as a school.

The report from Ofsted will be published on our website and Ofsted's website from tomorrow morning (Tuesday 26th April 2022).

We know the overall judgement will come as a disappointment to you, as it does to us. Therefore, we would welcome all parent / carers who would like to, to join us for a parent meeting in the school's hall tomorrow evening, **Tuesday 26th April 2022, 6.30pm.**

The leadership team will all be present to discuss any points you may want to raise. If you are not able to be there then please send in your questions or comments to enquiries@fairfieldsprimary.co.uk. Alternatively, you can book an individual appointment with a member of the team later on in the week, again using the same email address.

Tomorrow, we will also be sharing with pupils the many positive things that were highlighted about them in the report. With that in mind, please do know that we will be unable to accommodate children in the parent meeting.

Please be assured that myself, the leadership team and the entire staff are committed to ensuring that Fairfields will achieve the correct judgement it deserves.

Yours faithfully,



Matthew Shotton
Headteacher