

These notes have been prepared using the information shared at the meeting for parents held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

### Introduction

- **This meeting was called to let parents know the plans we have already made to move the school on, following the Ofsted inspection.** We do *not* intend to remain a school that 'requires improvement'.
- **All state schools, including academies, are subject to the same rigorous Ofsted standards.** Our advantage, as an academy, is that we can select and buy in exactly the support we need to bring about rapid improvement
- **Ofsted, quite rightly, constantly raises the bar;** we have not yet met the challenge of the far higher standards required since our last inspection.
- **In 2010,** Ofsted judged a wide range of equally weighted areas, leading to a final judgement. In 4 of the 7 areas we were not judged 'outstanding' but overall we did well
- **In 2014,** there is a narrower focus with teaching and learning at the centre; all other judgements are made in relation to that. If teaching and learning are not judged 'outstanding', nothing else can be either.
- **The report states 'standards have declined over the past three years'.** Standards refers to attainment [how well children do in national tests] and achievement [how much progress children make over the key stages] In terms of achievement we have not done as well as we should, and we recognise that.
- **A new school development plan was put in place in September 2014,** but has not been sufficiently embedded for us to see results.

### Additional information around the Inspection process (building on the details on page 2 of the report)

- **Lesson observations** – all teachers observed at least once – unlike previous inspection. Each observation lasted 25 minutes rather than an hour (2010 Ofsted)
- **Joint observations** – purpose to check the schools self evaluation. This involves several things:
  - information recorded about **quality of teaching,**
  - **quality and progress of learning** (evidence in books)
  - **analysis of data** (both historic –RAISEonline and current pupil tracking)
  - response to that data – the **School Development Plan**
  - **interviews** with Maths and Literacy co-ordinators
  - scrutiny of **Appraisal objectives** for teaching staff
  - interviews with **Governors**
  - hearing children read

- **Team meetings** – involvement of 3 inspectors plus Mrs Hintridge, Mr Jess and Mrs Bugg – feedback on what had been gleaned from information gathering – looked at the Ofsted handbook to work out judgements and wording based on evidence. However, in the final report there were some phrases which appeared that hadn't been shared in the feedback sessions and therefore there is lack of understanding around it.

### **What are we doing to improve teaching and raise standards?**

Teachers here all work hard and put in long hours and can't be asked to work harder but differently. Everyone has the best interests of the children at heart.

The intention is to use strengths within the school and support from County which we buy in.

**Staff motivation and morale** – highly motivated and want to do their very best!

Each member of teaching staff has had feedback around Ofsted/work scrutiny/drop in observations/planned observations. Those who were given gradings that require improvement are keen to do so! The Leadership Team's role is to support that.

Evidence based research is being used to support effective teaching and strategies to accelerate pupil progress e.g. supporting girls' maths and this is reflected in the SDP and underpins the spending of Pupil Premium grants – which was commented upon positively in the report.

### **All teachers have high expectations**

- Changing the way teachers demonstrate high expectations in their planning
- Planning is scrutinised by the Leadership Team and written feedback is given
- When planning lessons –the same objectives for **all** children within the class to achieve and working out how to support the children to achieve it (adult support, equipment, breaking down into smaller steps, prelearning sessions and so on)
- Bought into new learning schemes devised by County advisors – which meet the new national curriculum standards

### **More able pupils** – challenge (identified in 2014/5 SDP) SJ/CB

- Chilli Challenges in Literacy and Maths
- Forging links with Secondary Schools to tap into their specialist teaching
- Both Mr Jess and Mrs Bugg attended the County's Conference for Most Able
- Bring in Level 6 teaching earlier into the school year

### **Good progress** (from KS 1 – 2, within individual lessons and over time)

- Looking within books to see evidence of progress within lessons and throughout a series of lessons
- Swapped from folders to books
- Introduced purple response pens so that improvements as a result of teachers' marking can be seen
- Internal monitoring of children (Pupil Progress meetings) have increased to half termly in order to identify children who are not making nationally expected progress can be picked up more quickly – share with parents if progress has stalled and give specific ideas to improve progress. Talk in terms of 2/3rds level progress each year – no matter where in which year group from 1 – 6
- Crucial years – all of them! Attainment is important – what SATs levels are achieved at the end of Yr 2 and Yr 6 but progress is more of a key factor
- Greater involvement of pupils in reviewing their progress

### **Reception**

- Acknowledged experience of Early Years' leader who will continue to support Reception colleagues
- In addition Assistant Head is providing support with planning and modelling
- Engage services of Early Years Advisor from County to validate the actions taken towards improvement
- Open mornings for new parents – been most impressed
- Feedback from Rhyme time/Share a book also valued

### **Maths**

- Stephen Jess (deputy head teacher) has taken on the role of maths coordinator to build on previous work as he is non class based and has greater capacity to oversee the required improvements
- More problem solving approach to maths had already been introduced but as yet there has not been sufficient time to see impact.
- Bought in to the Herts for Learning (HfL) Teaching, Learning and Assessment Package which supports the introduction of the new national curriculum
- Relunched new maths curriculum with supportive structure around the teaching sequence of objectives. Maths advisor from HfL led a staff meeting to introduce the new structure
- During this staff meeting time was given for teachers to look at learning prior to and following their own year group to ensure progression
- HfL advisor to support teachers in planning maths using new curriculum in January

- Introducing new assessment tool in line with new curriculum in spring term acknowledging the raised expectations and no levels
- Opportunities for pupils to respond to marking is being embedded into lesson structure to ensure pupils have secure understanding of concepts before moving on
- Use of chilli challenge approach to differentiation to ensure pupils are extended in their learning
- Senior leadership team are monitoring impact of changes: monitoring cycle mapped out for the year
  - Half termly pupil progress meetings to monitor progress with evidence from books being scrutinised
  - Lesson observations
  - Work scrutiny
  - Planning scrutiny
- Maths week to have problem solving focus in line with the new curriculum
- Links with Matrix – Essex and Herts Maths Hub (H&E and Birchwood schools are leading and a focus is on KS2 maths teaching)
- Pupils from year 5 attending accelerated maths sessions at Birchwood
- External moderation of maths assessment through local cluster meetings – Year 3 and 4 have already attended and Year 6 will attend in spring term

### **Strengthen Leadership and Management**

#### **New systems**

- Engage the services of HIP (Hertfordshire Improvement Partner) – validate the work that the Leadership Team are doing and provide a health check as to progress towards actions.
- New team – Mr Jess is an Outstanding Teachers Programme facilitator, Mrs Bugg has extensive Early Years & KS 1 experience
- New Headteachers' Induction programme completed by Mrs Hintridge
- Both Mr Jess and Mrs Bugg are completing Deputy Headteachers' Induction programme
- Systems support teachers' professional development

#### **Subject leaders**

- Not discussed at any of the team meetings!
- Mr Jess will now manage Maths as a subject area as he is non class based and therefore has more time to be able to do this.

## Governors

After the appointment of the new Head – a rigorous process taking 4 months in all – we as governors reviewed our own practice and developed a new approach to how we should support the school and hold the Head and others to account.

- All governors now have a clear job description
- The committee structure has been tightened up. The 3 governor committees are responsible for the curriculum and pupil achievement; finance; school buildings.
- New ways have been identified in which governors can learn more about every aspect of the school's work
- The local authority is now reviewing and validating our work, offering advice and guidance where necessary.

## So what happens next?

- HMI visit – 4 – 12 weeks after the publication of the Ofsted Report which could be from middle of January
- Speak with HT and senior leaders and discuss particular focus and meet with governors
- Action Plan is written to demonstrate that urgent and effective action is being taken. This will be approved by the HIP
- Impact of any external support on school improvement
- May involve observations of the school at work, planning and assessments, work scrutiny
- Parent view
- Next steps discussion
- Feedback meeting
- Letter written to include comments on the above which will be published on the Ofsted website
- Usually only one monitoring visit
- Support from County (HfL) provides a further visit 10 – 12 weeks after the HMI to focus on key issues
- This visit will be given a Good, Reasonable or Inadequate grading.
- Summercroft will provide termly updates in addition to sharing reports from HMI and County
- **WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?**
  - Remain interested
  - Support class teachers
  - Attend future meetings around the curriculum and assessment
  - Keep talking to us to raise concerns earlier rather than later
  - We're on the gates regularly – or email into the admin account

## **To conclude**

Whilst we acknowledge the need to improve all the aspects outlined in this evening's meeting I am pleased that the report highlights some of our strengths to which there are many! Our drive to improve standards mustn't lose sight of the things we value and do well at Summercroft (as anyone who attended the Town's Carol Service, our own Carol Service today at All Saints or the year 1 and 2 play will confirm).

The meeting concluded by listening to Thought for the Day Radio 4 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 – the importance of developing the whole child.