

Dear Parents,

Feedback from recent Ofsted inspection visit

I am pleased to inform you that I have now received a letter regarding the recent visit from Her Majesty's Inspector (Ofsted), which I shall make available for you to read via our website. It is a very positive letter, which I am delighted with.

As the inspector was highly satisfied with the standards of education and provision on offer here at Waltham, the inspection was for one day only, which means that it did not convert to a full inspection as we have had in the past. Consequently, we have not received an extensive report that details outcomes in all aspects of school life; instead, we have a letter which summarises his findings from key lines of enquiry, for example, teaching and learning, safeguarding and leadership. Whilst the letter says, 'The school continues to be good', what it fails to say is that the criteria for Ofsted judgements have become increasingly more difficult over recent years and to be recognised as 'good' is extremely positive. The CEO of our Academy Trust (DLAT), David Morris, and the Director of the Board of Education for the Diocese, Carolyn Lewis, have both expressed their sincere congratulations and delight at such a successful outcome. The progress and drive for school improvement that this whole school community has been committed to for the past three years has secured this outcome and I am thrilled to be part of this journey.

Some highlights from the letter-include:

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and the deputy head teacher lead the school very well. You ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the pupils' needs. Pupils enjoy school and said that their teachers make learning fun.

The learning environments in the classrooms are positive. Smart displays celebrate pupils' work. Pupils take pride in their work and present their work neatly. They are well prepared for their next stage of education.

The provision in Reception Year is very strong. The children enthusiastically learn their phonics and are eager to write words. The adults help the children to make good progress and correct their misconceptions immediately. The learning environment allows children to make good progress in all areas of learning...Parents feel well informed and are delighted with the progress that their children are making.

Children in early years [pre-school] have a great start... The links between the pre-school and Reception Year have been strengthened greatly in the last year... As a result, the children are very well prepared to start their Reception Year.

The curriculum is well planned. It provides pupils with plentiful opportunities to learn about different subjects in an exciting way. The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Staff morale is high.

Attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 was above the national average for the

expected standard in reading and mathematics...Current pupils are making good progress.

Pupils' spirituality is developed very well. They have many opportunities to be reflective and creative...the pupils' knowledge of their own and other cultures is developed well. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Parents are very complimentary about the school. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that their child was safe and happy. They felt that the school was well led. One parent wrote, 'The teachers are brilliant at understanding the individual needs of the children.'

Safeguarding is effective. You and the staff team are vigilant and respond well to any concerns that may arise. Prompt action is taken and recorded in detail. You are resolute in following up.

Pupils said that bullying rarely happens at the school. Pupils believe that while everyone is different, they should be treated equally. They behave well and their attendance is above the national average.

The governing body fulfils its role very well. Governors regularly visit the school and have a good understanding of the school's effectiveness.

The inspector recognised that all of our children are suitably challenged in lessons, but advised that we need to offer the most able children the opportunity to access more complex activities at earlier points in the lesson, particularly in maths and reading. He suggested that this will increase the proportion of pupils who achieve more highly in the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 tests, which is on the national agenda. This has already been built in to our school development plan and is something we can quickly address.

We have a fantastic team of staff and governors here at Waltham and I thank them for all of their hard work. On behalf of us all, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you once again for your continued support in making this such an exciting, highly successful school. As one parent has said to me recently, "We couldn't wish for a better school for our children." This makes me a very proud Head teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J V Hopkins
Executive Headteacher