



DOWNTON CHURCH of ENGLAND VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gravel Close, Downton, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 3LZ

Telephone: 01725 510556

Email: admin@downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk Website: www.downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Paula Carlton BA (Hons) QTS NPQH

Acting Deputy Headteacher(s): Miss E Dunford, Mrs E Job



Monday 13th January 2020

A message from the Co-Chairs of the Governing Body to all Staff / Parents / Pupils

On behalf of the full Governing Body we wanted to write to all stakeholders following the important 'visitors' that came to see us last week at school.

By now I'm sure everyone is aware that these 'visitors' were HMI & OFSTED Inspectors (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills). Their role as inspectors is to visit all places of education and learning in England so that they may report on the quality of the provision they find.

As the last visit to Downton Primary was back in March 2013 the Governors are aware that many of our current parents and carers may not be familiar with the process and therefore, we thought it would be useful to provide parents with a bit more insight.

A call or visit by OFSTED is sometimes reported as being received with 'dread & fear' by all those on the receiving end. Although it can be stressful the reality is that it is an opportunity for Leaders / Governors and Teachers to have their strategies and approaches validated and benchmarked against the expected standards of the current time. As schools are inspected at different times (sometimes 7 or 8 years apart) these expectations do change over time and therefore the dates of inspection reports also need to be considered when directly comparing schools. The Board of Governors were both expecting and welcoming of an imminent inspection given so much of our school context has changed since 2013.

Although 'anticipating' a visit for the last 18 months when it does happen the notice provided is short. Mrs Carlton received the call on Tuesday lunchtime from the Inspection Support Team and the Inspection itself took place over Wednesday and Thursday.

At the end of the second day the leadership team including Senior Leaders and Governors were presented with the findings and given an indication of what to expect in the final report. You will understand that we are not able to say any more about this until the report is published but the good news for parents and carers is that the report should be published within 4 or 5 weeks. Please be assured that whatever the outcome the Staff and Governors are fully committed to reviewing the report and taking any and all action as appropriate to ensure that the education provided at Downton continues to provide each and every individual child with the best preparation for their future lives.

The Governing Body would like to formally thank everyone that supported with the Inspection last week. We recognise that it can be a stressful time but considering our fantastic Headteacher has been in post for just 2 years and our two Deputy Heads in post for just 2 days (yes – literally 2 days) we would like to thank the Leadership Team, in particular Mrs Carlton, Mrs Job and Miss Dunford for the way they prepared for and supported the inspection. Their commitment certainly didn't go unnoticed by anyone.

During the two days Inspectors spent time talking to the Leadership Team / Subject Leaders / Teachers / Governors / Pupils / Parents and Mrs Tina Evans our nominated School Improvement Advisor aligned



to our Cluster of Schools by Wiltshire Council. From our involvement we can confidently say that a robust and thorough review was conducted across almost all aspects of the school.

Our biggest thanks however go to all the pupils, parents and carers. We received so much feedback praising how polite and well behaved the children were during the inspection. We also know that Inspectors spoke to a large number of parents at the school gate on both days of their visit and the themes of this feedback was shared for input into the report's findings. If you were one of the parents or carers that provided feedback then thank you.

The Governing Body is a critical component of the school. Our role is to provide strategic management, and to act as a 'critical friend', supporting the work of the headteacher and other staff while providing appropriate challenge to ensure the best for the children. Vacancies exist today (for Foundation Governors) and it is anticipated that other roles will exist later this year so if anyone is interested in finding out more do please reach out to us via the school.

In summary we would like to extend our thanks to everyone that played their part in supporting the inspection last week. We look forward to the publication when everyone can get a chance to read about our great school and use it to shape how we evolve going forward.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Freer / Peter Ulliyatt / David Drennan

Co-Chairs of Governing Body

