



C/O Lynsted and Norton Primary School
Lynsted Lane
Lynsted
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME9 0RL

Tuesday, 04 October 2022

Dear Families,

Today we are sharing with you the Ofsted Inspection report following the two-day, Section 5 inspection on 28th and 29th June.

The publication of the report has been delayed due to a formal complaint that we made to Ofsted based on our serious concerns with the quality of the inspection process and the conduct of the Lead Inspector. The investigation into our complaint by a fellow HMI inspector was returned this week with the finding that not one of our complaints had been upheld in spite of our considerable concerns around the conduct of the Lead Inspector.

As you will see from the report the school has been graded 'Requires Improvement' overall despite the fact that the school has been judged 'Good' for Quality of Education, 'Good' for Behaviour and Attitudes, 'Good' for Personal Development and 'Good' for Early Years. Indeed, the only area the school received 'Requires Improvement' for was Leadership and Management. The Inspector, in her feedback, explained that this was due to two pieces of information missing from the 'My Concern' online safeguarding system which were subsequently located within half an hour by Mrs Godsell and shared with the Lead Inspector. Despite the temporarily missing information the school was still adjudged to be 'Effective in Safeguarding' which is entirely correct, but of course leads to further puzzlement as to why Leadership & Management is still regarded as Requires Improvement.

The outcome is incredibly frustrating as is the quality of the report as it does not give an accurate picture of the school. We find the report to be incredibly muddled with anecdotal quotes and not enough evidence of findings to provide a clear focus on the areas for improvement – indeed the 'What does the school need to do to improve' section really doesn't give us any steer at all as to what actions the school and Trust need to prioritise for improvement.

We can assure you all that the Trust and school, through our regular Seasonal Monitoring visits, have a clear view of our Key Priorities for improvement and that is what we will be focusing on going forward.

During the last academic year, we experienced eight inspections across the Trust this has enabled us to reliably form a view of what to expect in an inspection and what to expect from an inspector. Sadly, this inspection fell very far short of what is acceptable. We shall be making one further complaint about the quality of the investigation into the complaint as the letter received contained numerous inaccuracies which will require further explanation from Ofsted. We will also be making a Freedom of Information request to access the Evidence Forms that were used to notate the findings during the inspection.

Our focus is two fold; firstly and most importantly supporting the school as it moves forward in a new era under Mrs Tollervey's leadership. As a Trust we are fully committed to ensuring that our schools provide the very highest level of care and education for all of our children. Secondly, we will be continuing to raise our concerns with Ofsted as we understand this is not the first complaint that has been made about this particular inspector, following an inspection of another school, I would not want any other schools to go through this experience.





The overall outcome of 'Requires Improvement' is disappointing and frankly unjust, what we need to focus on and celebrate is the four out of five areas considered to be 'Good', not least the reflection on the children's behaviour and the quality of education. We must strive to achieve the highest standards in Leadership and ensure that Safeguarding is a key focus at all times.

We will not allow the experience of the inspection and actions of one Lead Inspector cloud the positive progress made in the school and distract us from our key role of providing the very best educational experiences and the highest level of care for all our children.

If any parent wishes to discuss the Ofsted report, they are welcome to make an appointment to see Mrs Tollervey.

Yours sincerely

David Whitehead
CEO