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23rd November 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

We have now received the final report from the Ofsted inspection which took place at the beginning of October.

We are gratified that many of the core values and beliefs at Southrop have been recognised in the areas of Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development, both of which were rated good. We know that it is these areas that give our children good wellbeing, enabling them to feel safe, happy, confident and accepting of others; without these feelings they are not able to learn or thrive. Ofsted also recognised the work we do to safeguard the pupils.

We are immensely proud of our pupils and the way that they conducted themselves throughout the inspection. The inspectors were impressed with the behaviour of the children, their enthusiasm and pride in their school and how confidently and eloquently they spoke.

Inspection Context

There are two types of inspection which Ofsted can undertake: a graded inspection (Schedule 5) and an ungraded inspection (Schedule 8). Southrop C of E Primary School was subject to a graded (Schedule 5) Ofsted Inspection on 3 and 4 October 2023. It is ordinary for schools previously judged "good" to be subject to an ungraded inspection, as has recently happened to many schools locally, however a proportion of schools graded good on their last inspection will automatically receive a graded inspection and we fall into this category. The inspection fell in week 5 of the school year. Details of the information considered by the inspectors is included at the end of the Ofsted report.

School Context

The Co-Heads were appointed in 2018. Since stepping into the leadership role they have been continually evaluating the curriculum to ensure it is providing the best possible outcomes for our children. As a result of our monitoring of pupil progress, experience of how our pupils learn, and with an understanding of new curriculum models, we made the decision to change how we teach reading and maths in 2021 and 2022. The Governing Board and Co-Heads, have been monitoring the impact of these changes

before rolling out changes to other aspects of the curriculum. Our monitoring has shown that the changes have been very successful and we are now making similar changes to other areas of the curriculum. These changes are being made in our planning and delivery and are monitored over the year as set out in our School Development Plan for this academic year (this is a document all schools create with their Governing Boards to drive strategic improvement in the school).

The Ofsted inspection process requires inspectors to assess the quality of education through reviewing evidence of curriculum intent, implementation and impact. It does not have a mechanism for taking into consideration positive recent change. As staff and governors we are proud of our school and its pupils and we are therefore hugely disappointed by the final grading of the report, believing it is not a true reflection of our school.

The report has some very broad statements which do not reflect the verbal feedback given to us following the inspection, and which also do not reflect the limited focus of any Ofsted inspection. We formally requested that additional detail was added to the report to provide a more useful document for those interested in our school, however we were directed to rely on the verbal feedback given immediately following the inspection. Ofsted have very set rules on what they are able to publish for a small school, however we have used our discretion to share more. Because we appreciate that this information will be important to you, we have therefore appended to this letter our understanding, based on that verbal feedback, of some of the less precise comments in the report.

Moving Forward

We know that the new inspection framework, which was introduced in 2019, is particularly tricky for small schools with a small number of staff. But we also know the huge value to our pupils and families of the small and nurturing nature of our school. However, in line with the ethos of our school we are aware that there are always areas we can improve, and we will show the resilience and commitment to do just that. We have been told that the timeframe for reinspection will be around 30 months.

In September this year we appointed an external school improvement partner to provide an additional perspective in how we can improve as a school, including how we can develop the areas of Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development to Outstanding in our next inspection; whether that is material changes to what we are doing or improving how this is evidenced to an inspector. A positive outcome of the inspection is that in an environment where local authorities are stretched, we do now also have a very productive relationship with our Gloucestershire School Improvement Officer. We also have a good relationship with our allocated advisor from the Gloucester Diocese. We are very much working as part of a wider team to take our school forward and are already working with them closely.

Finally, we would like to extend a big thank you to our families for supporting the school. The feedback you gave about the school to Ofsted was overwhelmingly positive and has been hugely valued by all our staff. <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results/survey/result/11518/14>

We are proud of everything we have achieved together and hope you will renew your commitment to the school and work with us to ensure that we show outside agencies the good work that goes on inside school.

We will have a survey open on the portal to collect questions that you want us to answer about the inspection outcome for a week. At the end of this period we will review questions that have been asked and provide answers. Where possible questions will also be anonymised and collated into an FAQ circulated to all parents. This approach will enable us to ensure that we consider questions fully, with input from any appropriate staff members or governors, to give you the most comprehensive answer. Following this process we will also be available for individual meetings to discuss the report; please let us know if you would like a meeting. This offer is for a meeting with either Co-Head, or if you would prefer, our Chair or Vice Chair of Governors. Please also feel free to talk to our Chair of Governors, Judith Giles, or Vice Chair, Mark Holland, at drop-off or pickup.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any queries.

Kind regards,



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Additional detail on report based on verbal feedback

No	Section of report	Extract from report	Additional information (based on verbal feedback to leadership team and our knowledge of the inspection process)
1	What is it like to attend this school? Paragraph 1	"Much of the school's curriculum is new"	The inspector noted in verbal feedback that some of the curriculum is already established; the inspector only looked at 4 subject areas out of 12; two of the subject areas looked at (computing and history) do have newly established curriculums this year.
3	What is it like to attend this school? Paragraph 1	"curriculum...is in its infancy"	The inspector commented in feedback to staff and governors that some subjects are further on than others and that the impact was evidenced and the curriculum established in areas including maths and science.
6	What is it like to attend this school? Paragraph 2	"School council members suggested the use of calm spaces in classrooms"	These areas were created by the SENDCo in September 2023.
7	What does the school do well and what does it need to do better? Paragraph 3	"Opportunities to correct pupils' use of their phonic knowledge and spelling of sight words are often missed."	From the verbal feedback this refers to a single observation of a KS1 child using the word "to" rather than using their homophone knowledge to write the correct "too". If the inspector was also referring to marking in books, the school's approach to marking is to principally focus on key learning objectives for the lesson to ensure pupils remain motivated, therefore some but not all spellings may be corrected in a piece of writing, if spelling was not the primary focus of the exercise. Gaps in spellings and phonics knowledge are

			addressed in a number of ways.
8	What does the school do well and what does it need to do better? Paragraph 5	"Most pupils with SEND have individual targets that reflect their needs. However, some targets are not precise".	These sentences are unclear; the point is made more clearly under "What does the school need to do to improve": All pupils with SEND have individual targets, some of which were judged as needing to be more precise.
10	What does the school need to do to improve? Paragraph 2	"Gaps in pupils' phonic and spelling pattern knowledge in key stage 2 go unchecked."	As communicated to the inspector, phonics gaps are assessed, and feed back into lesson planning and intervention planning for those with gaps. We dispute this comment.
11	What does the school need to do to improve? Paragraph 4	"Staff do not have secure subject knowledge of some curriculums"	From verbal feedback the subject being referenced is History. History is a focus within the School Development Plan for this academic year (which was in place prior to the inspection).