



21<sup>st</sup> November 2023

Re: Final Ofsted report 2023

Dear parents,

I am writing to inform you that Whaddon School's recent Ofsted inspection report, has been finalised and is attached.

Please take the time to read our report fully and see how: our hard work, culture of high expectations around behaviour, mutual respect, inclusion and safeguarding are all recognised. Our commitment to our community and how we are ensuring children are global citizens and have the skills they need for life are also praised, as well as the foundations we have laid for further improvement.

I feel it important that I share our Ofsted experience with you and provide some context to the report outcome of "requires improvement", which cannot cover everything discussed, due to a limited word count available to the lead inspector.

This was our first visit since the change from an infant school to full primary and since the change of headship as well as almost an entire new staffing team. Whereas many key areas of the school had seen improvements, in the last 12 months, there were areas we had identified as requiring attention next, in our School Development Plan and had just embarked upon these, when Ofsted visited. These facts were raised with the lead inspector, at the time of the visit, he acknowledged that there had not been enough time for the results to emerge from what he praised as excellent, well-planned curriculum choices.

Our Self Evaluation Form acknowledged the context of the school, the legacy of the global pandemic and the changes to the Ofsted framework, since the last inspection in 2019. We have worked tirelessly to ensure the children: have the best start in education, are safe, happy, kind, and respectful and have the skills required to help them in their next learning steps and further life; all of which were acknowledged by Ofsted as real strengths.

The two words in the report headline, do not, we feel, represent the hard work, professionalism or dedication of the staff, nor does it adequately establish the context that the school was in, at the time of the inspection- two weeks into the implementation of a new curriculum.

We have a clear action plan and are working through it. Everything we do, as a school, is in the best interests of our children. As such, it is pleasing that the list of priorities we had already embedded were received positively by the inspectors. The proof of which is in each child who attends our lovely school. Since the inspection, we have already made great strides in adapting or embedding any areas that the inspector noted needed improvement. The areas raised that have been judged as "Requires Improvement" are largely down to the two weeks of implementation of the new curriculum. Nevertheless, we are committed, as all schools should be, to continuous improvement.

We are never the finished article, nor have we professed to be. We are on a journey of sustainable change and have always had a clear vision of what our priorities are for our children's experiences and the school as we navigate the contextual challenges we face, nationally and locally.

As you will see in the Governors comments below, we have also recently strengthened our numbers across the Governing Body adding to the skills base, ensuring an increased layer of strategic leadership, across the school.

I would like to thank all of those parents who spoke with the inspectors or who completed the parent survey. Your contributions helped shaped the sense of community and engagement in the school; which is also acknowledged in the report.

We are proud of our children, our staff and we are moving forwards. We remain true to our core values and know that these will guide our decisions and actions to good ends and outcomes.

We are understandably disappointed, with those two words, but we are unwavering in our commitment and direction which is supported in the body of the report and in comments made by the inspectors, over the two days of the inspection.

Should you have any questions about the content of this report, please contact the school via [ahardman@whaddon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:ahardman@whaddon.bucks.sch.uk) once we have received questions, if necessary, we will be able to produce FAQ document to answer the questions raised.

Thank you for your continued support for our school.

Mrs Prior

Headteacher

Whaddon C of E School

#### Comments from the Governing Board

The majority of the Governing Board were able to meet with the lead inspector on the second day. We felt it was an extremely positive conversation around his thoughts of the school and staff. The lead inspector commented that our school was beautiful, "but you can't judge beautiful" in the report. He also commented that it is a school he would be happy to send his own children to.

As such a small Governing Board, where we have struggled to recruit in the last two years, we were already aware that we had some skills gaps to fill. Since the inspection we have managed to recruit two new parent governors, one foundation governor and a local authority governor. The school has undergone a huge amount of change and improvement over the last year and has welcomed many new staff members. We discussed with the lead inspector that this was a "snapshot in time" and we were aware that not all of his boxes could be ticked due to the short amount of time the school have had with the new curriculum and new staff.

We are certain that our wonderful school is heading in the best direction for our children and their wellbeing and are confident that the school have already laid the foundations for even greater things. We have a strong, committed team between the staff and governors, which was noted by the lead inspector. He let us know that we have a fantastic head teacher in place that he can see is driving the school in the right direction and that we would "not want to lose someone of her calibre".