

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School



Briefing to parents and carers

held on 30th September 2013

about the Ofsted inspection 2nd to 3rd July 2013

Background 1

- Ofsted introduced a new school inspection framework in January 2012. This raised expectations and focused strongly on the importance of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
- Ofsted look at four areas of a school when inspecting it. These areas are:
 - Achievement of Pupils
 - Quality of Teaching
 - Behaviour & Safety of Pupils
 - Leadership & Management.
 - The new grades are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

Background 2

- Parents rightly want a good standard of education for their children. So from September 2012, Ofsted said that only a 'good' or better judgement will be good enough.
- All the governors and the staff at St Augustine's agree. Indeed our aspiration/vision for our school is to be judged 'outstanding'; we have only the highest expectations for your children.

The grades for St Augustine's – 1

- Achievement of Pupils - Requires Improvement
- Quality of Teaching - Requires Improvement
- Behaviour and Safety of Pupils - Good
- Leadership & Management - Requires Improvement
- Given the grades in these four areas, our Overall Effectiveness was 'requires improvement'

Full report is on the school's website

The grades for St Augustine's – 2

- Ofsted emphasise that: “a school that ‘requires Improvement’ is not failing or ‘inadequate’. This designation is a signal that these schools must improve to a ‘good’ standard within a reasonable period of time”.

This is usually twenty-four months.

- Naturally, the governors and staff are disappointed by these grades, but not surprised, because we were aware of our situation and had taken action to improve the school.

Ofsted: Strengths

I am encouraged that Ofsted recognised our progress and noted the many things that the school already does really well. In their report it listed the strengths of the school as:

1. This school has been improving since September 2012 and at a greater pace since the arrival of the new headteacher. Pupils are beginning to make good progress, especially boys and those who speak English as an additional language.
2. The governing body and staff support the headteacher’s clear vision to move the school forward.
3. Pupils’ behaviour is good. They say they feel safe and their parents and carers agree with them.
4. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from outstanding provision, which prepares them extremely well for the move to Year 1.

Catholic Ethos

- Let me reassure you that the excellent Catholic ethos of the school, which is central to all that we do, will not be diluted as standards are improved to achieve an Ofsted grade of ‘good’ or better.

What has already been done to improve standards – 1

- Over the last twelve months there has been a tremendous amount of work to improve the four areas in the school looked at by Ofsted. Indeed Ofsted recognised this in their report.
- Included in this work has been a critical self-evaluation on how we felt Ofsted would grade us.
- Our view had been ‘requires improvement’.
- So we have a realistic understanding of the school.

What has already been done to improve standards – 2

- Crucially, we have looked at how staff and governors can raise the standards at St Augustine's for the benefit of all our children; the emphasis on the children, not Ofsted.
- I am pleased to say that progress continues to be made, particularly over the last nine months. This has included making necessary changes to improve the way that we do things. But more has to be done, and is being done.

What has already been done to improve standards – 3

Activities being done:

- An emphasis on good presentation of children's work
- Updating how we mark work and give feedback to so that children know how to improve their work
- Changes in what is given for weekly homework tasks to include Maths and English
- Improving what the classrooms look like so the children can be more independent
- Staff going to look at other schools where there is good practice so we can improve our own
- Children's English and Maths books being checked by the Senior Leadership Team each term to make sure that children are making progress

What has already been done to improve standards – 4

- A increase in the number observations of teachers' lessons with clear next steps for professional development
- Training for teachers so that they are more confident in tracking children's progress and knowing which children need to make accelerated progress
- An increase in the number of formal assessments in reading, writing and maths for children and staff meetings to discuss what to do for children needing to make more progress
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team have a better understanding of their role and are held more accountable for the children's progress by the Governing Body

What has already been done to improve standards – 5

- The Ofsted report does give us areas to improve. These coincide with the areas, which we had already identified and have been working on.

- As reported in the school newsletter of 12th July, the school's internal 2013 results for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 show a significant step in the right direction and a reversal of the downward trend, which the inspectors noted in their report. The externally produced figures are due shortly; when received, we will share the results with you.
- We have also seen, in our own work, a marked rise in the quality of teaching graded as 'good', showing that staff are working very hard for the benefit of your children.

Ofsted said: What the school needs to do to improve further – 1

“Increase the proportion of good and better teaching by:

- I. planning learning activities for different ability groups, including more-able pupils
- II. making better use of teaching and learning assistants so that they work more effectively with pupils in need of support
- III. making sure that lessons move at a good pace by reducing prolonged teacher talk
- IV. improving the teaching of mathematics by giving clearer explanations and examples of what pupils are expected to do
- V. giving opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves”

Ofsted said: What the school needs to do to improve further – 2

“Raise achievement and accelerate pupils’ progress in writing and mathematics by:

- I. making sure that teachers use tracking systems consistently so that they take actions to help any pupils at risk of falling behind to catch up
- II. improving the rate of progress in mathematics and in writing of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium by reviewing their progress more regularly and by adjusting the support accordingly.”

Ofsted said: What the school needs to do to improve further – 3

“Improve leadership and management by:

- I. enabling subject and phase leaders to take on effective responsibilities for their areas of teaching and learning, especially in monitoring how teachers use the tracking of progress
- II. refining the way leaders manage the performance of teachers so that links to pupils’ attainment and progress are more detailed.”

Ofsted Action Plan

- Governors met on 10th July and 17th September to discuss the Ofsted report and our Ofsted Action Plan. This Action Plan is almost finished.
- This Action Plan:
 - is lead by Jackie Warren, the headteacher
 - involves all the staff and governors
 - will address the areas mentioned by Ofsted as what the school needs to do to improve further [to achieve a 'good' grade]; listed in the last three slides.
 - it will take St Augustine's from its current grade of 'requires improvement' to 'good' within twenty-four months at the latest, and then continue to improve the school to 'outstanding', which is our vision
 - The monitoring of this Action Plan will be by a team consisting of the chair of governors, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and three other governors. They will meet at least monthly.
- The governors will be sharing much of this Ofsted Action Plan with you in due course, when it has been agreed with Her Majesty's Inspectors [HMI].
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Her Majesty's Inspector [HMI]

We will shortly be assigned one of Her Majesty's Inspectors [HMI], who:

- will come into the school regularly to monitor our progress against the Ofsted Action Plan
- will support the school in achieving 'good'
- when content that the changes have sufficiently improved the school, and that they are robust and sustainable (usually within 24 months)
- will recommend a planned Ofsted inspection takes place anytime from now to the next 24 months.

This is our opportunity to demonstrate our excellent response at St Augustine's to the Ofsted inspection so that we achieve the grade of 'good', which our children deserve. As I said earlier, only a grade of 'good' or better is good enough for our children at St Augustine's.

YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT

What is Parent View?

- Who has completed it? [Only 73 since January]
- Where do you find it?
- Action taken in response to Parent View e.g. homework

Contact the governors

Please contact Jackie Warren, Mark Dennison or any governor about your concerns if not resolved through the class teacher – give us the opportunity to improve your child’s time at St Augustine’s

Conclusion – 1

- As mentioned in the school newsletter of 5th July, the inspectors made a special comment about the children’s excellent behaviour and polite and honest responses; that is a credit to you, as well as the staff.
- I would like to repeat the thanks in the newsletter about the support and loyalty of parents and carers during the Ofsted inspection; it meant a great deal to all the hard-working staff [and governors] at the time.
- I have mentioned staff and governors during this briefing, but the school still needs your support.
- It is important that we concentrate on long-term sustainable changes, which will, of course, take time but are worthwhile for the benefit of our children.

Conclusion – 2

I am convinced that with all of us in the school community:

- ❖ Children
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Carers
- ❖ Staff
- ❖ Clergy
- ❖ Governors

working closely together, a significant contribution will be made and so St Augustine’s Catholic Primary School will improve to ‘good’ and then ‘outstanding’.

This is our vision and it is what our children deserve

2020 Vision [draft]

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is a multicultural community Growing Together to celebrate excellence so that every child has:

