



Dream Big, Aim High
& Make a Difference

Monday 18th November 2024

OFSTED Inspection

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following our OFSTED Inspection on 15th & 16th October 2024 I am delighted to share the report with you and I encourage you to read this covering letter alongside the report, which can be found [here](#).

The inspection was a Section 5 inspection of a 'Good' school. These inspections are also known as 'graded' inspections where the inspectors evaluate the school and provide a 'grade' against the five areas of the inspection framework:

- Quality of Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes
- Personal Development
- Leadership and Management
- Early Years Foundation Stage

In line with the much publicised changes to the OFSTED Framework from September 2024, there is no longer an overall judgement grade provided for the school, but I am delighted to share with you all that **Potley Hill Primary School** continues to be **good** in all areas, with **behaviour and attitudes** graded as **outstanding**.

Further details about why these judgements were reached are detailed in the OFSTED report itself, but this is merely a summary of the inspection visit as inspectors are required to follow a set template and word count. However, throughout the two days both inspectors shared a wide range of overwhelmingly positive feedback about many areas of school life which I wanted to share with you, together with supporting us in identifying some helpful areas for improvement.

One key theme the inspectors kept returning to were the School Values and how *'pupils and staff live the values and this is set by the Senior Leadership Team.'* They highlighted that the values are *'living and breathing'* in the school and they are *'threaded through lessons.'* Our School Values provide the foundation for everything we do at our school and so to hear these comments from the inspectors was fantastic.

In addition to this, it was also pleasing to hear that our focussed improvement on subjects across the wider curriculum were acknowledged with the inspectors explaining there were *'meaningful links made across subjects'* and pupils' learning was *'really thought about.'* However, we also agree with the feedback provided that there is still work to be done in some of the subjects across the wider curriculum and this was already prioritised on our School Improvement Plan for this year so we will continue to focus on making progress in this area.

There were also many wonderful comments made by inspectors about the children that didn't make it into the report especially around their behaviour, which was described as *'exemplary.'* Inspectors spoke about how pupils *'understand each other and show real empathy'* whilst also being *'proud of the school.'* They explained there is *'no low level disruption'* and this creates a *'calm, orderly and purposeful environment'* which led to children reporting to inspectors that they *'wanted to be at Potley Hill.'* Once again, it was wonderful to hear these comments from the inspectors but also that the pupils had spoken so positively about our school. During assembly this morning I also thanked pupils for the significant role they played in the inspection process too because these fantastic comments and *'outstanding'* grading were only possible because pupils live the School Values and fully embrace school life every day, and not just during the inspection.



With 'Behaviour and Attitudes' being graded as outstanding, the high quality of the personal development within school also enabled this outcome, with inspectors commenting that 'a plethora of pastoral support' was available to pupils. They explained that pupils 'thrive off the leadership opportunities' provided to them by school and no matter what year group they might be in, all children 'see themselves as role models.' They also highlighted there was a 'clear and shared ambition for all pupils with special educational needs' and the 'significant number of adaptations made for these pupils meant they feel that they belong.' This statement coupled with the observation made by the inspectors that there a large number of 'highly skilled support staff who effectively meet the needs of children with complex needs' only goes to highlight the strong package of wider support in place for pupils.

The strengths in Early Years were also observed with the 'well resourced, vibrant and engaging learning environment' being commented on together with the fact that adults within Reception have 'great relationships with the children and know what the next steps in learning need to be.' However, one of the identified areas for improvement is related to children within Reception needing to make the most of the learning opportunities available and that all activities need to support learning. We already have an action plan in place to make the 'good' provision within our Early Years even better, but this development point needs to be considered as part of the wider conversation that took place with inspectors and how our big indoor and outdoor learning space was once an asset for 30 Reception pupils, but with so few in the class we need to reflect on how we can maximise the learning opportunities with less pupils in such a big space.

In addition to the children within school, the inspectors also spoke with some parents at drop-off time and were told about the 'strong parent/school relationship' that exists and this is supported by the overwhelmingly positive Parentview survey results which can be found [here](#). Inspectors noted that there was a real sense amongst parents that children are happy to go to school here, that their children get a good deal here and they are provided with a wide range of opportunities.

This OFSTED Report is a reflection of many terms of ongoing dedication by school staff and all members of the school community, including the Governors who have also done excellent work in holding the school to account whilst providing the strategic direction for the school. It is important to note that when I joined Potley Hill in September 2021 there were nearly 50 members of staff and this figure has needed to be reduced and is now nearer 35. This reduction is partly related to the planned reduction in pupil numbers at Potley Hill as we become a 'one-form entry school' but the most significant factor is the constant squeeze on school budgets and the government asking schools to do more with less. Therefore, against this back drop the continued hard work and resilience of all staff to continue to meet the needs of pupils and give them the very best experiences as they journey through our school should be commended and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of them for what they do which helped secure such a positive inspection report.

I know you will all feel just as proud as I do of this great outcome, and, as always, thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards



Mr Brent Ellis
Headteacher

