

23rd May 2017

Dear parents/carers

Following on from last term's Ofsted inspection and the subsequent parent info evening that I attended at the school, I thought it important to write to update you outlining what action Southampton City Council has undertaken since the school was placed into category, receiving a judgment of Special Measures.

We recognise that an outcome such as this can be unsettling for parents and pupils alike so I want to summarise what activity has already been completed and what is planned going forward.

First and foremost you will be aware that the governing body has recruited a permanent headteacher. Nick Giles has been in post as Deputy Head and subsequently Acting Head since September 2016 and is well placed to understand the improvements that are required and the need to drive a consistent and unrelenting focus on raising standards and outcomes for the pupils of the school. SCC are working to support and challenge Nick and his senior management team to address what Ofsted identified in their inspection.

SCC's work will link to the school's Improvement Plan which has been scrutinised by the LA and judged fit for purpose. The plan is used by senior staff and governors to steer strategies and to monitor the impact of the work already underway. In addition to the school's own plan, SCC has submitted a Statement of Action to Ofsted which outlines its plans to support and challenge the school; the LA is monitoring the progress being made by the school closely, via half termly visits by one of SCC's dedicated School Improvement Officers. Indeed the most recent LA report found that 'the headteacher has a firm grip on driving improvements.'

Other activity which has been implemented since the inspection includes:

- a new Chair of Governors, Phil Hands, in place who has considerable experience and expertise in working with headteachers and local authorities to offer challenge and support to school in similar situations. Phil is working with other governors to completely overhaul the skillset of the Governing Body and reorganise their work to ensure that it is able to respond rapidly and effectively. Meeting and committee structures have also been completely reorganised. The LA is now confident that the Governing Body is growing in its capacity to support and challenge the school. The review of governance required by Ofsted will be undertaken in the new academic year.
- The HT has prioritised communications with parents; there has been a positive response to the LA's requirements that the school implements parent forums, a new dedicated area of the school website and regular newsletters to communicate the school's journey to improvement;

- The senior leadership roles have been restructured from September 2017 with several new senior leaders appointed;
- The school uniform will be refreshed from September, which has been well received by parents; this change had been implemented to signal a new vision for the school and assist with its focus on pupils' pride in themselves and their school;
- The timetable has been re-structured with longer lessons now in place and a better balance of subjects across the day and the week;
- Recruitment of high quality staff has been prioritised with the headteacher confident that there will be full staffing in all departments from next term;
- There is a good understanding on the part of senior staff that the quality of teaching must be addressed to support the drive for better pupil outcomes and there is a clear strategy in place to support good teaching and learning across the school;
- There has been a review of provision for pupils with special educational needs and recommendations will be built into the school's improvement plan so that the impact of changes become part of the monitoring and review work undertaken by senior staff and governors.
- Pupils' behaviour is more settled around the school with the majority of pupils now arriving at lessons on time and ready to work. This is a result of the reinvigorated approach to supporting pupils' good pupil behaviour to enable good learning. There are early signs of attendance improving.

The above summarises the core planks of activity that have taken place since February. Rest assured we will be monitoring the school's performance and it will continue to be a priority and I will continue to update you.

Kind regards



Jo Cassey
Service Lead Education & Early Help