



Head of School
Mr Des Stokes

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South Dartmoor
Academy
Executive Head
Mrs Rachel Shaw

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Dear Parents,

We are delighted to be able to finally share our Ofsted report with you – apologies for the delay, but schools always have to wait for the report to go through a number of checking processes with Ofsted before we are able to release it.

The school has been graded as good overall and this is where we had assessed ourselves as the criteria for Ofsted inspections has significantly changed since the school was last inspected in 2013. We were delighted that the Ofsted inspector still recognised many of the outstanding features of the school, such as the teaching of English, the quality of provision for the most able children, our strong reading culture, the opportunity to take part in a wide range of sporting and extra-curricular activities and the fact that we believe nurturing and the development of children's well-being was as important as their academic achievements.

The inspector also was particularly impressed with the quality of our curriculum as it focused on developing children's skills and gave them access to broad and stimulating topics. As we currently have such a small early year's cohort, the inspector was unable to report separately on this, however, he felt the early year's provision for children in our school was very good and ensured children had a successful start to school.

Our main areas for development had already been identified by the school, which was very reassuring for the inspector! The first was to improve our rates of attendance. Even though attendance was higher than when the school was last inspected, under the new inspection framework this has now has greater weighting in the Ofsted judgement. In fact, our attendance figure was the reason why we were inspected and it is also going to prevent us from being graded as outstanding in the future, until we can get it above 96%.

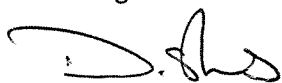
Our second area for improvement was maths. Maths has, for several years, performed in line with national averages and continues to do so. However, whilst this might sound good enough, because English is outstanding the inspector also felt we could get maths to a similar level. We had already set this as our goal and could show the inspector the work we had already done to develop teaching and learning in this subject as well as our development plans for the future. The inspector feels we should get maths to the same high standard as English if we continue with the work we have been doing. We are determined to do so.

Finally, it was noted that a small minority of children can struggle on occasion to show the levels of maturity needed to focus on their learning. This is about developing good learning habits with the children and again the school was already addressing this through our 'Building Learning Power' work which we will continue to promote and develop.

During feedback to the Governors, our inspector described a happy, purposeful school, in which children are polite and well behaved. He also commented that the school leaders, i.e. Head, Executive Head and Governors work well together and that planning for school improvement was insightful.

We were overwhelmed by the positive support and feedback from the parents and this mattered more to us than any words the inspectors could say because ultimately we want our children to enjoy their school years. We are very grateful for all your support along with the amazing staff team and of course our wonderful children who were keen to show the inspector why Widecombe is so great. Inspectors are limited with the language and phrases they can use in the written report so if you require any further information please do pop in to chat to me or speak to one of our Governors who were present for the verbal feedback.

Again, thank you for all your support as it adds to the lovely culture of school which is our overriding strength.



Des Stokes
Head of School



Martin Hibbs
Chair of Governors