9th December 2024

Dear St Leonard’s School Family,

I am incredibly proud to share the report from our recent Ofsted inspection, and also a letter received today from Iain Parks, Director of Education at Blackburn Diocese Board of Education!

We are absolutely delighted to have been judged as Good in all areas (Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Leadership and Management, Early Years) with an Outstanding judgement in Personal Development. Since the school was previously inspected, twelve years ago, the inspection framework has changed significantly, as has the way inspectors now arrive at their judgements.  At the previous inspection, this was done as a ‘best fit’ approach, whereas the judgements in the new framework are exacting, meaning that no criterion can be missed to achieve that rating.

Having had a couple of weeks to reflect on the inspection and its process, I would like to provide a little more information for you around the inspection findings, as it is difficult for Ofsted to include everything in such a short report.

During the inspection, School leaders’ passion to ensure the highest aspirations for all children was recognised by the inspectors. Having spent the last three years establishing and embedding an entirely new curriculum at St Leonard’s, I was delighted that it was described as ambitious and well designed, as providing a wide body of secure knowledge and as amply preparing our children for the challenges of high school and beyond as a result.

Our strong curriculum, including a sharp focus on the teaching of new vocabulary across all subjects, has led to the exceptional outcomes that our children achieve in national assessments in Y1 Phonics, Y4 Multiplication Checks and in our end of key stage 2 SATs tests in Reading, Maths, and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. This was congratulated hugely by inspectors who could see, very clearly, why children in our school achieve so well.

Teaching was found to be a real strength, with children receiving skilled and expert support from well-trained staff, who check carefully that they have a firm grasp of their learning. They provide regular opportunities to revisit new knowledge and practise skills, until these are stored in the long-term memory.

Provision and support for children with SEND was praised during the inspection and our inclusivity and passion for ensuring these children achieve well, was fully recognised. Our children with SEND make very good progress and access all school has to offer.

During the inspection, the children’s behaviour impressed the inspectors as they conducted themselves beautifully and enthusiastically in the classrooms. Inspectors commented on the calm, orderly and productive learning environment around school. Children talked proudly of their school and exemplified our pupil promises by how positively they approached their learning. They played well together at playtimes, their strong friendships and respect for each others’ differences shone through as they took very good care of each other.

Some children were so excited to share when speaking to inspectors, that they forgot to listen carefully to each other. Unfortunately we narrowly missed achieving Outstanding for this area.

Personal Development was judged to be outstanding because of the exceptional wider work we do in developing children’s character, self-confidence, self-assurance and readiness to make a positive contribution to society and to serve others. It has made me most proud that our work in developing the whole child has been recognised in this way, complementing our ambition to ensure the highest academic attainment and progress for our children - this is deep rooted within our Christian vision to love and value all and aspire, flourish and shine.

I continue to feel blessed to be the Headteacher of such an amazing school. Leadership is about service, and in this role, I am truly honoured to serve our wonderful children and would like to thank each of them for being who they are, shining their light each day and being the best they can be.

Thanks also to you, the parents and carers, for your unwavering support, trust and cooperation - your parent view feedback during the inspection was overwhelmingly positive and wholeheartedly appreciated. Huge thanks goes to our incredible staff team, whose hard work and dedication to our school's Christian vision is the underpinning of our ongoing success. And finally to our Governors, whose guidance and stewardship have been invaluable, thank you!

Whilst the report managed to evidence so much positivity and so many of our strengths, there is something so special about our school that cannot be entirely captured in an Ofsted framework checklist or a two-day inspection visit. As we move forward, we will continue to grow and flourish as a school community, walking in Jesus’ footsteps on our ever improving school journey.

Much love,



Mrs Lindley