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“Children don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care.”

Monday 4th November 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you are aware, our Ofsted inspection took place on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th October. The report is published today and available to view on the “inspection reports” section of our school website and also the official Ofsted website. Please contact the school office if you require a paper copy.

School webpage:

<http://christchurchschoolfrome.org.uk/about/ofsted-siams-reports>

Ofsted webpage:

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/123757>

The Ofsted report acknowledges the strong overall progress Christ Church has made over the last 15 months and judges the school to be “Good” in both “Personal Development” and “Behaviour and Attitudes”. These two positive judgements mean that, although the overall grading for Christ Church remains “Requires improvement to be good”, pupils, parents, staff, governors, partners in the parish and the school’s many friends across Frome can take great encouragement from the result. Christ Church received two strong “Good” grades and three near misses. (Think of it as reaching the Cup Final only to miss out on the trophy by the narrowest of margins by losing three-two on penalties!)

Inspectors told us Christ Church is one of the most improved schools they had visited in 2019.

There are plenty of positives within the report which we would like you to know about. Staff and governors are pleased that the first two paragraphs of the inspection report say:

Christ Church is a happy, caring school. The warm welcome each day from staff helps pupils to settle well. Staff have high expectations of behaviour. In response, most pupils behave well and try hard. The few pupils who have challenging behaviour are well supported. They soon learn the school’s six core values, such as kindness and respect, that guide their behaviour. Pupils like the rewards system and “golden time” is highly prized. Bullying seldom happens and is not tolerated here.

Pupils enjoy school. They like the clubs and after-school activities available to them. They know how to live healthy, active lives. There is a strong sense of community. Everyone is valued here. Staff are good at helping pupils with their social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils feel safe and well cared for.

The timing of the visit, just five weeks into a new academic year, meant that Christ Church was granted the unique privilege of being the first of Frome’s schools to undergo a full two-day inspection under the new Ofsted inspection framework. This time, inspectors were especially keen to find out what children learned and remembered in each and every national curriculum subject, not just in English and Maths.

Lead Inspector Sandra Woodman says in her report:

Leaders have already undertaken to review and improve curriculum design, breadth and quality in every subject ... Leaders have set out ambitious plans for pupils' learning in different subjects ... Recent improvements to the curriculum in the Nursery class are taking hold well this year. Children settle well. Adults' focus on teaching speaking and listening is helping the two- and three-year-olds to talk confidently. Regular teaching is increasing their love of early reading and understanding of numbers.

The Ofsted inspectors noted that Christ Church has a strong Christian vision, culture and sense of community. They commented on positive, respectful relationships between staff, governors, parents and children, and praised the calm, purposeful atmosphere in the school and nursery. As an inclusive school we have always aimed for every Christ Church child to reach their full potential and we will continue to maintain this focus.

There is a great deal for us to feel proud of. However, we must also take account of the four specific areas where the report notes a requirement to improve.

- ✓ Ofsted action point 1: *Subject leaders need to make sure that, for each curriculum subject, teachers build knowledge and skills in a logical order. Teachers need to check what pupils already know, and that pupils remember what has been taught.* Our response: **We have already started an ambitious review of the curriculum we teach for every national curriculum subject. Our goal is to ensure the highest quality education for all children in all subjects.**
- ✓ Ofsted action point 2: *Teachers should ensure that pupils who struggle with reading have books that enable them to practise the sounds they have learned with sounds they already know.* Our response: **We will be replacing and expanding our current selection of reading books, ensuring that the new books we buy are better at supporting children's Phonics learning.**
- ✓ Ofsted action point 3: *Leaders need to ensure that all aspects of the mathematics curriculum are taught well and remembered by pupils. Teachers should use their information about what pupils can do to plan work so that those pupils who struggle, or have fallen behind, catch up.* Our response: **We will be building in more regular times for children to recap and revise previous learning, so that this knowledge is not forgotten and can be recalled quickly and accurately.**
- ✓ Ofsted action point 4: *Leaders should ensure that children's learning moves on smoothly between the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers should use information about what children already know and can do to make the next steps in learning suitably challenging.* Our response: **We will be making sure that each of our two-, three-, four- and five-year-olds experiences a seamless, high-quality learning journey through Nursery and Reception. This will accelerate children's learning and build confidence, firstly, in readiness for school entry and, secondly, as they make the move up to Year 1.**

We fully respect and accept the inspectors' judgements and recommendations. We look forward to working in partnership with all staff, governors, parents and children as we take the next stage of our journey to secure "Good" in all areas and then press on to "Outstanding". The destination is still clearly in sight and we fully intend to get there!

The Ofsted inspectors asked us to pass on their thanks to all of the children, parents/carers, staff and governors who made them feel so welcome. Your kindness, enthusiasm and cooperation was greatly appreciated. So too were your messages of support, cards, cakes and gifts of chocolate!

Finally, if you have any thoughts, suggestions, worries or concerns please get in touch. We want to hear from you now, and look forward to working with you over the coming weeks and months as we continue our work to make Christ Church the best school it can be for the benefit of every child.

Yours sincerely,



Rupert Kaye
Headteacher



John Price
Chair of Governors



Ali Bowden
Deputy Head



Sarah Daffurn
Assistant Head