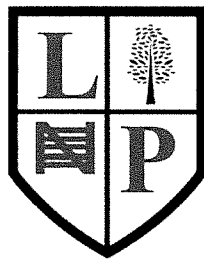


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Headteacher: Mr. R. Duff

10th September 2019

Ofsted Outstanding Rating

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2017 we were inspected by Ofsted and were graded Outstanding. Whilst this is something I am very proud of, it has never defined us as a school.

Earlier this year, Ofsted announced significant changes to the way it conducts inspections. The new Education Inspection Framework (EIF), which comes into effect this month, has a much stronger focus on the curriculum. Whilst the content of the curriculum is important, the delivery of the curriculum is of more importance - the best curriculum in the country, if poorly delivered, is meaningless. The inspectorate focus, in my opinion, should always be on Leadership alongside Teaching and Learning.

Additionally, I am confident in our curriculum. During our inspection in March 2017, Ofsted found:

Larchwood's curriculum is broad and balanced. It is based around topics where relevant. It excites the pupils and this means that they make rapid progress.

This is not going to change and any alterations to our curriculum since the 2017 inspection have only served to improve it further.

The new EIF is also more restrictive in terms of the data that Ofsted thinks is relevant. It has said that it will no longer consider school's 'internal progress and attainment data' as it believes that this could be inaccurate.

We believe that tracking children's progress and attainment is of the utmost importance. It allows us to monitor who is 'on track' and who is not. Additionally, we believe that our internal data is an accurate reflection of our children's learning and this is corroborated by our predictions for statutory testing, such as SATs.

Tracking progress and attainment also allows us to report to parents frequently, meaning they can better support their child's educational journey through the primary years.

Therefore, notwithstanding that Ofsted has changed the way it inspects schools, we will not be altering the way we operate at Larchwood. The firm focus will remain on the 'teaching' from our staff and the 'learning' by your children. This, together with strong leadership, will ensure that our high standards are maintained.

Comparing our inspection outcome in 2017 with any further inspections would be like comparing "apples and oranges" as the school will be inspected under a different framework going forward. As a result, I, with the support of the Governing Board and Mr O'Sullivan (CEO of the Brentwood Academies Trust), have decided to remove all Outstanding Ofsted logos from our school site, letterheads and website. We will now self-evaluate as an 'effective' school and move away from the traditional grades awarded by Ofsted. This does not mean that standards have fallen, quite the opposite. Rather it means that we have courage in our convictions and have the utmost confidence in our provision.

Please feel free to contact the School Office to make an appointment to see me if you would like to discuss this further or if you have any questions.

Mr R Duff
Headteacher

