



SETTLE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL - GOVERNOR NEWS

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Dear Parent/Guardian

Ofsted - new proposals for September 2019

The way nurseries, schools and colleges in England are inspected is to undergo its biggest overhaul in a decade, with proposals by Ofsted aiming to address concerns that education has been too narrowly focused on exam results in many schools across the country. Under the new proposals, schools that teach a narrow curriculum designed solely to improve test results and focusing on just league table rankings risk being punished by Ofsted's inspectors.

Settle Primary School governors welcome any move that recognises schools such as ours that have always offered a broad, holistic and inclusive approach to teaching and learning and who seek to prepare children with important life skills that equip them for life in Modern Britain.

We hope that the direction that our school has already taken in terms of our significant work in STEM, Computer Studies, Curriculum for Life provision, Special Educational Needs, Early Years philosophy, Extended Service provision, Community and Charity work is given higher recognition in the new Ofsted framework. We welcome an inspection process in which schools and their children are judged by the quality of educational provision received rather relying on narrow judgements that focus on just looking at aspects of data.

Data will continue to be important of course but it will hopefully no longer be the 'be all and end all' and inclusive schools such as ours will be properly recognised for the great work that we do. Inspections will no longer place as much weight on data in forming their judgment. Inspectors will have a longer period to assess the quality of teaching and will interview staff and children as part of the process. Young people benefit from an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum and this at last will be a key aspect of future Ofsted inspections.

If adopted, the new framework will come into force in September this year. Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman has said that "The new quality of inspection judgment will look at how providers are deciding what to teach and why, how well they are doing it and whether it is leading to strong outcomes for young people. This will reward those who are ambitious and make sure that young people accumulate rich, well-connected knowledge and develop strong skills using this knowledge."

There will also be an increased emphasis on behaviour and attitudes in a revised category, with schools able to be rated as having outstanding behaviour if pupils "behave with consistently high respect for others and foster a positive learning environment". It is also proposed that a new inspection area – personal development – will rate how a school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.

There have been many changes to the Ofsted framework over the years and this has put tremendous pressure on schools and pupils as the rules keep changing all the time. Though a new framework will be yet another new initiative that school leaders have to prepare for (and thus a further work load), we look forward with hope and optimism that this time Ofsted will at last put the well being and preparation of children for life in Modern Britain as having greater priority. We are also hoping that more freedom can be given to school to ensure that academic achievement is enriched by better recognising those schools who offer a curriculum that focuses on life skills and the personal development of children as individuals. If this does transpire then Settle CE Primary School will surely be recognised for the outstanding work the staff have carried out for many, many years.

Best wishes

Michael Gudgeon
Chair of Governors