



**Calow Church of England (V.C.) Primary School**  
North Road, Calow, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S44 5BD



*'Aiming High  
Together'*

18<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

We enclose the latest report from Ofsted, for your information. They recognised lots of things we are doing well, and acknowledged the positive progress that we have made since the previous inspection, but there were a few key areas that require further improvement before we can be officially recognised by Ofsted as "Good", and we fully accept their recommendations.

Among many areas that the inspectors praised, we are delighted that they found *Safeguarding* to be effective, and *Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development and Welfare* to be good. Ofsted really enjoyed meeting our pupils, and found them to be extremely polite, friendly and well-mannered. They noted that pupils are proud to come to this school, and that it is a caring school, where everyone is welcome. They saw our school values of respect, cooperation, caring, honesty and resilience in action, and spoke very positively about the ways in which we enrich children's education.

Ofsted acknowledged the actions and decisions we have taken over the last two years to improve the quality of education, since the last inspection, but concluded that some of those actions are work in progress, have not yet been implemented consistently across the school, and therefore have not yet shown impact on all learners in all areas. We would like to explain what we are already doing in these areas, to keep you fully informed, and so that you know we have the highest expectations of ourselves in providing the best possible education for your children.

### Early Reading and Phonics

Last year, we implemented something called *Project Read*, which was a massive initiative across Derbyshire to improve children's comprehension. We completely changed the way we teach children to understand what they read (active reading strategies) and had a big drive on the teaching of vocabulary throughout the school. We also brought in *Every Child a Talker* and *Talk Boost*, to help children develop better language and communication skills, and *Inference Training*, to help pupils see the meaning behind a text. All staff were trained, implemented the programme consistently, and every strand of Project Read was shown to have an impact on children's reading comprehension. We are really proud of the effect across the school, and our end of Key Stage 2 SATS results in reading showed a 29% increase, taking them above the national average. Ofsted also found that children develop a love of reading here, and enjoy being read to.

Whilst we can demonstrate enormous improvements in reading comprehension, including with our youngest pupils, and we are pleased that our efforts to promote reading for pleasure have been recognised, we still need to make some adjustments to our phonics teaching to make sure that we have a completely consistent approach to the nuts and bolts of decoding from Nursery to Year 2. We are onto this. We are currently undertaking some training in a phonics and reading programme called *Sounds Write*, which we will be introducing in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 this term. This will give us a unified method, and also

help us to match the younger children's reading books even more precisely with their phonic ability.

## Maths

Back in the summer term, we enrolled in the Department for Education's *Maths Hub Teaching for Mastery Workgroup*, which is an exciting collaboration through which we will make significant changes to the way we plan and teach Maths. We are bringing in a new programme across the school, called *Power Maths*, for which we have already secured funding. This will help us to plan and sequence our curriculum more tightly, teaching by small steps to ensure deeper understanding of key mathematical concepts.

## Sticky Learning

Although the phrase "sticky learning" does not appear in the report, Ofsted identified that children were not always remembering what they had been taught in previous lessons – sometimes going back to last year's topics. We are working really hard to ensure that the methods we use are designed to help children's learning to "stick" in their memories, so that they can recall and explain lessons from the past and build on them. We have already put systems and practices into place which will help – such as knowledge organisers and something called "retrieval practice", where children are regularly encouraged to recall prior learning in different ways – but we cannot yet show enough impact, so we are adjusting our actions to be as effective as possible and we will keep checking how well the learning is sinking in.

## SEND

Ofsted recognised the huge amount of work that had been done to support children with SEND, including effective intervention and training for teaching assistants to help support children towards achieving more independently. Specifically, though, we need to address the way that the curriculum itself is adapted for some of our children with SEND (especially maths and reading) and make sure that we follow up on the training to ensure our strategies are being consistently implemented.

The school has the full support of the Local Authority; advisors and senior advisors regularly visit, spend time in lessons, scrutinise work and analyse data with us. The Local Authority has acknowledged the enormous progress made in the last two years, have commended leaders and staff for our efforts and actions, and will work with us to make sure we can see through the changes to the point where full impact can be seen. In addition, we work closely with our cluster (Hasland Juniors, Hasland Infants, Hady and Hasland Hall) and with a National Leader for Education and Specialist Leaders in Education for Early Years and Maths.

We are proud of our school, the children and staff. We know we are not perfect, and will continue to work tirelessly to address those areas where we can improve further, to provide the very best possible education for the children we all care so much about.

Kind regards,

Daniel Sumner  
Headteacher

Father Kevin Ball  
Chair of Governors