



**Deanshanger Primary School**  
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Monday, 22nd July 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Ofsted communication from Rachel Rice, Head teacher and Jonathan Heap,  
Chair of Governors

From the Head teacher

Given how passionate I am about the success and happiness of every single child in the school, writing this letter to you brings very mixed emotions - absolute delight and pride in some areas and real disappointment in others.

As you are aware, we had an Ofsted inspection on 4th and 5th June and we have now, rather later than expected, received the report. Since the last inspection in November 2016, we worked hard to focus on the areas identified and have done this by pulling on our knowledge, skills and extensive experience alongside the guidance and support of other schools and their Head teachers, the Local Authority, our strong governing body and our Senior Leadership Team (SLT). I am privileged to be working with a SLT that truly cares about children - their outcomes, progress and individual needs and the teams that they lead. There have been challenges along the way that have tested us, but we have continued with focus, by working in partnership with you the parents/carers wherever possible, and with real commitment to ensuring that DPS is a happy, inspiring and inclusive learning environment.

The KS2 data from July 2018 was lower than expected and the recent inspection was using this data as its starting point. This year's data (released after the inspection) has built upon this and has moved us nearer to the national expectations although we still recognise we need to move forward on this with greater momentum.

Inspections are always quite challenging because there is so much to share and demonstrate within a short period of time. In some areas we failed to be able to demonstrate the rigour and pace of our actions in the timeframe available, particularly as a Head, and this brings real sadness. As you will read from the report, there are areas in which the inspection team feel that my/our actions have not been sufficient or had enough impact, and this is nothing less than devastating.

One of our school values is resilience and at this time, I am focused on demonstrating this and working with our incredible staff, governors and all stakeholders, to move forward from the disappointment, ensure that the pace of our actions is clear to all and that our unwavering commitment to providing the very best for our amazing children, is always evident. I might not agree with everything written in the report or indeed some of the features of our inspection process, but focusing on these is not as important as demonstrating our strength and abilities to improve further through our actions.

An outstanding judgement for Foundation Stage is well deserved and clearly recognises our steadfastness to ensuring that all children have the very best start to school life. This very strong and devoted team are leading the way in EYs - this is something to really shout loud about and continue to share with other providers. I am thrilled that the inspection team recognised the strength of their practise and we will ensure that we build further on this model.

A judgement of 'good' for personal development, behaviour and welfare is positive and demonstrates that our children are well supported socially and emotionally, know behaviour expectations and should be very proud of themselves, just as we are.

At DPS, we're pleased to be a school where everyone is welcome and where happiness and self-belief is one of our core aims. We believe in a broad and balanced curriculum where all subjects and talents are recognised, nurtured and extended. We believe in success in the widest sense and we're unapologetic about that, but we're also totally focused on the data measures that are important for every child and ensure that they are well prepared for their learning beyond DPS.

Reading this letter and the Ofsted report will undoubtedly lead to a mixture of thoughts, feelings and questions and despite the closeness to the end of the school year, I urge you to share these with me or Jonathan Heap, our Chair of Governors.. The school gate might close at 3.15pm on Wednesday but I can assure you the plans for rapidly moving forward will be being crafted, so please feel free to send an email directly to me so that we can either have an email dialogue or arrange a meeting during the summer break (if you would like), or in September. Your open communication with staff and governors is more important than ever now and, as always, we are ready to listen to the good, the bad and ugly!

As we return in September, further parental feedback will be requested for strategic areas and we will continue to hold Parent Action Group meetings (PAG); another opportunity to gather your views and ensure that these are considered as we move forward.

Working alongside the whole DPS team and in particular our highly committed SLT and governors, we will ensure that our strengths continue to resonate and that our focus on further building team work, leadership, teaching and learning and outcomes are highly prioritised.

Thank you for your support of DPS this school year and here's to a strong year ahead.

With kind regards,

Rachel Rice

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### From the Chair of Governors

As a governing body, we have worked alongside the school leadership team, and the local authority regularly across the timeframe since the last Ofsted report. Governance at the school is a critical part of how the whole school is run. Since 2016, the governing body has strengthened in terms of structure and skills. We share Rachel's perspective's that there are elements of this recent Ofsted which are disappointing and despite continued challenge to hold the school to account on the data and outcomes progress, the results in 2018 didn't shine through as hoped.

We have met recently, along with the school leadership team and the local authority to assess and craft a rapid post Ofsted Action Plan, and are determined to re-focus efforts from a governance perspective to support, align, and drive date outcome performance for all children. Working with the school team is a critical part of our agenda.

The school community is awash with great learning experiences for the children, most recently attending BNTO assemblies, This is Me event and conducting learning walks with staff and the LA, it's evident how happy the children are at DPS on a daily basis.

We are switching up efforts across summer to work with the school team to focus on the key outcomes from Ofsted, whilst ensuring policies and structures remain strong (a key part of a Governing body's responsibility).

Jonathan Heap

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