

A summary of 127 parent questions and some responses that I hope are helpful. Please appreciate that it is not possible to respond to all questions individually. We will offer another meeting after the Christmas holiday to share progress and give an opportunity for more questions. Thank you for all your positivity and willingness to embrace change.

Saira Sawtell 21.12.18

What will the new approach to behaviour be? This is a positive approach to behaviour management and a belief that relationships underpin the teaching and development of respect in our young people. We also aim to teach intrinsic motivation rather than solely a reward-focused approach to good learning behaviour. We will use our core school values of faith, hope and love in teaching about tolerance and respect. We will differentiate our response to behaviour depending on context and student. The draft policy will be shared with you very shortly for comment and the parent forum will offer a chance to discuss the draft, early in term. We will have a new clarity of process around students who show continual distressed behaviour and disrupt learning. We need our teaching of behaviour to be a partnership with parents and we need your support at home – our relationships policy will detail this. We are splitting into two lunchtime sittings from January to decrease the numbers and pressure points outside; we hope this will help.

Can we work less on paper for homework and knowledge organisers? Yes, absolutely. We have explicitly moved away from sheets for class work and we prefer homework to be in books if at all possible. We realise it frustrates children and parents if things are on scrappy paper that get lost. We will have all knowledge organisers on the website and we hope to have them available via our parent app very soon. This app will save teachers time as you will receive instant email details of things logged onto our system and there won't necessarily be the need for us to call or email separately. There is also a student app to accompany the product we expect to commit to shortly. At KS2 you should see weekly homework for English and maths. At KS3 you should see weekly homework for English, maths, science and French with some other homework at times. There will always be opportunity for your child to go further into the knowledge organiser for challenge (websites to visit, extension tasks etc.). We will be trying to simplify parental communication and will have everything through the app (in time even payments) – other social media presence is to celebrate learning and our community, as well as assisting the PTA to be vibrant and active (this has already worked well this term).

The Governing Body: we would like to work with a National Leader of Governance to upskill our governors and develop the team we have. We believe this will support the governing body to challenge the school more effectively.

Why did parents not know about the issues in school? The inspection was triggered by a three year historic data (KS2 SATs) concern and this is public data. This is also difficult for all middle schools who do not have the whole of KS2 in their provision (although we work very closely with our first schools) and we also have two more years as part of our provision. Nationally, all middle school experience this problem. The key actions are given as governance, leadership and mathematics. Despite the fact that there are many happy, flourishing children in school, it is important for us all to reach acceptance now, draw the line and move into improving the school. Staff were surprised at the overall judgement rather than the particular findings. When I wrote our school Self Evaluation in September, I had judged all areas of the school to be 'requires improvement'.

Can parents see how we are progressing/have progress reports from the Core Action Group? Yes. I will publish a meeting schedule early next term so that we have regular opportunities to share progress with you and seek your views. We will also share progress reports by parent mail. We are now working very hard in school to secure rapid progress and we are all reflecting on our practice and challenging each other. We have used performance management targets to address school improvement priorities this year and senior staff are taking on extra responsibilities commensurate with their salary.

When is the next Ofsted inspection? We will receive monitoring visits every six months and a full inspection in 24-30 months. The top priority is to improve leadership of teaching and learning at all levels. It is our ambition to be a 'Good' school in 24 months. Overall accountability is with the headteacher and the governors. Distributed leadership through all levels in school is currently being secured and supported. The Senior Leadership team and all Middle Leaders are already working differently with higher expectations about their roles and a greater awareness of their effect and accountability. Special Measures means that the school needs to make rapid and sustained improvement to secure good quality education. Our progress will be monitored by Her Majesty's Inspectors. We may be able to access a very small amount of extra funding to help us.

Student progress: Maths mastery will support and challenge learners of all mathematical ability, including able mathematicians who will work with depth; there is plenty of research to prove this. There remains a small group who will not be taught in a broader mix of ability in order to support them. 'No hands up' is for directed teacher Q&A sessions and has been proven to make most students think for most of the time. This is much better than the bidding war where only children who know the answer put their hand up and some children opt out and disengage, or have their poor self-esteem underlined repeatedly. It is a shift and we are building resilience in the children too. Students can still ask questions and seek help in the normal ways; we will keep reassuring them and they will adjust. We have shared the reasoning and the findings within the report with the students. Teachers will still be using engagement in class and evidence of learning in books to award an ATL score on a report. We use the DASP schools' assessment bands like all Dorchester schools where 3 is working at Age-Related expectations. This is effectively a 'grade' with 5 being the highest. The government removed levels at KS2 a couple of years ago. We are working whole-school with teacher pedagogy and raising teacher expectations of all children. We begin observing lessons in January and will be having professional dialogue around these areas in feedback sessions. There is a focus on work in books and triangulating the learning and teaching, the work in the book and the progress being made. Spelling corrections will be key words across the curriculum and also high frequency words, especially in English. All teachers are focussing on their pedagogy, their subject knowledge and their delivery to support maximum learning. We have input planned on teaching and learning improvement. During the Spring Term, every teacher will have a lesson observation with their appraiser and a member of Senior Leadership as well as a lesson observation with me and Mrs Boon.

Other: There are not as many Teaching Assistants in school as we need. We cannot afford them. Our school, like all schools, is facing continual budget reductions in real terms and this is affecting us on the front line. Please do write to your MP and protest. We will continue to offer the broad and balanced curriculum which is rich in things that are artistic and creative too; we realise that you value it and this makes a school vibrant. We will not be removing children from science and computing lessons to have extra maths lessons before SATs. We may look for other additional time to provide maths intervention but it will not be from core learning time.