

External Review of Governance – Stafford Leys Primary School

- The in- school element of this review took place on 3 July 2018. The methodology was as follows:
 - Research of key documents, reports and published school performance data in preparation for visit
 - Face to face meetings with headteacher (Andy Kitchen)
 - Face to face meeting with Chair of Governors (Allison Hammond) and Chair of Curriculum committee (Mark Donne)
 - Supported self review with Full GB
- The school was last inspected in April 2018 and was judged to be ‘inadequate’ (overall judgement at previous inspection in March 2014 was ‘good’).

Findings

- Stafford Leys Primary School converted to become a stand-alone academy in June 2012 and was one of the first in Leicestershire to do so. All trustees of the academy are members of the governing body. The Chair has been in post for 12 months and the headteacher has been in post since September 2015.
- The school was part of the Leicestershire ‘10 plus primary programme’ which meant that pupils would leave at the end of Year 5 for a placement in a ‘middle school’. Performance of the school in term of national testing was limited to EYFS, phonics and KS1 data. There was no progress measure between KS1 and 2 until the school reverted to full primary status in 2015. The current Year 5 pupils are the last cohort to have entered KS 2 when the school was without Year 6 provision.
- There is a sense of great disappointment following the Ofsted inspection in April 2018. However, senior leaders and governors are determined that the Ofsted judgements will act as a spur to drive up standards and ensure that improvement is both rapid and sustainable. In response to the criticism levelled at governors of failing to provide adequate challenge, there is now an urgency to ensure that all governors are confident and equipped to hold senior leaders to account for the performance of all pupils. There has already been significant improvement in how data is presented to governors, ensuring that it is in a format which is accessible, so that they are able to provide targeted support and challenge particularly around progress of groups.
- Governors have been fully engaged in developing the post Ofsted action plan with senior leaders and external consultants. They have set up the Academy Improvement Board with a specific focus on rigorously monitoring the impact of

strategies aimed at delivering the key priorities. This is an addition to the work of the curriculum committee who are very clear about their role in scrutinising in school data with a clear focus on progress.

- Attainment at the end of KS2 in 2017 was broadly in line with national averages but progress for all pupils in core subjects was well below national average. The unvalidated data from the 2018 KS 2 SATs indicates a far better picture; attainment has improved in all subjects with significantly more pupils reaching greater depth. Importantly, early indications are that rates of progress will be broadly in line with national expectations based on 2017 benchmarks.
- Relationships between governors and the SLT are very strong, based on trust, confidence and transparency. Governors are visible around school and regularly visit. However, it is not always easy for them to explain and evidence their practice, hence the need for minutes to show evidence of governor impact.
- Governors have provided robust oversight of financial performance and as a consequence, the school is in a secure financial position.
- Governors are very aware of the challenge they face in delivering the improvements necessary for the school to be judged good when next inspected. However, judging by the very positive steps taken in the weeks since the inspection, they have demonstrated that they have the capacity, resolve and skills to achieve this. Governance is now increasingly effective and I am confident that the PIR element of the review in Spring 2019 will be able to report further improvement.

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