

July 2023

Dear parents and carers

Although term has ended, I wanted to share with you some positive news that we have received.

As you know, we are part of a family of schools: Astrea Academy Trust. In early June, Ofsted visited a number of schools across the trust to carry out a review of how we work and how well the trust is doing.

The review focuses on quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, leadership and management, and governance, and provides recommendations on how the trust should develop in future. The report was overwhelmingly positive, and really demonstrates the value of being part of the wider family.

We know that you see the school's work each day but, as this evaluation shows, there is so much work that goes on behind the scenes at the trust level which ensures that we can provide the best education to your children.

You can read the full evaluation for yourself [here](#), but I wanted to take the opportunity to share some highlights with you:

- Ofsted found that we have an ambitious central curriculum, and that at Longsands, we contextualise this to suit our setting and the needs of our pupils. Our curriculum leaders are supported by trust subject leaders to ensure both the curriculum and student outcomes are excellent
- Inspectors reported that the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is excellent, with clear strategies in place. It highlighted that our teaching staff benefit from the training and support they receive from central trust staff, which helps them to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively.
- The evaluation also highlights our commitment to a strong reading culture, and says that our pupils quickly made progress they need to become confident readers.
- Ofsted found that as a family of schools, we are all working at speed to improve behaviour, and we benefit from additional leadership expertise, staff capacity and training when we need it. Although we are part of a trust, we are able to adapt policy and frameworks to suit the needs of our pupils and our school context.
- We know the importance of attendance, and Ofsted concluded that trust leadership is working hard with us in schools to ensure no stone is left unturned when working to ensure all pupils are

in school every day.

- Ofsted said everyone feels part of the same Astrea family, and that our staff networks, curriculum networks, trust-wide training and common systems all contribute to a strong alignment and shared purpose, regardless of postcode.
- Inspectors highlighted that pupils are at the centre of everything we do, and that when we need it, the trust's executive leaders ensure we receive help and resources quickly.
- The report highlights that safeguarding systems are strong, and that all of our staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Inspectors said that our PSHE curriculum responds to national issues, and that our pupils learn important safeguarding knowledge.

Joining an academy trust can be a daunting experience for any school community, and often, although not always, it happens when the school is in most need of rapid improvement. This review helps set out how the central team supports us at Longsands, and how we are realising our shared vision of addressing disadvantage so that all children learn, thrive and lead successful lives.

Yours faithfully



Dr C Cusick
Principal