



**Mrs Justine Chubb - Headteacher**  
Clapham and Patching CofE Primary School  
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Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Following our recent Ofsted inspection, I would like to explain a little around the process and the judgements given.

The team of three inspectors spent two days observing the staff and children. They spoke to leaders at all levels including parents, governors and members of the South Downs Education Trust.

We were delighted that the inspectors found our school to be 'good' in all the areas of

- Personal development
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Leadership and management
- Early years.

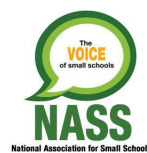
Due to the timing of the inspection, the inspectors were not yet able to judge the Quality of Education also as 'good'. Unfortunately, this is a limiting judgement, which then moves the overall school grading to 'requires improvement'.

Since joining the Trust in November 2020 the school has expanded and more than doubled in size. Due to this increase in pupil numbers, we were delighted to be able to open our third class. As a result of this, all the curriculum plans needed to be re-written to reflect moving from a four-year cycle to a two-year cycle, which will ultimately give a better quality of education. With the new curriculum in place from September 2023 it would have always been difficult to show impact when the inspectors arrived after only three weeks of its implementation.

With reference to the inspector's comments around subject knowledge, assessment and gaps in knowledge, with such a high number of children joining Clapham and Patching part way through the year (from a range of different settings), assessment of prior learning was always going to be a challenging task. We recognise that this is an ongoing piece of work for the whole school, and it will inform the school improvement plan 2023/2024.

Our disappointment for the 'Quality of Education' judgement cannot be ignored, especially when the inspection team recognised that, as a new curriculum had not yet had the time to fully embed. The inspection team commented that there was strong intent in the new curriculum; however, there wasn't enough time to show evidence of consistent improvement and impact after only three weeks. You will notice that throughout the report the inspectors frequently use the word 'yet', recognising that the school is very much on a journey of improvement from its challenging starting point following its notification of closure.

On a more positive note, throughout the report, the inspection team speaks in glowing terms about the school, with happy and successful pupils and an ethos for excellence, which is supportive and





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nurturing. I am particularly proud of the recognition given to our school leaders, and our dedicated team, whom Ofsted describe as having ambition for all our students, and the recognition given for the opportunities we provide for all the children, from reception through to Year 6.

The children's behaviour, respect and kindness were noted as being exceptionally good. The highly productive and happy learning environment was also commended by Ofsted, along with the strength of relationships between pupils and their teachers which make Clapham and Patching a very special place. Frustratingly, the school only missed the judgement of outstanding in the area of Behaviour and Attitudes due to historic low attendance figures, which, although much improved, remain an ongoing focus for the school.

The inspection team were very complimentary of the work that myself and the team continue to deliver, and although we are disappointed with the overall judgement, it has not impacted on the commitment that myself and my dedicated team have to Clapham and Patching and the work we do for the children in our school and community.

We will continue to build on the Quality of Education judgement and are confident that when Ofsted return in approximately 30 months, they will then be able to see the 'green shoots' they saw with the Quality of Education flourish, and the school will be recognised as 'good' in all areas or even better!

If you have any comments, questions or concerns regarding our Ofsted inspection, please do email me directly.

Thank you for your continued support as we move forward.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Justine Chubb  
Headteacher

