

10 December 2021

Dear Parents,

The Governors letter accompanying the recent ISI report largely referred to the safeguarding aspect of the report, and as the action points required by the inspector about safeguarding are largely about records rather than procedure, (keeping records on a computer system rather than on paper) these have all been quickly addressed by using Bromcom, a system we brought into school in September. We have also commissioned an independent audit of safeguarding from IAPS in January, after which we can implement any further specific recommendations. Overall I would reiterate that safeguarding is given highest priority here at Fosse Bank and there was no suggestion in the inspection report that any child has been put at risk of harm. I will continue to keep you updated but I hope that the Governors letter was reassuring on our processes and procedures and the importance that we attribute to safeguarding at Fosse Bank.

I am writing to assure you of our commitment to make changes in response to the specific comments in the education aspects of the report, indeed many have already been implemented.

Academic achievement:

Addressing the question of challenge for the most able children, we have changed some of the curriculum for January. The inspector said there was a lot of number work in maths, but not enough problem solving, so problem solving, usually starting with a question, will be part of maths lessons and, each week, the Friday lesson is now given to maths investigations and problem solving. This is to enable broader mathematical concepts to be developed. We shall, of course, continue to have a focus on number as this enables our pupils to score highly in senior school tests. (11 out of 12 pupils who took the 11+ this year passed maths well, and most with exceptionally high scores)

With reference to asking higher order questions, and synthesising data, the history and geography curriculum, in particular, will change from January to answer both these points. While staying with the existing topics which are age appropriate, we are changing the focus of these lessons to greater initial questioning by pupils, and a greater amount of independent work. For instance, the more challenging questions for Y4 to investigate might be: Can they find different views about an environmental issue? What is their view or *can they name the areas of origin of the main ethnic groups in the UK & in their school?* or *can they explain how people are trying to manage their environment?* or one of my favourites for Y1: *Where do the leaves go to in winter?*

Also with challenge in mind, Miss Davies is running a STEM club for Years 3-6, and I am running an Out of the Box Club for Year 3-6 which is for those who like to think 'out of the box'. Both these were popular pre-Covid. While pupils were seen using ICT effectively across the curriculum, the inspector found programming was lacking. Coding has not been consistent across the school but has already improved and from January, while Year 1 and 2 will continue to use the use the Bebots (physical robot insects that are programmed by pupils to move in different directions and for a particular distance), Year 2 to 6 will all be using *Scratch* or similar systems weekly to learn to code. Those classes that have been coding regularly have proved to be very competent. Mrs Baumhauer will also be running an after

after-school structured Scratch coding club. The point made in the report about worksheets has been addressed as has that of some inconsistency of marking.

#### Personal Development

The Inspector felt after talking to both boys and girls, that our pupils did not relate their charitable work to principles of equality of and human rights or see ways they could benefit from other cultures and nationalities. This will be addressed next term by reading texts that both inform and question such as *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis about girls in Afghanistan. Early Years has some particularly good age appropriate books on the subject. The PSHCE and RSE curriculum (brought in in September 21) also covers these principles. Equal rights in respect of gender equality has been a particular feature of this term for the upper years.

I was pleased to see that the inspector saw that the children had a strong sense of how to keep themselves safe online.

Understanding boundaries in terms of personal touching is something we teach as part of respect for each other, but we are further reinforcing this concept with discussion, questionnaires, class discussion and assemblies, and in January, revisiting the NSPCC material, as the NSPCC representatives still cannot come into school as they last did pre-Covid.

As you will have seen there are many strengths in the report, particularly the ‘culture of literacy’ which are very pleasing, as are the references to the confidence and independence of your children as responsible, tolerant and law-abiding citizens of the future.

As we continue to review the educational offering, I will keep you updated of other initiatives we will be implementing to further improve.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to discuss any element of the report, or the actions we will be taking in more depth. I will be in school next week and able to meet with any parents who wish to discuss it with me. I with the Senior Management will be holding a Q&A session on 11<sup>th</sup> January at 7.00 pm.

Best wishes,

*Alison Cordingley.*

Alison Cordingley  
Headmistress, Fosse Bank School