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27th April 2022

Message to Families

Dear Parent/Carer,

The link to our final Ofsted report is [here](#).

When you read this report, I am sure you will feel that it is a very positive summary of the work being done at Farlingaye, and a very pleasing reflection of the engagement of our students with their education. The report speaks of many strengths: it notes that students “behave very positively”, that the school is a community where students “feel safe and say they are happy”, that students “appreciate how their teachers take exceptional care of them”, and that students “learn well and remember much”. It also notes that “leaders’ work to promote [students’] personal development is exceptional”. We are very pleased that such comments reflect the positive nature of the experiences of students that we work to create every day.

While the final overall grade may not be what we would ideally have wanted to see, we must acknowledge that the new Ofsted framework is extremely tough, allowing only schools which present as having no flaws at all in any key area to be outstanding. It is a very, very high bar – and one which will very significantly lower the number of UK schools rated outstanding. The fact that key areas of our practice have been rated outstanding – just as we emerge from two of the most challenging years in the history of education in this country – is testimony to the excellent work of the staff throughout that period and to the resilience of our students. It is worth noting that the Lead Inspector informed us in his oral feedback that these were the first outstanding grades he had issued under the new framework, which has been in operation since September 2021. To put the outcome into context, it is important to note the results of inspections of the seven mainstream Secondary schools in Suffolk seen under the new Ofsted Framework. These reflect the impact of the raising of the inspection bar:

- three schools remained at “good”
- one school moved from “inadequate” to “requires improvement”
- three schools have been regraded from “outstanding”: two of them have been graded as “good” and one has been graded as “inadequate”.

Of those now classed as “good” in Suffolk under the new framework (excluding Farlingaye), there is only one that has a grading of “outstanding” in any specific category.

The improvement point identified in the report links to the inspectors’ view that the school could look more closely at two specific interventions in order to evaluate their impact and viability: off-site alternative provision and the use of some single-sex groupings. We have already taken steps towards making any necessary changes relating to these areas.

I am sure that you will be pleased that the Ofsted report reflects the many positive aspects of Farlingaye that we know make the school a special place. As always, we are determined to continue to develop and improve and will work hard to provide the best possible education for your children. The school will publish a post-Ofsted action plan, and this will be put onto our website as soon as it is finalised. We know that the drive towards achieving consistently outstanding provision will only be fully successful if school and home work together, and – with this in mind – we would welcome your response to the report at the next Families Forum meeting, details of which will be sent to you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AS', written in a cursive style.

Dr A Sievewright
Headteacher