

Letter to parents from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Dear Parents

As you will be aware on 13 and 14 of June we had our second monitoring visit conducted by Mark Sims, HMI and Philip Hamilton, an Ofsted Inspector. I promised when I last wrote to you that I would keep you informed about developments in the school and, in addition, to outline some of the strengths and areas for development in the monitoring visit report, I also have other updates for you. We have uploaded this Ofsted report on to our website.

We at Seva are very proud of our pupils and it was therefore a joy to read in the monitoring report that pupils behave very well and relationships at all levels are good. Evidence of work in pupils' books showed they were now making more rapid progress. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their leadership skills in such roles as Seva Buddies and although some incidents of bullying were reported, pupils felt that incidents were dealt with effectively when drawn to the attention of staff. Parents also indicated an overwhelmingly positive view of the school.

During the monitoring visit it was noted that the quality of teaching, especially in the secondary school, has improved. In the primary school particular mention was made of the successful use of phonics to help pupils develop their reading skills and joint lesson planning among teachers. There was recognition of the value of an extensive programme of in-service training and in future HMI recommended that teachers should receive written notes of the reviews of their classes by senior staff to help them improve their teaching even more. Teachers are regularly tracking the progress made by pupils, assessing how well they are doing and using this information to help plan lessons to meet pupils' needs more closely. HMI suggested that the accuracy of the assessment information gathered by teachers should be reviewed and checked, especially as it was used to set targets for pupils to help improve their work. Steps have already been taken to make sure this happens.

The monitoring visit identified that there was a new unity amongst the senior leadership team and this, together with improved communications, had brought stability and trust at all levels of leadership and management. The Trustees are challenging school leaders rigorously on the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils and new Trustees bring a valuable educational expertise to the Board. Teaching appointments had led to recent improvements, especially in Secondary classes, but work still remains to be done within individual subject areas. In mathematics, for example, the challenge extended to pupils was not always high enough and a greater depth of work was needed, especially for more able pupils. In English the leadership of the subject was thought to be underdeveloped and this is an area where Mr Chandla will be looking closely to bring about improvements. The monitoring visit also highlighted the need for improved teaching in humanities and for a more varied programme of enrichment in both classes and in after school activities. The Trustees will be discussing how they can support the school in improving the range of cultural and creative activities available to pupils in the coming weeks.

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Another area of the work of the school where improvement has been noted is SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) where HMI found that pupils' specific learning needs are identified well and planning in classes helps pupils to overcome their learning barriers. However, the picture is not consistently positive as pupils with English as an additional language were rarely identified or catered for effectively in classes. Regrettably the full range of information about pupil premium, the curriculum and other matters has not yet been put onto the school website and more work is required to ensure that there is a full analysis of the outcomes of different groups of pupils by teaching staff and governors. This is an area where Mr Chandla will be working very closely with his senior team, teachers and Trustees over the next term to bring about necessary improvements.

All safeguarding responsibilities have been met and there was said to be a culture of vigilance amongst staff who know what to do if there is a safeguarding incident. This was a major area of concern in the inspection report of the autumn term and staff and Trustees have worked diligently to correct the shortcomings identified at that time. There are new appointments pending which will add to the quality of teaching and range of subjects in the school. Seva School will be launching prizes for pupils in English and also in science where we have attracted sponsorship from the famous pharmaceutical group of Vitabiotics. Mr Chandla and his senior team are assessing where and how to develop the creative curriculum of the school. Dr. Matusiak-Varley, an educational consultant with much experience of assisting schools develop rapidly, now works closely with the school. She has already made three visits and helped initiate important improvements with Mr Chandla. We are looking outside our school to the wider community and establishing links with other schools, local organisations and businesses. Seva is not a complacent school and despite the many positive comments in the monitoring report we are already working on the less positive areas identified to see how we can improve the whole provision for our pupils further.

Yours faithfully

Norma Ball
Chair of Board of Trustees