

Bandon Hill Primary School

www.bandonhill.sutton.sch.uk
Headteacher: Miss L Rodger
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs B Thorp

Meadow Field

Sandy Lane South
Wallington
Surrey SM6 9QU

meadowfield@bandonhill.sutton.sch.uk
Tel: 020 8647 5377

Wood Field

Stanley Park Road
Carshalton
Surrey SM5 3HW

woodfield@bandonhill.sutton.sch.uk
Tel: 020 8619 1120

Oak Field

Stanley Park Road
Carshalton
Surrey SM5 3HW

oakfield@bandonhill.sutton.sch.uk
Tel: 020 8619 1120

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are pleased to attach the Ofsted report from our recent inspection for you to read.

As expected, the inspection was very intensive and forensic in its scrutiny. The team looked into all aspects of school, watched many lessons, looked at children's books and checked the administrative elements of our provision too.

As part of the Senior Leadership Team, we were invited to partner with the inspectors throughout the process. During this time we were overwhelmingly proud of all our children and staff – we saw brilliant lessons and a high standard of learning. The children's books were an excellent example of the standard of learning that takes place at Bandon Hill.

As you can see, we have been rated as 'Good' in all categories. We are very pleased and proud of this judgement and would like to take the opportunity to explain why.

As you know, Bandon Hill was last inspected in 2014/15 and achieved an 'Outstanding' judgement. I took over the entire school by taking on the additional responsibility for Meadow Field and Oak Field in September 2017.

I have previously written to you about the situation that I discovered at Meadow Field through my monitoring systems during the Autumn Term of 2017. As I had outlined; behaviour was a concern, in the corridors, in lessons and at lunchtime. Progress was too slow. Assessment outcomes were a significant concern and ultimately lead to the end of year results being well below floor standards.

In the interests of transparency, I think it is important to let you know that the standards I found when I took over would have been graded as Requires Improvement (the Ofsted judgement below Good) in several significant areas of the school. This was not something I was expecting at all and was quite a shock. My response to this situation needed to be prompt and proactive. Initially, I needed to be transparent about the standards that I had inherited. I called a meeting with the Local Education Authority to inform them of the significant drop in standards at Meadow Field and was able to secure some financial support to aid us on our journey of school improvement. The LEA were in agreement with my plan and had faith in my ability to move the school forward and wanted to reflect this by offering financial assistance. Additionally, I invited multiple external consultants in to validate our judgements, scrutinise our plans and offer suggestions for improvement. Again, they all assessed my plan to be ambitious, well considered and robust and gave me their support. Having finalised this plan I presented it to Governors to inform them of the complete picture and the journey I was planning to take the school on. All advice I was given told me that it takes three years to take a school through a journey of school improvement. I was determined to do this sooner.

We are now approximately 4 terms (less than 1.5 years) into that journey. In this short period of time the skills, perseverance and commitment of the entire staff and hard work of our pupils has enabled us to make significant improvements. Behaviour is no longer a concern. As you will see in the report the inspectors praised the standards of behaviour at Bandon Hill stating:

"Pupils are well behaved throughout the school... Pupils say that if there is any misbehaviour it is dealt with promptly and effectively through the schools' behaviour system... A calm and orderly atmosphere exists..."

Progress is no longer a concern. The inspection report states:

"... pupils currently in the school make the progress that the school expects of them. Pupils' books demonstrate that most pupils are making strong progress from their starting points"

Standards of attainment in KS2 that were previously of concern have already been addressed and are on track to be significantly improved. The inspection report reflects:

"In 2018, there was a dip in key stage 2 results. Leaders have identified the reason for underachievement in pupils' outcomes. They took decisive action to address gaps in pupils' knowledge and ensure that teaching for these pupils is strong. Books and other inspection evidence show that pupils in key stage 2 are making strong gains this year."

You can see the report reflects the excellent progress that the school has made to raise standards since September 2017. I am incredibly proud of all children and staff but would like to additionally recognise the efforts of my Senior Leadership Team and their hard work. The inspectors were very clear in their verbal and written feedback that the Senior Leadership Team are a strength of the school. All statements that reference 'the leadership team' (the Ofsted terminology of 'leaders' means staff that have a subject responsibility area and does not mean SLT or SMT) are overwhelmingly positive including:

"Senior leaders are determined, tenacious and have a clear vision. They set high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils."

Having Ofsted arrive at this point so early in our journey has led to some frustrating elements of the report. We have not yet been able to show any *end of year* data and so the report has been unable to fully acknowledge our likely outcomes, regardless of the in-year data we were able to show. Verbal feedback from the inspection team told us that we needed to continue to monitor the impact of our school improvement plans (as we had shown that we already were) but unfortunately the written report has said that we "are aware of the need to monitor more closely the impact of these school improvement strategies". This is a disappointing statement as it implies that we are not currently doing so. The strong progress we have already made to raise standards demonstrates that we are, in fact, skilled in monitoring, reflecting and adapting our school improvement plans.

The verbal feedback meeting with the inspection team was a long process, mainly due to our complicated school set up resulting in many items for discussion. The team told us, although this cannot be included in the official report, they appreciated that we are working within a very challenging school situation, with split sites located a distance apart. They also recognised that since 2017 we have been working with a much smaller Senior Leadership Team due to the demands of a reduced budget. They praised us for our achievements within this very challenging predicament and we were grateful to have this acknowledged.

Fiona Phelps, a representative from the Local Education Authority wrote to me following the inspection to congratulate us on our achievements and securing a 'Good' judgement across the board. The LEA are happy for to communicate to you that we have their support and that they are pleased with the progress and improvements we have made so far on our journey.

As you can also see the report highlights some areas for improvement. On the whole, these points had already been identified by the school through our Self-Evaluation Form. Following the inspection, Mrs Thorp and I have already planned a strategy day to reflect on the verbal feedback minutes, discuss the report and review the targets on the school development plan. Once we have ascertained our priorities and actions we will update you further about the steps we are planning to take. Alongside this information, we will hold a number of drop-in sessions with Senior Leaders and Governors for you to talk to us about our school and the next step of the journey for Bandon Hill. Information on these sessions will come out after Easter.

We are excited about having this very strong foundation to build upon and look forward to working with you to continue on our journey. We continue to be exceptionally proud of the Bandon Hill community.

Many thanks,

Laura Rodger
Head Teacher