



St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Head Teacher: Mr R Hughes B.A. Hons, PGCE, NPQH

3.7.17

Dear parents,

Please find attached a copy of the recent report from our Ofsted visit.

The judgments show that Ofsted grade us in several areas as being below the 'good' grade – the next grade down is called 'requires improvement'. (Please note this is **NOT** a 'special measures' grade, where a school would be performing inadequately.)

I did not meet the inspector, nor did I have any active part in the inspection; because I was accompanying a group of our Year 6 pupils on our annual unique Spanish exchange – the only one of its type in the north west of England.

Ofsted knew about the exchange, as I spoke personally a while back to one of the most senior inspectors for their North West region. I was assured to put the date on our website, so that Ofsted's visit and the Spanish exchange would not clash. However, they then ignored this – and came while I was away.

We are very disappointed, because we know that the inspection was allocated at least two weeks before; and the details of our exchange were on our website homepage, as they asked. They should have simply postponed it for a week, until I arrived back, as they themselves said they would.. We don't know of any Ofsted visit anywhere, where the headteacher has not been able to attend the own school's inspection, like this.

Other senior staff in this school led the inspection, but were expected to deal with huge amounts of queries and data – as well as being expected to teach part time. This does not normally happen in inspections either. In short, the way the inspection was arranged was a severe disadvantage to our school; and unfair, because it is something that no other primary schools have had to deal with; and it's clear that the outcomes would have been different had I been here. For example, pupils' progress is tracked scrupulously, including for disadvantaged children, by gender, by free school meals, and for those with special needs and disabilities etc. Call in and see, if you need more information. We can show you!

I have 16 years' headship experience and 8 successful Ofsted inspections. I have an in-depth overview of the school, the pupils, the information and data that no-one else could have. Unlike a secondary school, with non-teaching staff, our primary senior staff teach full time, with very little non contact time; and they are not accustomed to debate with a rigorous, probing inspector, in a way that is second nature to an experienced headteacher. (Continued....)



As I was in the Pyrenees, with no data to hand, it became impossible to talk to an inspector in depth, on my mobile phone, whilst touring the Basque country with our hosts. You can imagine that we needed to be on duty for 24 hours, in order to attend to our pupils' every need. They were in a foreign country, with many different experiences, coming at them, all at once. (By the way, the exchange trip and the children were *fantastic!*)

However let's move on. The report has some great ideas; as well as some things that are very contentious to us.

I urge everyone to come to an open meeting in school either tomorrow, Tuesday 4th July, at 2 p.m. - or next Monday 10th July at 6pm - with staff and governors, where we can discuss the outcomes; and I will answer your questions. Please come and fill the hall!

Yours sincerely

R. Hughes