

Toftwood Infant School  
School Lane  
Toftwood  
Dereham  
Norfolk  
NR19 1LS



Toftwood Junior School  
Westfield Road  
Toftwood  
Dereham  
Norfolk  
NR19 1JB

01362 692612

01362 694919

admin@toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk

reception@toftwood-jun.co.uk

**Website: [www.toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk](http://www.toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk)**  
**Toftwood Infant and Junior School Federation**  
**Executive Headteacher - Mrs Joanna Pedlow**

### **OFSTED monitoring Update - Toftwood Junior School**

Dear Parents/Carers

As you may be aware, a short time after the Federation became official in September 2017, the Junior School had an OFSTED inspection. OFSTED recognised that the school had many areas that needed to improve and that 'overall standards had declined' prior to the new leadership team taking over. OFSTED could already see the improvements that had been put in place. However, as this had only been over a few weeks, they had to give a grade of requires improvement, as actions taken had not had time to have the impact we wanted. OFSTED were very clear that it was the ability and capacity of the new leadership team to improve the school for the children that meant the school was not placed in special measures. In September 2017, OFSTED said that a strength of the school was the 'recent federation with an outstanding Infant School' which was 'adding significantly to the school's capacity to improve. New leaders, including Governors, are demonstrating that they know what to do to raise achievement.'

Since that inspection, the Executive Headteacher with the senior leadership team has worked tirelessly to put improvements in place to ensure the children have the best possible care and education and to improve standards across the school. By working together as a Federation, many new and improved systems have been put in place to make this happen and promote consistency and high expectations throughout our school community.

OFSTED recently returned to carry out a monitoring visit of the Junior School. This happens for schools that are judged requires improvement to see if leaders are making the necessary changes to improve outcomes for the children.

**We are pleased to say that the HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector) said 'Senior leaders and Governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent Section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.'**

The full monitoring letter from OFSTED is attached to this email for you to read but we wanted to highlight some of the key points, in what is a very positive report acknowledging the effective and ongoing impact that the work of the senior leaders and school staff is having to improve the Junior School for the children.

**"Teaching is improving strongly; very weak teaching has been eradicated."**

We have always started from the point of the children, and what they need. Changes were put in place and we recruited new staff, making clear our expectations in terms of teaching and learning for our children. We have ongoing training and support in place to ensure we all have the most up to date and relevant skills for our children to succeed.

**"Pupils in all year groups are working hard and with enthusiasm."**

The children shared this with the Inspector, and it is as a result of the hard work and commitment of all the staff in the federation, working together.

**"Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are making better progress than was the case at the time of the previous inspection."**

Working together, we have worked as a federation to make sure all staff know the difficulties individuals and groups may face so they can tailor their teaching for this, to ensure a positive learning experience for all.

**"Pupils spoke very enthusiastically about reading and appreciate the considerable investment that has been involved in restocking the library."**

Reading was highlighted as a weakness in the last inspection, and all staff have received training around reading and we have also asked children what books they like to read. The library, where the children choose their reading books, has had a large number of new books and we are still working on developing reading corners at the Junior School. More new books have recently arrived and some more are on order. We even have our first 'reading millionaire' in school and look forward to celebrating more in the future. Our Year 6 outcomes for reading in July 2018 were above the national average.

Whether you are a child in school, parent, carer, member of staff or governor, this is your school. The kind of improvement that OFSTED recognises is only possible when people work effectively together. We are especially proud of how rapidly this improvement has happened and very pleased that there is recognition that the school has been transformed and OFSTED have recognised these improvements and the positive impact it has had on the children and their learning.

I'd also like to draw attention to the significant impact of our school leaders, Mrs Pedlow, Mrs Bell, Miss Yeoman and Mrs Saunders. They have always worked from the basis that previously, things were not good enough for our children in the school, and we are here for the children. A transformation like this requires tremendous dedication, experience and skill. There is always more to do and we are always committed to ensuring we do what is best for the children and the whole school community.

The last year has been a period of significant change for everyone and we appreciate this is not always easy, but it was necessary. We are pleased that OFSTED have recognised the huge improvements and positive developments that have happened and seen that we have taken effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement in order for the school to become judged as 'good' at its next inspection.

We, as school leaders and Governors, would like to thank all of the children for their commitment to the changes; to learning in different ways, to changing systems and to changes in staffing and for their positive attitude towards school and their learning too, as well as to each other. They have shown what excellent learners they are, that they are resilient and able to take on challenges and that they are committed to all aspects of their school life.

We also thank all of the staff who committed to the changes, who recognised that there was work to be done and acted upon advice, training and support to improve the school for the children in such a short timescale.

Finally, we thank our parents and carers for their support during this time and we hope you are as pleased as we are to see the result of this OFSTED monitoring visit.

We look forward to the future and continuing to work together.

Best wishes

Kevin Daines (Chair of Governors)