

St Columb Major ACE Academy

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Headteacher: Marie Taylor



Please ask for
The Academy Office

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Date
Friday 8th February 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you will know, St Columb Major ACE Academy was inspected by Ofsted on 15th and 16th January and we have now received their final report. The full report will be published on the Ofsted website on 11th February; however, we are enclosing a copy of the report so that all parents and carers know the outcome and findings ahead of the formal publication.

The grades that can be awarded during inspections are; Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate. In recent years, the term 'Requires Improvement' has replaced the previous grading of 'Satisfactory' and it is only at the 'Inadequate' judgement that a school enters a formal 'category' of concern, i.e. Special Measures or Serious Weaknesses.

During our inspection, the school was judged 'Requires Improvement' overall, with our Early Years classes and the Personal Development and Welfare provision judged Good. Whilst pleased that the provision for our youngest children and the way that we provide for the personal development and welfare of our children was recognised, we are obviously disappointed with the overall judgement.

We encourage you to read the report thoroughly, as it recognises the 'relentless pursuit of improvement' by senior leaders' and in particular, notes the contribution of our Headteacher since her arrival in September 2017.

Despite the judgement, inspectors found much to praise within the school and had many positive comments to make. Some highlights of the report include:

'Senior leaders have a clear vision to provide the direction required after a period of transition. They articulate high standards and remain resolute to achieving these.'



‘Staff and adults in the Early Years have created a positive and nurturing environment in which children achieve well.’

‘The environment is vibrant and reinforces the values that underpin the school.’

‘The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities that enhances pupils’ activities.’

‘The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is good.’

‘Leaders have used the sports premium effectively to improve participation rates and pupils understanding of their health and fitness.’

‘They recognise the importance of ensuring that all pupils feel valued and included.’

Our safeguarding arrangements were judged to be effective and inspectors acknowledged that there is a vigilance around safeguarding and that practice has evolved to effectively strengthen what we do.

The inspectors commented on seeing ‘green shoots’ during the inspection but that the strategies put in place to tackle historical weaknesses in some areas of teaching had not had long enough to make a sufficient impact.

It is obviously very disappointing for all members of the school community that the inspection has found that the school requires improvement in some areas. We know that St Columb Major ACE Academy is a great school and we know that a good percentage of parents think so too, as demonstrated by the comments made on Parent View. Our school leaders and governors have already taken the areas that Ofsted highlighted for improvement and have begun to work on making the necessary changes. The Ofsted team acknowledged that we had a committed and passionate team that have the capacity and capability to meet the inspectors’ recommendations. In fact, we are already putting plans into action!

There is much to talk about and to do but we want to draw parents’ attention to the section on attendance. It notes that rates of absence are too high and that this was ‘not challenged stringently enough in the past’. If this area is to improve, we are all going to have to work on this together. If children are not in school, they are not having the opportunity to receive the education St Columb Major Academy offers.

Inspectors were also provided with information from some parents about their concerns over the way in which some school staff were treated by parents, especially on social media. This is an area that governors and staff are going to focus on immediately and will lead to changes in the way that the school uses and condones electronic communication.

We have already made changes to the accessibility of teachers through the dojo system. We will keep you posted as decisions are made.

We are organising some meetings and would like to invite you in to discuss the report in more detail and the school's resulting plans to address areas of concerns. We would welcome parental engagement to contribute to the future improvement journey of our school. We intend to hold the following meetings:

Tuesday 26th February

5.00 p.m. Parents / Carers of Early Years pupils

6.30 p.m. Parents / Carers of Year 5 and 6 pupils

Wednesday 27th February

5.00 p.m. Parents / Carers of Year 1 and 2 pupils

6.30 p.m. Parents / Carers of Year 3 and 4 pupils

If you would like to attend a meeting, please complete the slip below. If you are unable to attend but would like to raise a question or make a suggestion, please fill in the slip below.

Ahead of the meetings, if you have any questions please feel free to pop in and see Mrs. Taylor or make an appointment to see our Chair or Vice Chair of Governors through the school office.

Yours faithfully,

Sally Attwell Chair of Governors
St Columb Major Local Advisory Board

Please return to school office

Parent/s or Carers of (Child's name) in (Class)

I / We would like to attend the meeting on 26th February / 27th February (please delete) at 5.00 p.m. / 6.30 p.m. (please delete) and would like to raise the following question/suggestion:

I / We are unable to attend the meeting but would like to raise the following question / suggestion:

Signed Parent / Carer