

A Statement from the Chair and Chief Executive of Learning Today Leading Tomorrow

Rugby Free Secondary School was visited by Ofsted on 14th and 15th May 2019. This was the school's first inspection since opening in September 2016. After a significant delay to the publication of the report, occasioned by factors outside of Trustees' control, we are now able to share the results of the inspection. Prior to this point we have been bound by the confidentiality of the inspection process.

We are disappointed to report that Ofsted has placed the school in Category 4: Inadequate with Serious Weaknesses. There is no disguising the huge disappointment felt by all involved with the school. As a Trust, we have already apologised unreservedly to the parents and carers who have placed their children in our care and to those who have chosen Rugby Free Secondary School for their child from September 2019

We encourage everyone to study the report and are grateful to Ofsted for confirming that they have confidence in Learning Today Leading Tomorrow (the Trust) to bring about the necessary improvements in the school quickly. The significant delay in the publication of the report and the constraints of our temporary accommodation means that we are unable to bring the whole school community together until early September. We have made members of the Senior Leadership Team of the school available to meet with individual parents and carers until the end of term and will be continuing to answer correspondence from parents over the Summer as quickly as we are able. A series of parent/carer meetings will be held in our new purpose-built secondary school in the first week of September and invitations will be sent out to parents and carers shortly.

We have set out below details of the Trust's immediate response to the inspection and the actions taken thus far - actions which started on the day after the inspection.

Recovery plan

The day after the inspection, the Trust took executive control of the school and instructed Brenda Mullen, the Trust's Chief Executive Officer, to assume direct management responsibility for the school. The Trust charged the CEO with developing a recovery plan for the school. This is being developed in collaboration with senior and middle leaders at the school, and with close assistance from Heather Roberts, the former Headteacher of the Outstanding Aston Manor Academy in Birmingham.

Governance

The Trust Board is establishing a Sustainable Improvement Board (SIB) to govern the school. The SIB's task is to enable the school to address the Serious Weaknesses and enable the school to secure an Ofsted category of at least Good at its next inspection. This new body will be chaired by Tom Legge, Vice Chair of Trustees and previously the Chair of the Local Governing Body that took Rugby Free Primary School through its first Ofsted inspection wherein it received a judgement of Good with Outstanding for behaviour, personal development and well-being.

The SIB will work with a new and hugely important Parents' Advisory Board (PAB) to facilitate effective communication with parents/carers during the turn-round period.

Appointment of new Deputy Headteacher

The Trust has appointed Des Shirley as Deputy Headteacher. Mr Shirley was interviewed and appointed shortly after the Ofsted inspection and was the outstanding candidate in the field. The Trust secured an early release from Mr Shirley's previous employer and he joined the school on 1st July with special responsibility for behaviour, student welfare and inclusion. Since his appointment, he has been in school working closely with the CEO, Mrs Roberts and the rest of the leadership team.

Mrs Roberts is an acknowledged expert in implementing effective behaviour policies in schools. Since the inspection, she has been in supporting the leadership of the school in both immediately improving behaviour and in developing a new behaviour system that will be implemented from the start of the new academic year. This will be communicated with parents shortly to ensure everything is understood and in place for September. The impact of the changes since the inspection of been felt in school already with many positive comments from parents and children alike in relation to the improvement of this aspect of school life.

Headteacher

Christine Green, the Headteacher, is currently not in school. Further details have to remain confidential. Mathew Gaynon, Deputy Head is currently deputising for Mrs Green and is being supported by Mr Shirley, Mrs Mullen and Mrs Roberts. The Trust will be making no further comment on this matter until it is resolved.

Behaviour

The Ofsted report was highly critical of levels of behaviour in parts of the school. It appears that there has been a significant and rapid deterioration in behaviour since the turn of the year.

Immediately after the inspection, interviews were conducted with all staff and groups of students to gather a clear picture of the position in school. A significant change resulting from these interviews was the move to the a timetable implemented in the last two weeks of term. This moved from eight forty minute periods to five 60 minute periods in the day. Another significant development was the establishment of a 'positive behaviour task and finish group'. This group has had an immediate impact in school, re-enforcing existing policies that had been allowed to slip or that had not been applied consistently.

In September 2019 we will move into a brand new, purpose built school. We are not underestimating the task ahead of the school both in terms of improving the Ofsted judgement and restoring parents and carers' faith in the school. We would like to thank the parents, carers and children of the school who have been so supportive during what has been a difficult time since the inspection and for the many messages of support since we were able to share the findings with them. The unique community that was built to bring the school into being is as strong as it ever was and will play a major part in the ongoing improvements the Trust will strain every sinew to bring about.

Two months on from the inspection, we are able to see the progress that has been made in this time and this allows us to look to the future with optimism and an absolute resolve to make Rugby Free Secondary School an institution that the whole community can be proud of.