Mandeville Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As you know Mandeville was inspected by Ofsted in February of this year. This inspection was under their new inspection framework. This new approach has a toolkit which outlines a range of standards against which schools are judged. *Please see the note below for more details of these*. I know many of you spoke to the inspectors and gave your positive views of the school very clearly! The report is now available for me to publish so please find it attached. I'm sure you must have been wondering why it has taken so long for the report to be shared with you, and I would like to explain why the report has taken so long to be finalised.

We were extremely well prepared for the inspection and looked forward to showing Ofsted what a wonderful school community we have all built here at Mandeville. The new framework promised to value inclusion (something we are very proud of) and to understand the context of the school when making their judgements. The inspection itself was exhausting but we really did get the sense that the inspectors had a true understanding of our school by the end of the two days. Their feedback to senior leaders and Local School Committee members was extremely positive, balanced, clear and comprehensive. This feedback highlighted our many strengths, particularly in inclusion, and gave some sensible next steps.

However, I received a phone call from Ofsted on the 16th March to say that some of the judgements that the inspectors had given had been changed as a result of an "enhanced quality assurance process" by a panel of inspectors who had not visited the school, met your children or spoken to staff or parents. As you can imagine I was devastated by this call. The revised judgements following the quality assurance were simply not a true reflection of the school we know and love.

After this call, I received the draft report. Although the judgements had been downgraded, the words of the report remained true to the feedback that we received at the end of the inspection and really did show what a fabulous school Mandeville is. The positivity with which the school was described did not seem to have any correlation to the gradings attached to them. We decided to make a formal complaint to Ofsted and so the publication of the report was formally delayed while the complaint was investigated. I am so grateful to the Trust and to the Local School Committee for their incredible support at what was such a very difficult and emotional time.

On Friday 22nd May, just before half term, we received the outcome of Ofsted's investigation. Sadly, our complaints in relation to the revised grades were not upheld. This decision is so disappointing, particularly given our hope that this framework would allow schools like Mandeville to celebrate its strengths by understanding our context of specific circumstances. It is clear that their decisions to downgrade three of our judgements were based largely on our DfE published attendance data, which we know is significantly lower than most other schools. What is even more disappointing is that the report acknowledges that the school "goes above and beyond to promote regular attendance and works closely with parents and pupils to reinforce its importance".

Having said all of this, I remain exceptionally proud of our school. If you look at the data section at the end of the report, you can see that our children achieve above all national measures at the end of Key Stage 2, showing that Mandeville children achieve well, not just academically but they are well rounded human beings who are well prepared for their future lives.

Our initial judgements from the on-site inspectors judged us to have achieved the "Exceptional" standard for inclusion. This is the highest grading possible and has been awarded to only a few schools in the country. Three more areas of inspection were graded as "Strong" and three as "Expected". **The words in the report reflect these initial gradings so I urge you to focus on the wonderful words rather than the mismatched, changed gradings. If you read just one section, please focus on 'What it is like to be a child at Mandeville'.**

Even after the downgraded judgements, there is no aspect of Mandeville's work that falls short the Government's high expectations, but I remain disappointed that it does not reflect our strengths.

Mandeville's Ofsted report card:

	Initial on-site judgement	**Final judgement**
Inclusion	Exceptional	Strong
Personal Development and wellbeing	Strong	Strong
Attendance and behaviour	Strong	Expected
Leadership and Governance	Strong	Expected
Achievement	Expected	Expected
Curriculum and Teaching	Expected	Expected
Early Years	Expected	Expected

I explained the new framework judgement grading scale in a newsletter back in February, but for clarity have copied it here:

The New 5-Point Grading Scale
Previously, schools were judged on a 4-point scale. This has been replaced by a more nuanced 5-point scale used for each section of the report card.

1. ***Exceptional =*** *The highest standard; practice is among the best in the country.*
2. ***Strong Standard =*** *High-quality, consistent, and effective practice.*
3. ***Expected Standard* =*** *The school is doing exactly what it should (the new benchmark).*
4. ***Needs Attention =*** *Not yet at the expected level but leaders know how to fix it.*
5. ***Urgent Improvement =*** *Serious concerns that need to be addressed immediately.*

***Note:** "Expected Standard" is now considered a high benchmark, meaning the school is fully meeting all of its legal and educational duties and is doing everything that the Government expects a school to do.*

In due course, you will receive further communication about this report from the Local School Committee and from the Trust, but I felt it important that the explanation for the delayed report comes directly from me as Head Teacher.

With very best wishes,

Cathy Longhurst