



Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to the new school year, the children have settled in so wonderfully and it has been a joy to see them happy and eager to get started with their classroom activities.

We write to you with some important updates for the school. After a turbulent and somewhat uncertain past two years, we want to thank you for your unwavering support of our school. We were extremely pleased that on the Ofsted ParentView questionnaire from the last week of term that 100% of our parents said they would recommend the school. This is clear indication of the strength of our partnership in your child's education. The written comments provided by yourselves are not published and openly available for public view, however some of them were shared to us at the feedback meeting after the monitoring inspection and they were so heart-warming to hear. Comments such as the school is 'brave and unique' and 'the children are at the heart of everything we do' really do encapsulate all we hope to be and more.

Firstly, we are now at a point where we can write to you about the outcomes of the Ofsted monitoring visit which took place on the last week of the summer term. As you know from previous meetings and updates, due to the position of the school being placed in a category of concern in March 2022, monitoring visits are put in place to ensure that rapid improvements are being made. The purpose of the monitoring inspection in July was to ensure progress had been made against the 8 areas listed within the report from the inspection on March 10th and 11th 2022. As discussed with you at the meetings, this means the school cannot be regraded at this point and this will be the case until we have a Graded Inspection (previously known as a full Section 5 inspection). The wording on the published Ofsted report from July 2023 states that we are still in category and I understand that the first page may not read as well as you'd like however all schools in a category, during a monitoring visit, are **only** provided with one of the two overarching judgement statements these are either-

- *[The school] remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the category of concern to be removed.*

or

- *[The school] remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Leaders have made insufficient progress to improve the school.*

We are pleased to state that we sit comfortably in the first judgement and huge amounts of progress has been made.

I have attached a table at the bottom of this letter that clearly shows the areas of development and the progress made against each area in a 'where we were' and 'where are we now' format which I believe makes it a little clearer to read and actually demonstrates the many positive remarks made in the report about the school as it is now.

I hope that on reading the accompanying table, that you are also pleased with the outcome of the report. It clearly outlines that a huge amount of hard work and dedication by all members of the school community over the last 18 months, has resulted in a much more positive picture for the school going forwards. As ever, there are always areas for development and we are very much only at the start of our journey, with many more developments and actions to be taken to be the 'best that we can be' but we are happy with what was reported back to us, both at the feedback meeting and within the published report.

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You will see on the attached document that I have also included the areas that we have been told we now need to improve on, in order to help remove the category of concern. Many of these are due to needing more opportunity to demonstrate learning over time or being able to demonstrate children's retention of knowledge over time, both of which we are confident that we can achieve given a longer period of time delivering the hybrid flexi model. The points highlighted within the last column of the table are already areas that we had identified ourselves and are already cited within our school development plan for 2023-2024. We are confident that we can achieve all target areas.

Please be reminded that currently the report is only shared with parents/carers and it will not become 'live' on the Ofsted website until 28th September. We ask that you do not share/discuss this with anyone outside of our school community until this is published on the website.

Secondly, we are extremely pleased to announce that we have been successful in securing a multi academy trust to take us forward as a school. It gives me great pleasure to tell you that we will be joining the Chester Diocesan Academies Trust. We are extremely pleased that we are going to be part of CDAT as their vision and values are completely in line with our own; rooted in Christian values, CDAT is committed to:

- Valuing the uniqueness of every child
- Aspiring to excellence
- Being a nurturing learning community for all

Children are at the heart of CDAT. They want each individual to develop knowledge, skills, understanding and wisdom, underpinned by values based on principles that are important to people of all faiths and no faith.

As a Trust, their aim is to ensure that all of our pupils are able to benefit from and enjoy 'life in all its fullness' which has been the focus of all the work we do here at Huxley. We are very excited to be joining a network of schools with the same ethos and values as ourselves. CDAT embrace each school's uniqueness and fully support Huxley's hybrid model of flexi and full time education.

We would like to invite you to a parents meeting to discuss both the Ofsted report and the move to CDAT on Thursday 28th September at 3.30pm. Sports club will be on that afternoon so your children will have child care during the meeting.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Gourley
Headteacher

Gail Webb
Chair of IEB

Please see table below-

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Ofsted March 2022 and July 2023 outcomes improvements made

Where we were... (areas for improvement from Report March 2022)	Where we are now... (response to these actions July 2023) Please note- This contains the whole report statements- any outside the areas of development are listed below the table	Next steps listed within report
<p><i>The curriculums for subjects other than English and mathematics lack substance. Leaders have not thought about what pupils need to learn and the order in which this should be taught. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, experience disconnected activities that do not build their learning over time. Leaders must ensure that they design and implement subject curriculums that enable pupils to gain the knowledge that they need to achieve success.</i></p>	<p>Following the previous inspection, you acted decisively to address the considerable weaknesses in the curriculum.</p> <p>You have meticulously designed the overall curriculum to take into account the unique context of pupils at the school. This has given much needed structure and purpose to pupils' academic diet. Pupils who are flexi-schooled access the same curriculum as those who attend school full-time. Significantly, pupils who attend school every day no longer tread water on those days that the other pupils are not in school.</p> <p>You have acted to strengthen pupils' love of reading. Pupils now access a wide range of high-quality reading materials linked to an ambitious English curriculum. They read to adults regularly and enjoy making reading recommendations to each other. You have created enticing reading spaces where pupils and their parents share books together. This includes the well-stocked and welcoming reading caravan. Pupils said that they enjoy reading. For some, reading calms them down and meets their emotional needs.</p>	
<p><i>Teachers lack the subject knowledge that they need to teach the national curriculum. They are ill equipped to design learning for pupils of different ages in their classes. This means that pupils do not build on their learning over time. Leaders must ensure that teachers are supported to improve their knowledge of different subjects. Leaders must also ensure that the curriculum enables teachers to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes.</i></p>	<p>You have further set about ensuring that the curriculum is suitably broad and ambitious. Pupils now benefit from learning the full complement of national curriculum subjects. You have made sure that teachers have received sufficient guidance to deliver the curriculum well.</p> <p>This has been enhanced through focused training and support from the local authority. Consequently, teachers now have the subject knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum confidently. However, the curriculum is still at an early stage of being put in place. Pupils have not developed a rich body of knowledge across all subjects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum is still at an early stage of being put in place. <i>(Cycle A of 2 years cycle completed)</i> • Pupils need to develop a rich body of knowledge across all subjects <i>(this will be achieved given further time- many pupils still very new to formal education)</i>



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<p>The assessment strategies that teachers use for most subjects are ineffective. This is because teachers are uncertain what they should be checking. As a result, they are unsure about what pupils know and remember. Leaders must make sure that, alongside their work to improve the curriculum, they pay equal attention to how pupils' learning will be assessed. In addition, leaders must ensure that staff are suitably trained to check pupils' learning and adapt their teaching so that pupils gain fluency and accuracy in their knowledge and understanding.</p>	<p>Alongside improvements to the curriculum, you have developed staff's understanding of how to check and build on pupils' prior learning. This is most evident in mathematics. Here staff know how to adapt their delivery of the curriculum so that pupils gain fluency and accuracy over time. In other subjects, it is less clear how staff make effective use of assessment information to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they should. That said, pupils are beginning to benefit from the new curriculum. They can confidently discuss the broad knowledge that they have gained recently. However, their recall of previous learning lacks sufficient depth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to make effective use of assessment information to address gaps in pupils' knowledge • Pupils need to be able to build on their previous knowledge • Recall of previous learning lacks sufficient depth <i>(Actioned- already forma part of school development plan 23-24)</i>
<p>There is no curriculum of any real worth for children in early years. As a result, they do not gain the essential foundations for later learning. They are not well prepared for Year 1. Leaders must ensure that they build a suitable curriculum that matches the minimum expectations for learning and development, as set out in the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage.</p>	<p>You have focused on improving the curriculum for children in the early years. This includes redesigning the learning environment to better meet children's developmental needs. You have identified the important content of the early years curriculum. You have also ensured that the key stage 1 and 2 curriculums build well from the early years. This means that children in the early years now gain the knowledge and understanding that they need to succeed in their future learning. However, your plans for improvement have been hampered to some degree by instability in staffing. You are in the process of recruiting staff to further strengthen provision in the Reception Year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure staffing and approach is needed to strengthen provision in Reception <i>(Already actioned for Autumn 23-Qualified HLTA is being employed to support the provision for Acorns)</i>
<p>Those pupils who attend school full time are disadvantaged. Too little account is taken of their learning on the two days each week when the flexi-school curriculum is not in operation. This impacts on their achievement. Leaders must review the curriculum offer that they provide for pupils who are in class every day of the week so that these pupils do not waste valuable learning time</p>	<p>Pupils who are flexi-schooled access the same curriculum as those who attend school full-time. Significantly, pupils who attend school every day no longer tread water on those days that the other pupils are not in school.</p>	



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<p>Governance is ineffective. Governors do not know their core duties or fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Their actions have hindered the school's progress and contributed to the poor quality of education that pupils receive. Urgent action must be taken to ensure that governors gain an understanding of their role and build bridges with leaders and staff so that a united leadership team works together to move the school forward.</p>	<p>Following the previous inspection, the local authority acted swiftly to replace the governing body. An IEB was quickly formed. The IEB comprises of members with a broad and suitable range of experience and expertise. They ensure that statutory duties are fulfilled, including in relation to safeguarding. Importantly, the appointment of the IEB, coupled with the external support from the local authority, means that your efforts to move the school forward have gathered momentum.</p> <p>Members of the IEB use their expertise to maintain a sharp focus on your actions to improve the school. They provide appropriate challenge and support to you and other staff. The IEB has been pivotal in securing the future stability of the school through driving the process of academisation forward. This process has gained traction and is now at an advanced stage.</p>	
<p>The capacity to improve the school is poor. Almost every aspect of school life lies with the headteacher. This has slowed down the pace of change and led to considerable shortcomings in the school's provision. Leaders must ensure that other staff in the school have the knowledge, expertise and confidence to shoulder some of the load and contribute towards the school's recovery.</p>	<p>There have been changes to staffing since the previous inspection. For example, a new teacher has joined the school. A special educational needs coordinator now works at the school for one day each week. This appointment has helped to support the improvements in the quality of education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).</p> <p>At the time of the previous inspection, weaknesses in wider leadership capacity were a barrier to improvement. In response, you have put appropriate leadership arrangements in place. For instance, you have appointed leaders for each curriculum area. You have made effective use of support from the local authority to provide these leaders with appropriate training and development opportunities. Subject leaders now have a better understanding of their roles. They are starting to take more ownership of their areas of responsibility. This is helping to drive forward the improvements needed to the curriculum. However, more remains to be done to develop new leaders' oversight of how well pupils are learning in their areas of responsibility.</p> <p>You have sought specialist advice and guidance to review and improve the provision for pupils with SEND. For example, you have drawn on the expertise of members of the IEB to commission a SEND audit. This has provided clear actions for further improvement. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure the early identification of pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND receive focused, timely and effective support. This helps these pupils to access the curriculum alongside their classmates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New leaders' (<i>this refers to our class teachers in their subject leaders role</i>) to demonstrate oversight of how well pupils are learning in their areas of responsibility



Additional comments made within the report-

- You have worked closely with members of the IEB and staff to develop a clear vision for the school. Staff fully understand the part that they will play towards realising this vision. You have made sure that all members of the school community, including parents and carers, are fully on board. Those parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View would not hesitate to recommend the school to others. They appreciate all that you and the staff do to meet their children's academic and wider needs.
- Despite the significant changes that you have had to make, including raising expectations of how well pupils should achieve, staff morale is high. They value your consideration of their workload and well-being.

Please note this table includes all statements from within the report- I have just placed them against the areas from development listed in the previous report so to help you make a direct comparison. I hope this helps.