

February 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

As you may well be aware, Limehurst was the subject of an Ofsted Unannounced Behaviour Inspection on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January. The monitoring letter has now been published and is available to view on the school and Ofsted websites.

The most important thing to say about the letter is that it does not alter the judgements made about the school in its last inspection in May 2013. Limehurst Academy is still a good school, and it is still considered to be outstanding for behaviour and safety. If the inspector had serious concerns about whether this was still the case, she had the power to order an immediate full inspection of the school, but she did not deem that necessary.

Overall, the monitoring letter contains almost twice as many positive statements than negative. For instance, we are delighted that students feel bullying is very rare and effectively dealt with. In giving her feedback to governors at the end of the inspection, the inspector was keen to point out that leadership of behaviour, and overall, was a real strength of the school. We have no hesitation in saying that Limehurst remains a positive, forward-looking, vibrant school.

However, her letter makes some helpful recommendations for the school in how to improve even further, and we are already working extremely hard in order to do this. The first is about attendance of students. School attendance in this academic year is already higher than in previous years, but we must continue to do more, particularly for specific groups such as White British girls. We are particularly concerned about those students whose attendance drops below 95%, which is equivalent to one day every four school weeks, and ask for your support in ensuring your child's attendance remains well above this figure. The link between attendance and achievement is well proven, and poor attendance can often lead to poor achievement.

The second recommendation is about how consistently the school's behaviour policy is applied. We are very proud of our students' attitudes to learning, and do not recognise some of the comments the inspector makes in her letter. However, we are never complacent about behaviour, and will seek to give extra emphasis to this over the coming weeks and beyond. There has already been additional training for all staff, and we are holding extra assemblies to remind students of their responsibilities. We would particularly like to draw your attention to two of the things that concerned the inspector the most: uniform and punctuality.

The school has a clear uniform policy, which we work exceptionally hard to enforce and can be read on the school website, and the vast majority of our students are proud to wear the uniform. Please support us by ensuring that your child is in black school shoes (not trainers), and is wearing a tie and school blazer, jumper or cardigan when they leave home in the morning. We intend to be increasingly vigilant about students who do not comply with the uniform policy.

Too many of our students are arriving late to school. Students should be in their form rooms for morning registration at 8.45am, which is when the school gates are locked. We accept that there is sometimes an 'exceptional' reason for lateness, but there really is no excuse for students to regularly arrive after this time. There are already consequences for students who arrive late, and we are introducing some more severe consequences for those who regularly do not get to school on time.

The final recommendation the inspector makes is around the tracking system for behaviour despite the fact that, earlier in her letter, she acknowledges that the school has recently done this. We feel sure that any issues around this will be quickly resolved.

If you have any queries, please address them to us at [governors@limehurst.org.uk](mailto:governors@limehurst.org.uk) and we will respond to you. Alternatively, we are going to arrange a series of sessions where parents can come in and meet governors, the headteacher and the senior leadership team, and see the school 'at work' during a normal school day. We are always proud to show visitors around the school, and I am sure you will be impressed. **The first of these sessions is on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March at 10.00am.** If you intend to come along, please let the school office know on 01509 263444 so we can cater for the right number of visitors.

Yours faithfully



Lisa Kilner  
Chair of Governors



Jonathan Mellor  
Headteacher