

CABINET – 14 MARCH 2019

PQ 17/19 - Written Question from Caroline Woodgate, Freshwater to the Cabinet Member for Childrens Services, Education and Skills

QUESTION

“Regarding the proposed closure of All Saints School; Why has the Ofsted information for All Saints CE been misquoted and misrepresented within the proposal?”

RESPONSE

“We do not believe that it has been misquoted or misrepresented. All Ofsted reports are in the public domain, so members of the public can view for themselves.”

“Paragraph 18 in the report describes the overall performance of the school as judged by Ofsted.

“All Saints’ has not been good since being created following reorganisation. It was rated as RI in 2013, 2015, and 2017. Any improvements in the school have not been good enough as illustrated by the July 2018 monitoring visit, in which Ofsted stated that the school was “not taking effective action”.

Ofsted’s own website shows that the 2017 inspection judged the school as RI. As does the inspection in 2015. As does the inspection in 2013. The reorganisation of the schools concluded in September 2012.

The website also shows that the school received an HMI monitoring visit in June 2013 following on from the March 2013 inspection. This visit was early in the school’s two-year improvement journey. It reviewed the school’s plan, which it judged to be good. It looked at governance through discussions with leaders and some governors. Whilst it made a positive comment about them, this was tempered by the governing body failing to have undertaken the review of governance identified in the 2013 Ofsted inspection. It raised concerns about lesson observations. However, the purpose of these visits is not to judge the overall quality, but to judge progress. The two are different. It is perfectly possible to make good progress from a low baseline but not yet be good.

This monitoring was carried out within a term. It judged the school to be taking effective action. However, in this timescale the school would not have been a good school. The matters raised in the report support this view.

In spite of this “effective action” judgement after 3 months, the school was still judged to again be RI in March 2015.

A monitoring visit is of a different nature to an in-depth inspection. A full section 5 inspection has a much deeper and broader evidence base. Therefore, judgements about

school performance are more securely made on the basis of a full inspection rather than a short monitoring visit.

The visit was not referenced as it does not provide evidence of the school's overall quality. It is worth pointing out that the 2007 report that found the school to be satisfactory and the 2010 report that also found the school to be satisfactory have not been mentioned in the report. The last time that this school has been judged anything other than RI or satisfactory was 18 years ago in 2001. The report just looks at performance following reorganisation. A wider timescale would raise wider concerns about performance.

Whilst a number of the reports from 2013 onwards contain positive comments, they also contain other negative ones. And whilst there are areas of strength in the school, there are also areas of weakness which balance them out. What is clear from the reports is that areas of strength have not necessarily been maintained from inspection to inspection. In one report the work of leaders is praised, in the next it points out significant weaknesses in this area. And whatever Ofsted might say about component parts, the sum total of all these parts has been a school that overall has been judged to require improvement consistently since 2013.

In the report, we do draw upon the HMI monitoring report from July 2018 as it is the most recent report of Ofsted activity in the school. We draw upon this source for other schools as well in the report, where it is the most recent piece of Ofsted work. The report accurately identifies the overall judgement made by HMI that the school is not taking effective action. This means that the improvement that have been made have not been good enough. The HMI letter of visit identifies a number of examples of this: the school's monitoring processes, expectations around the pace of change, teaching that is not sharply enough focussed on pupils making rapid progress, leaders' oversight of teaching. It does, however, balance this out with comments about how there is now better progress and as a result standard at the end of KS1 and in Y1. Also pupils with additional needs are now making better progress. But this visit has been made over a year on from the May 2017 inspection and it's the inspector's view that the school simply has not done enough."