

# Edukos Trust

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Mr Chris Huscroft  
Chief Executive Officer

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Dear Parents and Carer

As we emerge from the past two years of disruption, I wanted to share with you the picture of the educational landscape, most specifically in relation to Ofsted and their expectations of schools.

During the pandemic, Ofsted suspended routine inspections of all schools. Now that things have begun to return to some relative normality, Ofsted have resumed routine inspections of schools. It was during this period that Ofsted reviewed their School Inspection Handbook (the framework that they use to inspect all schools in England). With this review, came raised expectations about what schools are required to do in order to meet the judgements set out in their handbook. Most notably, around the quality of education. In this section of the handbook, it specifies what inspectors will expect to see about the curriculum, how it is delivered and the outcomes it has for children. For all schools across the country this has initiated huge reviews of their planned curriculum, adaptations having to be made and for the training and delivery methods to be updated. This change couldn't happen overnight.

The expectations for schools to achieve a grading, which they may have previously been given, is now therefore significantly harder to achieve. Many schools across the country, who having been re-inspected under the new framework, have received a lower grade than in their previous inspection. It has been widely publicised that Ofsted knew this would happen and indeed they reflected this in their Inspection Handbook. In fact, Chris Russell, National Director of Education for Ofsted was quoted as saying

“Some ‘outstanding’ schools which have improved since their last inspection may still be downgraded because the bar has been raised under the latest Ofsted inspection framework.”

Furthermore, he said if a previously ‘outstanding’ school receives a ‘good’ grade it “doesn’t mean that the school has declined in recent years, in fact the opposite can be the case” ([Schools Week, 9th November 2021](#))

It is clear from Ofsted communication that they expect there will be fewer school designated as outstanding, than under previous inspection frameworks. Ofsted now say that schools should be performing exceptionally and that this should be consistent and secure across the whole school. At the time of writing to you, of the last 100 published reports for primary schools, just 2 had been judged as ‘outstanding’. 2% is a very small number and demonstrates how significantly challenging it is to now reach this standard.

Therefore, I wanted to write to you so that I can explain the impact that this will have on our schools when their next inspection takes place. The significant amount of work that was needed to ensure the curriculum in each of our schools would meet the exacting requirements of Ofsted has taken leaders time and energy. Our schools are moving towards or are already in a strong position with regards to having a clear vision or intent for their curriculum. In addition to this, they are now working hard to ensure that the implementation is strong and most importantly consistent across the school.

What is very clear to the leaders in our schools, is that they are on a journey. The schools are most certainly making adjustments to their curriculum and therefore the quality of education for our children is of the highest standard. However, what we also know is, even though these adaptations are happening, it will almost certainly mean a change in the status of some Ofsted ratings in our schools. This does not mean that the school has declined. As you will see from the quotation above (and the article if you read it) the school will most likely have improved but the requirements of the new inspection framework may suggest a decline, which is not necessarily the case.

As CEO, along with the Board of Trustees, we felt it was important to manage the expectations of you, our parent body, in relation to this matter. By being open and transparent about this, should the grading of a school which your child attends change, we hope that you will continue to support the school and its community in the same way that you have always done and please remember, the schools are on a journey and a lower grading does not always mean a decline!

Of course, as ever we strive to be the best in all our schools; we will constantly be looking towards achieving an outstanding judgement whilst also being realistic about what is possible within the context of each school.

Thank you for your continuing support, now and in the future.

Yours sincerely



Chris Huscroft  
CEO