

Sleights Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School
Ingham Close
Sleights
Whitby
North Yorkshire
YO22 5DN



Working together to be happy; to flourish; to succeed through our Christian Values of perseverance, respect and trust.

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Headteacher: Scott Grason

14th December 2018

Dear families,

As you may know, children in Year 6 and Year 2 complete SATs assessments during May each year. The children complete a range of tests that focus on reading, mathematics, grammar and spelling. The results of these assessments are used in a number of ways. For example, the Department for Education and Ofsted study the assessment results carefully and use these to make decisions about a school's performance.

We are sharing this information with you, as this week, the league table for primary school performance was released. These tables can be interpreted and read in many ways, with some people drawing conclusions or making headlines about numbers on a page and not a whole school story.

Despite the hard work and efforts of children and staff, some of the results from last year were below the national floor standard. This means that not enough children reached the expected standards, or made the progress needed across their time in Key Stage 2. It is important to note that Year 6 results form part of a wider picture that looks at how well this group of children performed across Year 3, 4 and 5. Indeed, some of the conversations I had with Miss Spencer when I took over as Headteacher at Sleights were about the Year 6 cohort and how they could be best supported.

It is also worth noting that only ten children in Year 6 last year completed the SATs. This means that the results (recorded in percentages) should be viewed with caution when comparing with other, much larger, schools. It is very easy to make a conclusion about how well one group did compared to another looking at percentages, but not the size of the group actually taking the test.

On the Whitby area league tables, a number of school results do not appear, as they have recently converted to an academy.

This **one** set of results does not define our children, our school and should not overshadow our many successes. For example, during their time in Year 6, the children had intensive support to ensure they made outstanding progress in the time they had left at Sleights. Lots was also done to address identified issues or concerns and, as many of you know, a great body of work and improvements have been undertaken since September 2017. This includes:

- Significant improvements in the school's provision for Special Educational Needs.
- Significantly increasing the opportunities for staff development and training across school.
- Overhauling approaches to teaching and learning.
- Refocusing our learning environment and approaches to supporting all children in the classroom.
- Developing a more robust system to track children's progress across school.
- Working hard to create strong and successful partnerships with all of school families.

These are a handful of the many actions that have been undertaken at Sleights and are demonstrating a positive impact in school.

The Diocese of York has recently described some of the school's recent work as "exemplary" and is being case studied across the whole Diocese. Sleights was also celebrated at a national Church of England conference recently.

North Yorkshire advisors also recognise the school's commitment and improvements. Recent visitors from the school advisor validates that good progress is being made.

Please be assured that ensuring this does not happen again is **the** top priority for everyone at Sleights. Already since coming back to school in September, we have put in place a range of actions to address the results from last year and make sure our children are making excellent progress across the whole school. This has included:

- Putting in place a new spelling scheme across school.
- Implementing a new writing approach, including teaching grammar and punctuation effectively.
- Staff training and support in relation to achieving the best outcomes in the Year 6 assessments.
- Improvements to reading.

I do also want to mention that, by contrast, our Year 2 children's results were incredibly positive, placing us in the top 25% of schools across North Yorkshire. The outcomes for our children in Reception were also above the national average. We are, undoubtedly, very pleased about this!

We are immensely proud of each and every child at Sleights. Since September 2017, we have renewed our vision and instilled a commitment that every child, regardless of background or ability will be successful. We know that every child's success is different.

Nowhere in the SATs results does it detail the individual strengths, talents and skills of our wonderful children and families. Nor do the results provide an opportunity to showcase the outstanding progress that the group made since starting Year 6 in September 2017. We think this is unfair.

We have chosen to share these details with you, as we feel that our school families deserve to be given full and accurate information about results and headlines that might be seen on the internet, or in the press. I hope this information helps to provide all families with some background and understanding. We are very successful school and promote and nurture many things that a test result will not show. It is this that makes Sleights such a special school. I think that having seen so many happy children and families in Church this week, I am not alone in thinking this.

If you would like to discuss any of the information with me further, please do not hesitate to catch me on the gate to arrange an appointment, or contact Mrs Stubbs in the office.

Thank you for your ongoing and continued support.

Scott Grason
Proud Headteacher

Gemma Kellerman
Chair of Governors