



Feedback from the Parent Governor discussion – Building a vision for Downs Way.

Thank you to the four parents who were able to come to our meeting on the 24th March. Please find below notes from the event. If parents unable to attend would like to comment on what their vision for Downs Way includes please contact the chair of governors via the school office and or send an email for the attention of Susan Gibbin to office@downs-way.surrey.sch.uk.

The evening was organised in two parts.

Part 1 - a brief presentation (See Annex below) which provided some context and information about the current situation of the school. In particular parents were given a brief review of the current situation including:

- Confirmation of the ongoing partnership with St Marys
- An overview of governors drive for ongoing self-evaluation and improvement – not satisfied with Good
- An overview of feedback from the local community around the schools leadership as well as Ofsted and in doing so to recognise the impact the Headteacher and senior leaders have had in moving the school forward.

It was made clear that **the evening was not about deciding which type of state school the community want Downs way to be but about how governors can work with parents to make sure whatever structure we have the children will continue to flourish.** Examples of outstanding schools can be seen in all types of state school and that our priority is to secure outstanding teachers and leaders who have the drive and passion to make sure that our children flourish.

We also explored briefly the job of the Governing body. Whilst recognising that the governors are responsible for making the final decision around the most appropriate direction for the school they need to do so in an environment where they communicate effectively with parents and the wider school community. Only by doing so can we accurately understand your thoughts and opinions.

Part 2 – the main focus of the evening was a chance for parents and governors to talk in small groups and in doing so to capture their vision for the school. In doing so each group was asked to consider the characteristics they thought were really important for our school. The table below summarises the responses across the four key areas:

Summary response	Key characteristics for Downs way
<p>Leadership and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Improvements in teaching learning and behaviour • Children involved in leadership • Engagement of stakeholders • Views of stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven to strive for a balance in nurture and support and educational achievement • Evidence of open communication, good listeners and proactive in response • Clear who governors are and what they do offering regular opportunities to hear parent views • School equipped well with resources to support teaching and learning • Leaders make sure the environment is safe whilst offering children opportunities to experience risk in a supervised environment (ponds, trip) • Partnerships evident with other schools to share skills and resources, benchmark progress • Effective parental engagement evidenced by helping in school, on trips, attendance at social events • All children have the opportunity to lead and contribute to decision making (e.g. school council)
<p>Behaviour and safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude to learning • Respectfulness • Expectations and behaviour • Safety • Equality and discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children positive and excited to learn ‘ hands in the air’ • Children seek opportunities to get better at what they do • Excellent playground supervision • Children seen to support each other, no child’s behaviour disadvantages another • Children want to go to school • Children able to build relationships and ensure resilience for life in the future • Everyone is respected for who they are - children, parents and staff
<p>Pupil achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results for all • Perception by stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children achieve well (always above average)– boys and girls / pupil premium / SEN / gifted and talented • Results mean that children move to their next school well equipped to manage new experiences • Pupils achieve with a smile
<p>Teaching and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurture and care alongside stretching a child to their potential • Clear positive feedback to all children

Summary response	Key characteristics for Downs way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities • Engagement and motivation • Expertise • Independent learners • Provision to maximise learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle and easy transition between stages of school life • Open attitude to sharing good practice and learning from each other as well as from other schools • Empowering with energy and enthusiasm ‘we are going to have a great day’ • Teaching extends out of the classroom – visits / outdoor learning / at home / community events • Diversity in approach meeting the needs of the individual child – no one single model

As well as identifying key characteristics to keep in mind when planning for the school there was some helpful feedback which we can use in our ongoing self-evaluation.

This included our approach to providing opportunities for all parents to engage with the life of the school supporting their children’s learning in class on trips and through social activities. We will also be reviewing the opportunities parents have to get to know and meet governors, know what we do and how they can help shape the future of the school. This event should be seen as the start of a journey we are all on together to improve Downs Way.

Susan Gibbin
Chair of Governors, Downs Way

The current situation

- Partnership with St Marys
- Downs Way Self evaluation
 - Including Pupil / Parent / Staff questionnaire results
- External evaluation - Ofsted

External views

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is good because effective teaching ensures that most pupils currently in the school make good progress in all subjects.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress well and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 are higher than those found in most other schools.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and attain high results at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is interesting and enjoyed by pupils. Teachers give pupils clear and helpful advice about how to improve their work.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning and pride in their work and achievements. They behave well towards one another.
- The school keeps pupils safe and looks after them well. Pupils are taught how to keep safe in different situations, including when using the internet.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by other leaders and governors, has raised the school's expectations of its pupils. Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have both improved as a result.
- Effective leadership and governance have ensured that all the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been met.

Types of state school

<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/overview>

- **Community schools**, controlled by the local council and not influenced by business or religious groups
- **Faith schools**, can be different kinds of schools, eg voluntary aided schools, free schools, academies etc, but are associated with a particular religion.
- **Foundation schools**, with more freedom to change the way they do things than community schools
- **Academies**, run by a governing body, independent from the local council - they can follow a different curriculum
- **Free schools**, funded by the government but aren't run by the local council. They have more control over how they do things.

*Schools are only as good as their
teachers and leaders*

Role of the Governing Body

- Communicate effectively with the school community
- Accurately understand the thoughts and opinions of the community
- Make the decisions regarding an appropriate direction for the school

Your vision!

Leadership and management

Behaviour

Achievement

Teaching and learning