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**Holly Park Achievement and League Tables**

Dear Parents,

This week you may have seen some league tables published in the Evening Standard. Parents should be aware that the information published here emphasises only one measure of achievement (attainment) and not the most important measure of achievement used by schools, the Local Authority, Ofsted, the DFE etc (progress)

I wrote to parents about achievement at Holly Park in my initial letter to you all at the start of the year – this data was based on cohorts in July 2018.

My letter said:

* The reception profile – assessing children at the end of reception was above National and Barnet
* The Y1 phonics check was our highest ever and well above National and Barnet
* KS1 results (Y2): reading results were above National at expected level and greater depth.
* Writing results were in line with National at the expected level
* Maths results were just above National at the expected level.
* KS2 results (Y6): reading results were just below national at expected and in line with national at greater depth. However progress was significantly better than National
* Writing results were below national at expected and just below at greater depth. However progress was just above national and significantly improved on the previous year.
* Maths results were below national at expected and just below at greater depth. However progress was just above National.

As always we continually look to see how we can make improvements and tweaks we can make to improve our results.

Parents should view league tables with caution as this is a very inaccurate way of comparing schools. I would never rate my son’s school based on a league table. When I do the secondary transfer meeting for our Y5 parents as they begin to think of secondary schools for their children, I remind them NOT to make their choices based on any league tables but to make their choices on a wealth of information about the school as a whole including the most recent Ofsted report.

These figures in league tables are based on attainment only - and schools now really don't use this kind of data to measure success – it’s very confusing for parents - and not helpful that they are published in this way.

The league tables are based on one group of 60 children in a school. Every cohort of children is different

The particular cohort of children at Holly Park who left Y6 last year, were as a group, our lowest attaining cohort for several years on entry to the school - at the end of KS1 and also at end of KS2 - so we knew their attainment results as a collective would be low – this was not a surprise to us.

What this league table does not show you is the progress measures - how children progress from their starting points  (which is now what **all** Local authorities and Ofsted are interested in) This measure shows what the value added by the school is. If we were in a table for progress measures - you would see Reading progress for this cohort - well above national, writing just above national and also maths just above national. This data is in fact reported by the BBC this week, including a very different table on the Government website – which you may want to look at: https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=phase&region=302&geographic=la&phase=primary

Every cohort is different and every child is different. Individual parents in the Y6 cohort last year were very pleased with their own child's individual results because they were most obviously concerned with the progress their own child had made since joining the school and how well they had attained individually.

Schools, DFE, Ofsted etc don't really compare schools within a Local Authority as the areas in a Local Authority are very different - they compare schools against the national figures - as this is a wider group.

Ofsted - of course - were well aware of this data when they came to us in November and you can see from the outcomes section of the report that they were very happy with outcomes at the school:

* Pupils achieve well from their starting points on entry to the school, which are generally in line with those expected for their age.
* Pupils’ work in books, work seen in lessons and the school’s own detailed assessment information confirm that they make good progress overall.
* Pupils make good progress overall in developing reading skills. Most pupils read widely at home and at school. Younger pupils in key stage 1 are eager to read, and use their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils have a developed fluency and understanding of what they are reading. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were skilled in inferring meaning from a book that was new to them.
* In 2018, provisional results show that pupils’ attainment at the end of key stage 2 was above the national average. The progress made in reading and mathematics was stronger than in writing.
* At the end of key stage 1 in 2018, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading and mathematics were above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing was in line with the national average.
* In 2018, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who met the expected standard in the phonics screening check was well above the national average.
* Disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress than in the past because pupil premium funding is spent wisely on providing a range of additional support for pupils’ learning, as well as giving them access to extra-curricular activities.
* Pupils with SEND make good progress as a result of the targeted support they receive. This shows the school’s commitment to provide equal opportunities for all pupils to access all it has to offer.

As well as our Ofsted inspection, we also had a Local Authority inspector in to visit us to discuss our achievement data at the beginning of December (as all schools do) and again he was very happy with the data and rated the school as a ‘very strong good’ based on that data.

If you would like a more accurate picture of data at the school you might like to visit the following website

[https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools®ion=302&la-name=Barnet&geographic=la&for=primary&page=1](https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools%C2%AEion=302&la-name=Barnet&geographic=la&for=primary&page=1)

Of course the data from league tables is already so out of date now. As school leaders we have analysed that data to the nth degree to understand what it tells us about our school. Ofsted praised how well the school leaders analyse data to help improve teaching and learning at the school. We are now of course well into this academic year and thinking about the attainment and progress of our current pupils.

As parents you will have had your own parent consultation in November and have been to the ‘Book Look’ so you will be aware of how your own individual child is doing. The next parent consultation will be in March.

Primary schools are very different to secondary schools where parents might be looking more closely at data – based on percentages of children achieving GCSE grades. A primary school cannot and should not be assessed on data outcomes – we are about educating the whole child and setting down good foundations for future lifelong learning. Primary school is about gaining basic skills in maths and English – but so much more than that – about values, self-esteem and the all-round curriculum. These are things that Ofsted rated very highly about our school.

Interestingly, the way Ofsted judges primary schools is about to change again in July 2019 and it will be far less based on data but so much more about a broad and balanced curriculum – which is something we do very well at Holly Park with our exciting curriculum, Forest school, music, sport, trips, visits, curriculum days, concerts, residentials, Enabling Enterprise days etc

I hope that this letter gives you a little more information with which to assess published data concerning primary schools. I encourage you to consider it carefully



Ann Pelham

Headteacher