

Frequently Asked Questions

	Question	Answer
Teaching & Learning		
1	How will you develop challenge for all children in the school?	All children are closely tracked and monitored and through developing the expertise of the teachers and ensuring there is challenge for all children and support where required. There will be support from HFL to ensure this is the case
2	What is the plan for able children?	We will continue to offer enrichment opportunities to stretch pupils to achieve their potential
3	What is being done to improve the quality of teaching?	There are planned Inset Days, staff coaching from committed and outstanding teachers and additional support from HFL
4	What are you doing to improve Marking Feedback Policy?	The Marking & Feedback Policy has been updated and implemented and is currently being shared with HFL
5	What about the core subjects?	Core subjects have more lessons than non-core lessons and are more frequently marked in accordance with the Marking & Feedback Policy
6	How do we measure success?	Each child's progress is followed and their individual successes monitored to inform planning to stretch through book monitoring and lesson observations. Success is measured in all sorts of ways, good behaviour, in having happy enthusiastic children and drawing out their potential wherever their talents reside
7	What are you doing differently to ensure that able pupils are consistently challenged/stretched?	Through close monitoring of pupils' progress and our tracking systems, book scrutiny and lesson observations

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8	Why is Year 5 not set for maths?	Each year we evaluate, amend and change practice according to the requirements of the pupils. This was the favoured option of the current Year 5 team. Pupils would benefit from remaining with their form tutor and the Leader of Maths would take out those requiring support, be they high achievers or those needing more practices or individualised support
9	Will Year 8 be addressed first before transfer to Freman?	GL Assessments will take place in the next few weeks. This is already in the Action Plan. All tests are externally marked and will therefore be an accurate reflection of progress and aptitude. We will continue to raise the standards and challenge for Year 8
10	What will you implement to ensure teaching in the school improves overall	Subject leaders and Senior Leadership Team alongside HFL will be closely monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and supporting teachers to develop their expertise
Action Plan		
11	Will we receive a copy of the Action Plan or be informed of key actions?	Key strands of the Action Plan will be made available and sent out to all parents and there will be regular updates on progress and further opportunities to meet and ask questions
12	What is the timescale for improvement?	The usual timescale is that an HMI will return after six months to ensure the Action Plan is being affected. A further Ofsted will take place after two years or earlier if advised that improvement is evident
13	Where did the standard change and how did this happen?	There are many reasons why this happened. There have been many changes at GCSE and KS1 and in Assessment; staff absences have also had significant impact. The school is already working on developing knowledge and understanding of Assessment at KS2 and developing the confidence of teachers in their respective roles

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14	Will the Action Plan be published?	The Action Plan will be updated termly and will be available to all parents. Key strands of the Action Plan will be made available to all parents and there will be regular updates on progress and further opportunities to meet and ask questions
15	Will the Action Plan address the need for proper mental wellbeing, not just address the academic stuff?	The school has a successful support mechanism for staff and pupils mental wellbeing. Mental well-being for all is very important to us
16	There are some inspiring teachers and some not so good, what is in the Action Plan to improve?	Inset Day on Differentiation, staff coaching from committed and outstanding teachers and any other support from outside agencies and HFL will improve consistency
17	When is the Action Plan in place?	Many elements of the Action Plan are already being implemented and their impact being monitored. We now have an overarching document which sets out the wide variety of interventions, initiatives and required actions the key themes and interventions will be shared with parents and regularly reported back on
18	Will parents have access to the Action Plan to see changes?	A copy of the Action Plan will be updated termly and will be available to all parents and there will be regular updates on progress and further opportunities to meet and ask questions
19	When is the next Ofsted visit?	The next Ofsted visit will be within two years though we expect a visit to evaluate how improvement is being addressed within the next 6-9 months
20	Can we have a brief outline of the Action Plan to address the concerns raised by Ofsted?	The Action Plan will be available to all parents and updated termly
21	When does the Action Plan come to an end?	When improved to upgrade to Good in the first instance

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22	How will this Action Plan improve Year 8	The intention is for actions to have a positive impact on all years
Levels		
23	How will you moderate levels to make sure they are accurate?	Moderation is taking place alongside middle, upper and lower schools to ensure accuracy as well as verification by HFL advisors
24	How do we measure success?	Success is about the whole child and is measured in many different ways not uniquely academic performance
25	Teacher Assessments – Are they not checked or do they not know how to grade?	This is a national problem with currently three different systems in place. Exam papers are externally marked and we are constantly moderating. We will be using external advisors to validate our assessments
26	The accuracy of progress reported to parents is of concern – levels are inaccurate, will they be assessed?	Any inaccuracies will be addressed
27	If it was the case that KS2 results were 5% below in 2012 and 17% below in 2015, why was action not taken earlier	Middle schools judged by KS2 exit data. High achieving Y8s taking GCS Stats exams a year early. A class group can make a significant difference in the statistics
Behaviour		
28	What will you do about disruptive behaviour?	Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom so less incidents of pupils off task when lessons are engaging. We will be proactive to ensure that all staff must adhere to the Behaviour Policy and ensure this is being applied consistently across the whole school

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29	Behaviour Policy – Why was the whole school put on Behaviour Report?	It was an audit to identify and celebrate good behaviour and pinpoint those displaying disruptive behaviour for us to better target interventions and improvement strategies but also to celebrate those children modelling excellent behaviour
30	After ‘mock’ Ofsted, pupils felt it was their fault why did they come home with that impression and what will you do to correct it?	This may have been following the school review where the team advised the HT that they had seen some occasions where pupils had not shown respect to each other/staff and visitors. However since this was mentioned to pupils, this had greatly improved and the Ofsted Inspectors commented on their polite/good behaviour. The HT has already taken steps during collective worship to make it clear to pupils that no one is holding them responsible for the poor Ofsted Report. If that feeling persist we will do more to correct that misunderstanding
31	Big changes are required in the messages to children. How will this be communicated as they feel it is their behaviour that has let the school down and it is their fault?	The HT will ensure the message is clear to pupils
32	Over the last three of four years I have been discouraged by the reliance of group punishments due to persistent bad behaviour of one or two individuals. Will you put an end to this practice?	This should not be happening and is not good practice. The audit assists staff in identifying individuals who are disturbing the learning of others
Leadership		
33	What is the current retention rate for staff? How does that compare to the county or national average? A high proportion of leavers would suggest there has been a low morale amongst staff for a while.	Enquiries are being made to see how we compare with the national average but there does not appear to be a particular concern at the school. It is quite usual that teachers move, as in all profession for promotion, maternity leave and personal reasons and we don't believe that our school is any different. However, Governors will continue to monitor this closely

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34	Why did the Governors and HT appear to be so unaware of the problems mentioned in the report?	The leadership of the school had identified that there were areas for development hence were already working with the HFL
35	What will happen to the Governors and HT if that improvement does not occur within the timescale?	They will be held to account. If Ofsted are not satisfied significant progress has been required they will insist on more radical changes within the school and the Governing Body
36	I have faith in his teacher but if no improvement in six months turnaround, what will happen to the school leadership?	Ofsted and the Governing Body will hold the school leadership to account
37	Can we have open communication weekly or fortnightly?	Drop-in sessions will be held every Thursday 2:30pm-3:30pm with HT or SLT in her absence or by appointment at other times
38	The Report says the HT has a clear vision but not clear commitment from members of staff, all members of staff need to be on board – how will you bring that about?	The staff are committed to the vision. Through line management, subject leader meetings and the ‘open door’ policy, staff will show their commitment. Where this is not evident staff will need to self-reflect and decide if this is where they wish to be
39	We have concerns that some of the current staff do not follow the Bullying Policy – will this change? How will you make sure this is happening?	All staff must adhere to the Behaviour Policy and the HFL behaviour team will be working with the school to review this where parents have concerns we would encourage them to raise those concerns with their child’s form tutor
40	The Ofsted Report refers to the effective use of funds; will the school lose funds due to change in the grading?	The change in the grading will not affect funding. In fact having ‘requires improvement’ status gives the school access to a whole host of additional professional support at little or no cost to the school
41	How will you recruit specialist staff?	We are currently advertising and trust that we will recruit. It can be more attractive to applicants as a school requiring improvement rather than outstanding as teachers feel they can make a difference. Recruitment can be a challenge at

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		the best of times but we have a full complement of staff, and have recently recruited some excellent experienced and talented teachers and are in a good position to move forward
42	Long term absence of Subject Teachers	The long term absence of a small number of subject leaders has had an impact; as would be the case in any school of this size where there was uncertainty about return dates, of course vacancies cannot be advertised until resignation has been received. However, we have a full complement of staff have already appointed highly experienced teacher to cover maternity leave and are well placed to move forward
43	The turnover of staff has been high and losing more top quality staff - why? Why have staff left?	Staff move for various reasons but there is no evidence to suggest that this is any different to the national picture
44	Do you have the commitment from staff? How can you move forward without a committed team?	Since joining in September it was evident to the DH that there are committed and hardworking teachers. We can't move forward without that commitment but we are confident that it is there. Performance management arrangements will ensure those not committed and delivering good teaching will receive support to improve, but where progress is not made the process will see them leaving the school
45	We don't understand how everything has slipped?	Having sustained Outstanding for the past eight years it is a great challenge to maintain when other issues impact on this – staff absence, new national curriculum and assessment
46	Regarding the Ofsted inspection – is there some disagreement about the grading?	We accept it in its entirety. The inspection was rigorous and fair and leaves us with a clear focus on where improvement is required and what we will need to do to bring that about

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47	Do you need a different HIP? What are you going to do to follow through	We are working closely with the HIP and HFL. They have already provided some really valuable advice and support in contributing to the school's improvement plan
48	You have spoken about leadership, is there a requirement of the GB to make a clear decision to changes within the leadership?	The school is mutually supportive. Governors believe that the school has the leadership capacity and capability to deliver the improvements required though this will be regularly reviewed. The Governing Body will be holding the HT to account on the delivery of that improvement
49	Is there a lack of leadership?	There has been a lack in capacity in the leadership team which has now been resolved
50	Does the GB have additional support?	The GB has additional support available to it even prior to Ofsted work was underway to review its strengths and weaknesses designed to identify where support was required and how to improve the way it carries out its responsibilities
51	Does the Chair have support?	The Chair has additional support available and continues to attend regular training events to help meet the demands and responsibilities of the role
52	It is important for children not to feel demoralised, staff must be feeling down too – what measures are in place?	The school is mutually supportive. The whole school is pulling together to ensure good morale
Communication		
53	Parents need to work with the school, what is happening at home? We can all work together	Thank you for your support this is greatly valued and appreciated
54	Parents would support the school if a comment about poor behaviour had been put in the ROA	Thank you for your support

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55	What can be done to improve the speed of a response to issues addressed directly to the HT? Will we get a response within 48 hours?	A response will be received within 48 hours, it may be that the HT is not in school or it may be another member of staff will respond. There may be occasions where other members of staff are better placed to deal with parents enquiries/issues
56	A parent sometimes needs to speak to the HT, will this improve?	A member of SLT will respond by the end of the day. There will be a 'Drop-in' for parents on Thursdays where the HT will be available 2:30m-3:30pm
57	What will you do to accommodate the needs of parents who work?	Working parents can make an appointment. We will be working with parents to get a better understanding of the needs and expectations of parents and how we can best meet them.
58	Why can't there be greater use of email like other schools?	This will form part of the working party discussion on communication. We use the ROA as our means of communication, but we are conscious that other schools use email
59	Communication with parents has been lacking, can there be more regular parent meetings to discuss a child's progress?	This has already been implemented in Y8. We will look to introduce this into other year groups and more year meetings
60	Year 6 SATs why were parents not notified sooner regarding the drastic Changes to the tests?	We have had some booster classes and parent workshop evenings
61	What if we haven't had the opportunity to ask a question?	Email the Chair of Governors chairgb@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk
62	Could we have more opportunities to meet with teachers?	Yes this can be arranged

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63	Will there be feedback to parents if levels are incorrect?	Yes parents will be contacted of any discrepancies
64	If there are discrepancies, can an appointment be made to discuss with the DH?	Yes -
65	Moving on – what can we do as parents to help support the school?	Positive messages from parents are greatly appreciated
66	My child’s Form Tutor is not here?	Some staff attended the previous open meeting and may have had prior or personal commitments. Their absence should not be interpreted as not supportive of the school or its ambitions to improve

KEY:

HIP	Herts Improvement Partner
GB	Governing Body
HFL	Herts for Learning
HT	Headteacher
SLT	Senior Leadership Team