



July 19, 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

In the last week of the academic year, we write to update you on the work of Darlington Academy's Rapid Improvement Board giving you insight into how we work with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team to ensure every child gets the best start in life.

We are proud of the work of our staff and children over the past year and we would like to thank you – our parents and carers – for your support in our journey to excellence.

This report is formed of three parts – our results, our focus on attendance and the work of the Rapid Improvement Board, which acts as the academy's Governing Body.

1. Our results

We are delighted to share with you our positive results which demonstrate the success of our Academy-wide drive on reading and phonics, with positive attainment and progress stories from Reception to Year Six.

We are pleased to highlight our greatest success and headline figure of 95 per cent for the phonics screening test. Our children have benefited immensely from the early developments made in reading and know that from these strong foundations, will go from strength to strength.

In addition to a great start in phonics and reading, our reception children have secured good levels of development above last year's results and the national 2017 result.

Our Year Two results reflect the high standard and challenge provided for our children, equipping them for KS2 expectations.

In Year Six, our high standards are mirrored in the outcomes at greater depth, showing the focus on challenge and raised expectations.

We will proudly share our validated figures with you in due course.

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Thank you for your parental support, including the home learning and encouragement that takes place. We recognise the success at Darlington Academy is achieved by working in partnership - achieving excellence together.

2. Attendance

The Rapid Improvement Board has been looking in detail at attendance at the academy. It is essential that our pupils are in school as often as possible to ensure they reap the rewards from learning. Sadly, some children are still absent from school during term time due to holidays. This is a real issue for us and will be a focus in the new academic year.

The academy, part of Legra Academy Trust, will now have a two-week break at October half-term, allowing another opportunity for holidays. We cannot stress enough the importance of aiming for 100 per cent attendance and appeal to all parents to ensure they work with us to ensure this is achieved.

3. The work of the RIB

The Board is made up of a number of professional individuals who meet monthly to work with Mrs Nicholls and her team to ensure the academy remains a safe, happy and nurturing environment for all children while ensuring teaching and learning is Good or better. We challenge the Senior Leadership Team on our improvement and development plan to make sure we attract a 'Good' rating at the next Ofsted inspection. With Mrs Nicholls' outstanding leadership and our excellent staff, we are confident that we will achieve this at the next inspection.

At each meeting, members scrutinise and interrogate data, tracking the progress of our children and ensuring each child gets the help and intervention needed for them to be successful. We have looked at the use and effectiveness of Pupil Premium funding and are assured that this is used to best effect, ensuring all children make significant progress during their time at Darlington.

We focus on areas of development and ensure our statutory obligations are met in terms of safeguarding and health and safety. In addition, educationalists on the Board have undertaken regular 'learning walks' in the school, allowing the Board to be assured that teaching practice and learning is good or better.

The academy is now in a strong position and we aim to establish a Shadow Governing Body in September. We will write to you then with further details.

Finally, we would again like to thank you for your ongoing support. We hope you have a lovely summer break and we look forward to welcoming you back in September.

Yours sincerely



Bev Williams
CEO, Legra Academy Trust



Chris Hatton
Chair, Legra Academy Trust