

Hi Miss Williams

I'm writing to you (and the staff/parents/students) as I read the Shropshire Star report on Saturday.

Typical of the media to write such a negative headline and start the article with all the negatives.

This kind of reportage can be very damaging to morale and confidence, so I want to give you my impressions, as an ex-teacher.

Firstly, I want to say that, on my first visit, a few years ago, my impression was that the staff really cared, wanted to do their best for the students. They were very keen to take on board what we had to suggest and the school responded brilliantly - ordering books, creating programmes and creating the wonderful mural.

On my last two visits, I was struck by the wall of stars, with names. It felt so positive and affirming...and it must make students feel that they belong, are noticed and cared for. The mural is brilliant.

The school feels happy, inclusive and safe (which is mentioned at the end of the article). If I was looking for a school for my child, I would want this to be the main thrust. Of course, I wish my child to get a good education, but, primarily, I want them to feel safe, cared for, happy, supported and valued for who they are and to feel that the staff (all staff, not just teachers) care. I would be really happy to see the mural, as it would tell me that the school was one which was inclusive of diversity and wishes to communicate this.

I'm pleased that Ofsted noted that early year pupils is 'tailored to the needs of the children and as a result they make good progress'. Now that would have been a much better headline, given that what happens in the early years is the basis for what comes later! Also, 'vulnerable pupils were now supported and pupils well cared for and feeling safe'.

My headline: **'School is a caring and safe place, say inspectors'**

How different that would feel and appear to the reader. And, it could then say that, as the school itself has noted: 'certain areas do require improvement'.

Well done in getting the Certificate from Alice/XYZ. That is a real achievement.

There are always things that can be adjusted, tightened and improved upon, but happiness is the best starting point!

Best wishes,

Geoff