

19th April 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

I am now able to share the Ofsted Report with you, a copy of which is attached to this letter. You can also download a copy of the Report from our website, by clicking [here](#).

Whilst we have never self-evaluated ourselves as “Outstanding” we do consider our school to be “Good”, and this is reflected by the many positive comments contained within the Report.

We were, however, disappointed in the overall judgement, especially in light of the fact that Quality of Education, Personal Development, Sixth Form and Leadership and Management were graded as “Good” with Safeguarding graded as “Effective” (the highest possible grade for this area of school life).

You will see that Ofsted were very positive about the Quality of Education which we provide for our pupils and students, stating that “[Leaders] have overhauled the curriculum and subject leaders have thought carefully about...how best to teach it.” I was particularly pleased that the Inspectors commented on the fact that our “Key Performance Indicators approach is well embedded and is used effectively to check how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum”.

In relation to Personal Development, the Inspectors found that “there is a rich curriculum in place for pupils’ personal development” and “pupils and students receive appropriate careers information, education, advice and guidance”. We are incredibly proud of the majority of our pupils and students and work hard to ensure that the curriculum provides them with the knowledge and cultural capital that they need to succeed in life, and to become valuable members of society.

In respect of Behaviour and Attitudes, we accept there is a small minority of pupils who have not adjusted to an environment with boundaries since returning to school after lockdown, and who do not subscribe to our school ethos. However, we do not consider the snapshot taken by Ofsted in this category to be an accurate reflection on the conduct of the overwhelming majority of our pupils, who embrace our simple rule of respect, and who comply with our Behaviour Policy.

Regrettably, Ofsted took the view that they were not yet able to see the impact of all the work we have been doing to address and support the behaviour of the small minority of challenging pupils since they returned from the periods of school closure during the pandemic, as well as work we have undertaken to improve attendance. Therefore, despite receiving a “Good” judgement in all but one category, it was the “Requires Improvement” grade that determined the Overall Effectiveness grading.

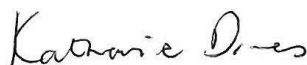
As a school we are incredibly lucky to have a highly supportive, skilled and experienced body of both local governors and Trustees, who hold us to account with rigorous levels of challenge. I was, therefore, pleased to see that Ofsted recognised this and commented that “Trustees and governors...provide appropriate and regular challenge and support...”.

We know our school well, and believe that it provides a nurturing, caring and respectful environment: our pupils and students are at the very heart of all we do. I am often humbled by the humanity and kindness shown by so many of our pupils and staff. We feel privileged to work in an atmosphere where “teachers and other members of staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school”. This is evidenced by the very low rate of staff turnover and the high level of longevity of service amongst staff.

As a school, we have never been complacent, and have always welcomed external scrutiny irrespective of the recent negative press attention on the inspection system. Ultimately the Report will galvanise us to respond swiftly and decisively while maintaining all that we do well, including the many successes cited by Ofsted in their Report. Going forward, we will be introducing a scheme to incentivise good attendance and will take a more assertive stance in managing and addressing both the challenging behaviour of a small minority of pupils as well as occasional low-level disruption in lessons. I will write further about our plans over the coming few weeks.

In the meantime, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support.

Kind regards



Katharine Dines
Headteacher