



Dear Parents and Carers

I am delighted to inform you that the full Section 5 Ofsted Report from our two day inspection in December 2022 is now available. I share it with all parents and carers in advance of it being published on the Ofsted website in the next five working days.

The full two day inspection involved five inspectors and examined every aspect of school life. This two day inspection, did not seek to ratify any existing judgements on the school, but examined the provision afresh, under the new, more rigorous inspection framework.

I would like to thank all those who took part in the inspection, staff, governors, parents and carers and students.

The school's GOOD grading is a high benchmark in the new framework with fewer and fewer schools achieving the elevated status of Outstanding with the new measures. The grading of Good recognises that we provide an ambitious, inclusive, safe, caring education with high expectations, rigorous standards and breadth of provision inside and beyond the classroom.

The school has worked hard through and beyond the pandemic to maintain and improve learning for all students. Many schools have consolidated and survived in the last two years, but we have made considerable changes, some of which may be visible to parents and carers and some of which may be more behind the scenes. This inspection, along with the exceptional examination results of 2022, endorse that these changes and our commitment to our community is having a positive impact.

The report itself and indeed the two-day visit will only ever manage to capture a snapshot of all that we do with our young people. It would be impossible to distil in such a short space of time the breadth of all that we do with 1800 students across seven years of study. As part of the inspection process key senior leaders and governors are present as the inspection team share their observations on their scrutiny of the school. The written report is shaped with a framework in mind and a consistency of language. In order to share with you as much as possible from the two-day inspection, I share with you here some comments made by inspectors, that further demonstrate the impact of the school's collective work in the best interests of all students. These comments resonated with our ethos of "more than just a school".



Quality of education

- *The curriculum is ambitious for all our students. All students are served well by the curriculum.*
- *There is a clear underlying educational, pedagogical approach.*
- *Learning is well-sequenced and skilfully developed from KS3 to 4 and then into KS5.*
- *There are well-established lesson routines, which ensure a calm and orderly learning environment and automaticity which enables learning.*
- *There are forensic assessment processes across the key stages. Feedback is timely and meaningful for students.*
- *The Sixth Form curriculum is broad and ambitious - students of all needs are well-catered for.*

Behaviour and attitudes

- *There are high expectations of students.*
- *The management of behaviour is strong.*
- *Students say that important things are talked about: "the big three" - homophobia, racism and sexism are all openly addressed.*
- *Students say "It is ok to be yourself here"*
- *The school culture is embedded from day one, when students join in Year 7*
- *There is a proportionate and proactive, stepped approach to behaviour - rewards are integral to this*

Personal development

- *PHSEE is clearly planned and well-sequenced - the spiral nature of this means themes are developed at age-appropriate points and then reviewed (From Year 7 to Year 12)*
- *Teaching of RSE in the Spring Term allows for strong tutor relationships to have been formed. Tutor relationships are very strong.*
- *PSHE and RSE reflects the whole school ethos and supports student development in motivation and self-confidence*
- *Tolerance and diversity is strongly and explicitly developed*
- *Students' physical and mental health is clearly considered and proactively approached - this runs through into the Sixth Form*



Sixth Form

- *Sixth Form students experience a high level of academic and emotional support*
- *The breadth of curriculum offer allows students to take a bespoke array of studies, best suited to their future pathways*
- *Impartial and well-informed careers, advice and guidance allows students to make sound choices into and beyond the Sixth Form*

Leadership and management

- *School self-evaluation is robust, quality assurance processes are detailed and fulsome, reports are of good quality. There is clear governor involvement in these activities.*
- *There is a wide range of CPD opportunities to ensure that staff at all stages of their professional career are catered for and developed. This includes succession planning and leadership training opportunities.*
- *Staff are energised, supported and excited to share the research they are engaged in.*
- *Teachers' subject knowledge is explicitly considered - development of the curriculum through shared planning is strong.*
- *Governors and trustees know the school well and give time to ask challenging questions, balanced with support.*

And finally, three that touch to the core of what we aim to do:

- *Learning is not always plain sailing for students – they are stretched and challenged.*
- *Staff are consistent in their approaches.*
- *Staff here know children very well and are committed to doing the very best for them.*

Our school development plan for the last three years has been themed under the acronym of eBASICS – this starts with a focus on excellence, underpinning our strive to echo the last of our three Bs – “be our best”. I do hope that parents and carers take the time to read the inspection report in full as it represents a school that is not only good, but one that is always striving to improve and with our students at the heart of its work.

Your sincerely

Miss Julia Upton, Headteacher; Mrs Sue White, Chair of Governors