



ST/KJP
13th June 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

We have now received the final report from Ofsted following our inspection on 14th and 15th May 2019. The full report will be available on the Ofsted and the Academy website and I am writing to share the main findings with you.

The report is thorough and praises the academy's strong leadership, effective teaching and learning, and the positive and well-behaved students, alongside recognising that student outcomes and progress is improving. The successful Sixth Form and the ambitious culture and curriculum, underpinned by a commitment to equality, inclusion and raising aspirations were also recognised by Ofsted.

The inspection looked and judged several key areas of the academy:

- Effectiveness of Leadership and management – **Good**
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment – **Good**
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare – **Good**
- Outcomes for students – **Requires Improvement**
- 16 to 19 study programmes – **Good**

As Ofsted sees the 'outcomes' category as 'a limiting judgement', this has meant that the Academy has been determined as requiring improvement. However, the detailed report praises leadership, teaching and learning, personal development and 16 to 19 study as good, areas which we can all be very proud of.

There were some very positive comments made about the Academy and I would like to share a snapshot of these with you below:

- "The principal, together with the leadership team, governors and Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT), have established an ambitious culture and curriculum, underpinned by a commitment to equality, inclusion and raising aspirations".
- "All staff share the vision and are committed to the ambition for every pupil to achieve to the best of their ability".
- "Students show respect and concern for each other and are safe in school. Students speak confidently about how the school supports them to stay safe and are confident that there is always someone they can talk to if they need help".
- "Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through the extensive extra-curricular activities offered, which are designed to broaden students' horizons and support every pupil to achieve success in the arts, music or sport. Students' cultural awareness is also developed through trips abroad, which all students are encouraged to attend".
- "Through the many opportunities to take on responsibility across the school, pupils develop confidence and self-assurance. Inspectors recognised that students are keen to learn and improve their work".

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- “Comprehensive careers advice, information and guidance support students very effectively as they choose the next steps beyond school. Students value especially highly the effective careers education, information, advice and guidance they receive in the Sixth Form”.
- “Leaders have established a positive culture where caring relationships between pupils and staff are key to pupils’ achievement and enjoyment. Pupils feel well supported and valued”.
- “Teaching is well structured and delivered in the Sixth Form, with a good balance between independent activity, support and tuition”.

In order to progress to the next level, the report also highlighted what the Academy needs to do to improve further, areas which we had already identified and have been working hard on improving.

- The new approaches to teaching and assessment need to be further embedded, so that recent improvements in current students’ attainment and progress is sustained and on track to be at least in line with national averages for students with similar starting points by the end of key stage 4, improving outcomes for students.
- Gaps in students’ literacy skills are to be further addressed, particularly by ensuring that students have more frequent opportunities to apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in extended writing tasks across the curriculum.
- There will be a focus on ensuring that errors in student work is picked up promptly and misconceptions are addressed more effectively.
- Attendance continues to improve, particularly for the small number of students who are persistently absent.

We are pleased that the inspection team rated the Academy as Good in four key categories. It is of course disappointing that due to historical outcomes Ofsted’s overall rating was that the academy requires improvement, and this will undoubtedly also be disappointing for you as parents. However, we are working hard and swiftly to drive the improvements we had already identified in the specific areas outlined in the report.

I would recommend that you read the full report to gain a full and complete insight into the inspection findings, which overall recognised that students behave well; there is an ambitious culture around achievement and aspiration; effective teaching and learning is supporting the improvement of outcomes and progress for students.

We are committed to continuing to provide the highest quality of teaching and learning at the Academy, which will in turn ensure that student outcomes improve. We are confident that the Academy will continue on an upward trajectory and we are confident that when Ofsted return they will recognise the further improvement that has taken place.

I would also like to thank you for your ongoing support as it has meant everything to us all to know that you are with us as we continue our journey.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Turnbull
Principal