



HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

JDX/JDN

9 June 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Ofsted Inspection – April 2022

You will, by now have seen Mr Roberts' letter about our recent Ofsted inspection, which gives some explanation and context to the report and its gradings.

As a Governing Body, we believe that the overall grading of Good is positive and a high benchmark under the current Ofsted framework.

The outcome was not a surprise to us given the challenging, new Ofsted inspection framework and the much-publicised determination of Ofsted to change the proportion of schools achieving the Outstanding grading.

That said, we are not critical of the system and although it was a stressful experience, the Lead Inspector and his Team were professional throughout.

Myself and my fellow Governors are clear; the School has done everything it possibly could have done, during incredibly challenging circumstances over recent years, to ensure that our students make excellent progress and the Inspector in the report explicitly articulates this.

Governors are so grateful to our committed staff team, who under the passionate and dedicated leadership of Mr Roberts, have ensured that our students have made excellent progress, even though education has experienced so many disruptions over the last two years.

Of course, there will always be things that the School can improve upon. The inspection report highlights a number of areas, which had already been identified by School Leaders (in the School Development Plan), discussed with Governors and in respect of which Mr Roberts and indeed all school leaders were already implementing strategies and plans. The Governors were actively monitoring these.

As a Governing Body we are confident that these strategies will enable the School to effectively respond to those development areas. Indeed, there has already been much talk in School of the improvements that have been made showing how amazing the School is.

I would also like to reassure parents, that the School we have today is just as vibrant as it was prior to the inspection, in the words of the Lead Inspector, "It is an exciting place to learn." An Ofsted grading should not affect anyone's perception of the School. Ofsted is only one measure of success and our true measure is that of our students, who are a credit to you all.

It should also be remembered that student attainment in our school is excellent and this is acknowledged in the report, but under the current Ofsted framework this was not a focus for the Inspectors in terms of the grading.

It is particularly pleasing, during a time of such national and international uncertainty, to know that our students are "happy and feel safe," the Lead Inspector spoke of pupils who are "very polite, articulate and ambitious," who "behave extremely well" and "live the School's values of respect, responsibility and excellence." And it was noted that "leaders provide pupils with a huge range of experiences." This is the HGS that I know you will recognise, and of which I am so proud to be Chair of Governors.

The students are at the heart of all we do at HGS. We are lucky that we work with students who are respectful and kind and every single person who works in, and with the School, cares passionately about the potential and the life chances of your children.

I met with staff before, during and after the inspection and I must say how impressed I was with the huge effort and commitment made by the School during what was a very challenging and rigorous process. A number of staff, who have been at the School for many years, came to tell me that they feel the School is better and stronger now than it has ever been, including at the time it was last inspected 15 years ago. And whilst I was not involved with the School at that time, I certainly agree with them.

I want to thank you and your families for your continued support, commitment and trust in the School and to say thank you to all those who were able to complete the Parent View survey which formed a key part of the inspection process.

As a Governing Body we will continue to work with Mr Roberts, his senior leadership team and all staff to support, challenge and monitor the School's progress over the coming months and I know that with your ongoing support we will ensure the School provides the highest quality of education, outcomes and opportunity for all your children and young people, in an exciting, nurturing and happy environment.

As always, if you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

With kind regards



Jane L Dixon
Chair of Governors and on behalf of the Governing Body.