



## HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

PDR/JDN

9 June 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Following our section 5 Ofsted inspection on 5 and 6 April, I am pleased to feedback to you some of the headline findings and attach the report itself, which has just been released.

You may be aware, we were last inspected in 2007 and during the intervening years there have been many changes to the framework. The latest version, in 2019, departed from a focus on exam progress measures, to one which is much more based on what is observed during the 2 day visit. Following the introduction of the 2019 framework, Ofsted decided they wanted to recalibrate nationally the proportions of schools achieving each of the 4 possible gradings. This has resulted in 77% of previously outstanding schools being downgraded. With this context, despite our continued excellent GCSE and A level results we are not surprised, to be graded as overall Good.

You will see that the report itself highlights many elements of excellent provision, as well as the next steps needed to take the school forward. The inspection was thorough, led diligently and was professionally undertaken. Throughout the whole process, we were commended for our openness and honesty and willingness to take on board suggestions in a spirit of learning, just like we profess to our students. What is most satisfying, is that the areas for development were already identified in our school improvement plan prior to the inspection and strategies are already in place to ensure developments are implemented swiftly and effectively.

Overall, this is a very good report, with many things to be proud of:

- “Heckmondwike Grammar School is an exciting place to learn, expectations are high”
- “Behaviour is exceptional”
- “Over time, pupils make very strong progress, the pace of learning is fast”
- “The extra-curricular life of the school is very strong, the vast majority of pupils take up something from the wide-ranging offer.”
- “There is a detailed programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) for all pupils from year 7 to 11.”
- “Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.” “Pupils feel safe. Their strong relationships in the school mean pupils have an adult they can talk to. Pupils have confidence that staff will help them solve any problems.”

- “The vast majority of learners in the large sixth form achieve high grades. Many of whom go on to gain places at the most competitive of universities.”
- “Leaders know their school well, both strengths and weaker areas.” “Staff Morale is high.”
- “The Headteacher is passionate about the school and has a clear vision for its development”.

With any inspection, as expected, there are areas to further improve and these include some aspects in the sixth form:

The inspectors felt some sixth form learners, particularly those coming from other schools, struggle with the skills required for success at A level. Inspectors also felt further development is required of the PSHE curriculum in the sixth form. And finally, we will be further developing our work experience program post Covid, and ensuring sixth formers have an enhanced careers advice provision, particularly during the current difficult economic position we are in.

As Headteacher, a former student, and whose whole family has attended the school, much of my life has been associated with Heckmondwike Grammar School and it is much more than a job to me. I am passionate about school improvement and my staff and I work tirelessly to deliver a brilliant and wonderful education to all our students and the school is just as good as it was prior to the inspection. Indeed, many long serving staff tell me it is stronger than at the last inspection, 15 years ago. I would like to reassure all our school community that our students continue to receive the very highest level of education and guidance. But, as is the Heckmondwike way, we are already addressing the areas for development, particularly those in the sixth form which require improvement. Staff’s reaction to the report has been excellent and great strides have already been made to ensure, when we invite Ofsted back, we are in a position to regain our coveted status.

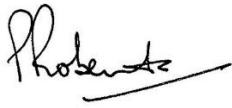
During the last few very difficult years, I have publicly thanked school staff for their exceptional provision, often putting school before family life, and I would like to state this again. I am privileged to work with an outstanding team. Our pride has been slightly dented, and as such we are now even more determined to be the very best we can be and it is an exciting time for both students and staff to be at Heckmondwike Grammar School.

And finally, once again, my heartfelt thanks to all parents and carers for their unyielding support. We have said so many times that as a team we work exceptionally well together and I know this will continue as we move in to the next stage of rapid development.

You will read in the [Ofsted Report](#), that we have much to celebrate.

If any parents/carers have any questions they would like to ask, I will be only too happy to help.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Roberts', with a horizontal line underneath.

Peter Roberts  
Headteacher