

Thursday 8th February 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you will know, we had a visit from Ofsted yesterday and so the last couple of days have been a bit of a whirlwind! We got the phone call at 12.30pm on Monday and were welcoming the inspection team by 8am on Tuesday morning so there was very little time to prepare, as is the way with Ofsted inspections these days.

We are not permitted to share any details of the feedback until the report is published (which we hope will be within 3-4 weeks). However, I will say that the inspection team was both very fair and very thorough. The lead inspector was an experienced HMI: he was very perceptive and not afraid of challenging us where he felt it appropriate, but he was also prepared to listen to what we had to say. In this sense, we could not have asked for more and I thank the team for their professional approach.

Whilst we do not know exactly what will emerge in the written report, we were delighted with lots of the verbal feedback and particularly pleased that they seemed to fully accept our own self-evaluation of the strengths and areas for development in the school. We will, of course, share more with parents and carers as soon as we can.

I would like to like to extend my thanks to the 417 of you who took the time to complete the Ofsted 'Parent View' questionnaire; we are very grateful to you and it was nice to see the inspectors note how parental feedback has improved so much over the past 2-3 years. Thank you for your support.

Above all though, I'd like to commend the students. Most headteachers would be stricken with panic if snow started to fall during an Ofsted inspection, but it was lovely to be able to reflect last night on the fact that it had never even crossed my mind that I ought to have been worried about the prospect of our students letting themselves down. Indeed, one of the inspectors asked me, almost in disbelief: "It's snowing. Why aren't your students all running around crazily and making lots of noise – they would be in any other school I've been in!!" Sometimes we can take these things for granted, but it is such a privilege to work with such incredible young people, as well as with a staff body who have worked so hard to reinforce high expectations of behaviour and social responsibility.

As I say, we will be in touch with more details as soon as we can – though I would be surprised if anyone who has followed the details of various communications from me over the past year or so is especially surprised by what is in the report.

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