

Parent Forum – Ofsted

Tuesday 19 September 2023

What does the outcome mean?

Serious Weaknesses means that, although there are aspects of the school that need to improve rapidly, Ofsted is in the firm belief that our academy and trust leaders have the capacity and capability to deliver the change required.

What were the positives?

The below quotes are from the Ofsted report:

- *"Pupils feel safe at school"*
- *"They have adults to talk to in times of need"*
- *"Pupils feel issues are dealt with by staff"*
- *"Day-to-day behaviour in lessons is calm"*
- *"Lessons are routinely calm and orderly"*
- *"Teachers can teach and students can learn"*
- *"The wellbeing team provides effective support"*
- *"Leaders provide appropriate reading intervention"*

Addressing a misconception

Ofsted state in the report that "outcomes in external examinations are weak"; however, we would challenge this assertion and suggest that a more accurate statement would be: "for those students who do not attend regularly, outcomes in external examinations are weak". This is evidenced when comparing attendance to the average grade achieved by students in the Class of 2023:

- Students whose attendance was above 90% achieved an average grade of 5.17.
- Students whose attendance was above 80% achieved an average grade of 4.34.
- Students whose attendance was below 80% achieved an average of a grade 1.2.

What were the next steps identified in the report and what are we doing to address them?

Next step one:

Develop breadth in the curriculum.

What have we done?

- Re-introduced food technology as part of our 'health' curriculum. Students in Y7 and Y8 complete one cycle of food technology. There are plans to offer this as a GCSE option in the future.
- Re-branded 'art' to 'art and design' to ensure students know there are significant elements of design technology in the art curriculum.
- Reviewed the 'art and design' curriculum to include more elements of 3D design and technology.

Next step two:

Develop systems to ensure SEND needs are identified and met.

What have we done?

- Increased the amount of professional development / training time for staff.
- Increased the amount of SEND specific professional development / training time for staff. This equates to at least three times per cycle.
- Implemented and improved a more robust method for sharing strategies to support students with SEND.
- Begun developing a quality assurance process to ensure that the SEND strategies are well implemented in each classroom.
- Improved the referral process for staff to help identify SEND needs.
- Employed a qualified SENCO to add capacity and expertise to the inclusion team.

Next step three:

Develop systems to support more consistent implementation of the curriculum.

What have we done?

- Increased the amount of professional development / training time for staff.
- Improved the quality assurance process for classroom teaching to inform professional development and coaching.
- Created simplified expectations of what should be present in every classroom.
- Reviewed all curriculum plans to ensure there are robust opportunities for the most important knowledge to be revisited regularly.

Next step four:

Develop systems to ensure that all alternate providers provide a comparable educational and student experience to our academy.

What have we done?

- Re-evaluated all providers to ensure that the rights provisions are used for the right students.
- Improved monitoring and quality assurance of alternate provision.
- Appointed a new senior leader with oversight of alternate provision.
- Increased the number of visits to each alternate provision and to visit students.
- Better communication and support for students returning to the academy.

Next step five:

Develop systems to drive improvements in attendance.

What have we done?

- Increased the number of staff working in the attendance team.
- Increased the number of home visits that the attendance team are completing weekly.
- Implemented a new strategy around persistent absence called 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance', which aims to understand and remove barriers to attendance.

Next step six:

Develop strategies to engage proactively with stakeholders.

What have we done?

- Launched the parent steering group who meet once per term to give feedback to the school and work on improvement priorities.
- Launched the Unity Community to signpost families to external services and provide more opportunities for families to engage positively with the school.
- Launched a parent survey which will be conducted at each parents' evening. Completion is incentivised.
- Launched a student survey to give all students the opportunity to have their voice heard.
- Planned to re-launch the student leadership programme to ensure student voice is heard regularly in a structured manner.
- Engaged with the feedback provided and act on it as appropriate ensured there is regular communication on updates to all stakeholders.
- Launched video updates so that families can translate subtitles into a language of their choice to support engagement.

What happens next?

- Monitoring visits will take place roughly every six to nine months. The judgement will not change because of these visits, but they will give an indication as to how improvement is progressing.
- A full reinspection will take place between 18 and 26 months. At this stage, the judgement may change.

How can you support the academy?

- Support your child to attend school every day.
- Support your child to follow our learning habits.
- Challenge misinformation about our school.
- Provide constructive and positive feedback to staff and senior leaders.

