

Dear parents/carers,

I am very pleased to include in this introduction some particular quotes from our recent OFSTED report. I think the report gives a fair description of our school.

This school continues to be good.

You have continued to create a learning environment where pupils are happy and safe, and value learning. Staff feel supported to develop their skills and teach enriching lessons that enable pupils to make good or better progress, particularly in the sixth form. Progress overall at GCSE and A level last year was significantly better than average, reflecting the successful work done.

Leaders have been successful in managing changes to assessment and the curriculum for GCSE and A level while preserving the creative outlets that pupils value and enjoy.

Teachers now benefit from a well-planned cycle of professional development which supports leaders' plans for improvement of the school. An outcome of this is that teachers now routinely plan activities that stretch and challenge the most able. For example, they use questioning with skill to further maintain the momentum behind pupils' progress.

The school's assessment procedures are robust. They are followed well by teachers and designed to promote the development of the knowledge and skills required at GCSE and A level, from the start of Year 7. Teachers are precise in their understanding of most pupils' needs and consequently activities are typically well pitched.

The sixth form is a particular area of strength, with students making significantly better than average progress year on year since the previous inspection, particularly in the academic subjects that form the vast majority of those on offer. Leaders are rightly proud of the success that students enjoy in the sixth form and afterwards as they now move on to university courses and other career routes.

Leaders and governors have ensured that there is a culture within the school where pupils' welfare is the number one priority. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

...pupils, parents and staff consider this to be a safe, happy and welcoming school where bullying is rare, concerns are dealt with effectively and diversity is celebrated. Inspectors agree with this view.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

Teachers consistently plan activities that meet disadvantaged* pupils' needs, particularly in challenging the most able disadvantaged, so that their progress at least matches that of their peers.

*Disadvantaged includes students receiving Free School Meals and students who are in care.

We will be prioritising the next steps as part of the school improvement plan for next year.

With best wishes,

Annie Gammon

Headteacher