

June 15th 2017

Dear Parent

Ofsted Report and Inspection Feedback

On behalf of the governing body and staff at The Lakes School it is my pleasure to share with you the outcome of our recent inspection which took place on Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th May 2017.

So many strengths...

The inspection team said that we knew our school very well and that we were aware of what we needed to do to improve. They agreed with our judgement that The Lakes School requires improvement but were extremely positive about so many aspects of our work and the progress we had made since our last inspection which took place in May 2015.

The inspection team said that we had a lovely school and they were extremely impressed by the atmosphere in lessons and around the school which they said was created by warm, and friendly welcoming staff and students who were respectful, polite, orderly and very happy about their school and the opportunities available to them. They also said that Lakes School students responded well to the trust afforded to them in their role as leaders and during social time when they were very well behaved. The inspection team told us that they saw no overtly challenging behaviour and that low-level disruption was no longer an issue for the school as classrooms were purposeful and students generally presented with a positive attitude to learning. They said that our safeguarding procedures were very strong and that parents and students felt that the school kept people safe and was very much a caring, learning community.

The team also graded our Sixth Form as good and said that our provision for supporting students with their welfare and personal development was very strong. They recognised that we help students develop social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of their learning and that we have a strong programme of careers education, information advice and guidance. They were also impressed that our students leave Year 11 and Year 13 with the skills and ambition they need to move on to further and higher education, apprenticeships and employment with training.

I would encourage you to read the detail within the report but the inspection team felt that the wider leadership of the school were poised to move the school forward quickly so that we are graded as good overall at our next inspection. This is certainly our collective ambition and you will be pleased to know that we have already begun the next phase of our work.

Areas for improvement...

The inspection team agreed with our own self-evaluation and our areas for improvement. As you will read on page two of the inspection report, we specifically need to embed high quality marking that helps students make progress, secure teaching that meets the needs of all students in all lessons, establish robust monitoring of the quality of teaching and improve the attendance of our students. We will be writing to parents later in the summer term to ask for your help with improving attendance rates which need to show a significant improvement by the time of our next inspection which should be scheduled for May 2019.

We were a little disappointed about receiving a grade of requires improvement for behaviour because the inspection team were overwhelmingly positive about the behaviour of our students. Unfortunately, student attendance is part of the behaviour criteria and because this does indeed require improvement it adversely affected the overall judgement of that area.



Parent View

Of particular note to the inspection team was the positivity expressed through the Ofsted Parent View website which showed consistently that over 90% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements. This demonstrates a strong sense of feeling about the school and indicated to the inspection team that with the support of the community, we were well placed to continue our journey towards becoming a good school. Our Parent Forum was viewed very favourably by the inspectors and I would like to extend an invitation to any parents who feel that they would like to join our Parent Forum and contribute to our journey over the next two years towards our next inspection. We will be writing to all parents soon about the date of our next meeting and it would be great to see many of you there.

Site Security...

You will no doubt be very pleased to know that the inspection team were extremely impressed by our attention to detail when it came to safeguarding the needs of students, staff and visitors. They felt that we were thorough in our assessment of the vulnerabilities around our school site and were pleased that we had plans in place to further secure our site from intruders.

Specifically, our site team has been working hard to assess our grounds and we are currently awaiting planning permission to secure our school by installing a fence. We believe that we have found a fencing solution that enables students to still feel a sense of freedom and openness that is so important to us all. Our plans were very well received by the inspection team and we know that this work will provide even greater reassurance to students, staff and parents that we are doing all that we can to protect us against a number of potential risks, however unlikely they may be. Our fence should be installed during August and we know this will help us with a number of areas including the monitoring of student attendance and punctuality. This will also help us with our routines around signing in and out via the main office at reception. We will write to all parents and students in the near future with more details about the plans.

How do I access the full inspection report?

You can access the full inspection report by following this link which takes you to the [Ofsted page of our website](#). The report itself will also be made available on the Ofsted website within the next few days. We are also happy to provide a printed copy to parents which can be collected from reception. Alternatively, please call us on 015394 40810 and we can pop one in the post for you.

I consider myself to be extremely fortunate to be the Headteacher of such an amazing school and I am equally as proud to be working in such a supportive and positive community where students, parents, staff and governors all share the same ambition which is to make The Lakes School one of the very best schools in England. During my interview in the summer of 2013, I said that, if appointed, I would ensure that the Lakes School was judged as Good or Outstanding within 3 to 5 years. Having taken up post in January 2014, three years have passed and much has changed, developed and improved at the school yet we have maintained true to our values of being a caring, learning community. If I am to live up to my interview promise, I have 2 years to go! Our next inspection will occur in my fifth year at the school and I look forward to working with everyone to ensure that our inspection in 2019 is a cause for real celebration. Like so many people, I have a strong connection to The Lakes School and I hope to serve the community for many more years to come. For the moment, I would like to thank all of you for supporting our work and I genuinely look forward to working with you in the years ahead.

Kindest regards



Andy Cunningham
Headteacher



Excellence through a caring, learning community