

13 December 2024

Dear Families

Re: Ofsted Inspection Report-Letter

It is with great pleasure that I share with you a copy of the final Ofsted Inspection Report-Letter that we have recently received. As part of the inspectorate's monitoring of schools, they undertook a Monitoring Inspection on Wednesday 13th November 2024. This monitoring inspection is officially "...of a school not in a category of concern": GAA is not in a category of concern, and this inspection was an interim visit to monitor our progress in-between full, formal graded inspections. The inspection involved a full day's review of our school by a member of His Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) from Ofsted and included activities such as observation of our morning routine, break and social times, observations of lessons, meetings with leaders from both the school and our trust, meetings with students and meetings with staff, inspection of student work and a review of Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. The inspection also included a full review of our school improvement planning and evaluation, and an assessment of our safeguarding systems and practices.

I hope you will join with me in celebrating the improvement journey we have been on as a school. Our trust, our local governing body, and every single member of our staff and student body, have been so heavily invested and involved and the report is a true celebration of all their hard work. Your partnership, as families, has supported us to make the rapid and sustained improvement leading to GAA being one of the most successful schools in the region, with official recognition for our attendance, engagement, behaviour, and ambition. We have a high ambition which is now one of the most ambitious and over-subscribed schools in Tameside, with over 450 applications for our 270 places for next year's Year 7 entry. This could not have been achieved without your partnership and support: thank you.

I am, however, readily acknowledging that we still have so much to achieve and we will continue to drive improvement. Our students are making great gains in their reading, their engagement and progress, and we must continue to embed our ambitious inclusive curriculum to ensure that all students become GREAT. Our students will be able to tell you that I believe my job is "...to metamorphosise the life chances of our young people for the community we serve" and this inspection report is merely a stepping stone on that journey.

As your Principal, I am so very proud of all our staff and our students, as we continue to bring about sustainable and embedded improvements. The last 4 years have been filled with great challenge, yet great success, and this success is down to all the work of our staff, our governors and trust, our students and vitally, our families.

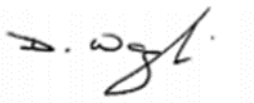
Some key takeaway headlines from the report include:

- "...changes have helped the school focus on securing the improvements identified at the previous inspection".
- "...all involved with the school are unified in their wish to bring about positive and sustained change".
- "...the foundations for further improvement are securely in place".
- "...the school, together with colleagues from the trust, have worked to enhance the curriculum and ensure that it is broad and ambitious".

- "...the school continues to prioritise reading. Since the previous inspection, considerable progress has been made in supporting pupils who find reading difficult. The school uses assessment information successfully to identify gaps in pupils' reading knowledge and to provide effective, targeted support. This approach helps pupils to build fluency and confidence in their reading. Additionally, pupils who are at the early stages of reading, including in key stage 4, now receive the necessary support to read with greater confidence".
- "...the school has made significant progress in improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. It has raised expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils and staff feel that behaviour has improved. Lesson visits demonstrate that low-level disruption is uncommon".

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. I will write again early in the New Year with an update on our next phase of continued school improvement. In the meantime, I hope that you all have a peaceful, relaxing and safe winter break.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Waugh', is written over a light grey dotted rectangular background.

Mr David Waugh
Principal