



DARTON COLLEGE

Kate Davies NPQH MEd NLE
Principal

Thursday 30th November, 2017

Ofsted Inspection Outcome

Dear Parent/Carer

Following the Ofsted Inspection in October, I can confirm that the school has been placed in Special Measures.

We are all clearly disappointed by the judgement. Whilst we accept many of the areas identified, we do not feel that the report gives an entirely fair reflection of our school or the improvements that have taken place over the last three years. We have therefore raised some concerns regarding the inspection process.

It is important that we now do not dwell unduly on the outcome and we move forward incisively, with pace to make the necessary changes required. A number of actions have already commenced.

In the coming weeks, The Governing Body will be replaced by an experienced Interim Executive Board and we have welcomed support from Barnsley Local Authority to increase capacity for leadership and management across the school.

Our existing relationship with Wales High School in Rotherham has been strengthened. Headteacher, Mr Pepe Di'lasio is now working at Darton College in an Executive Headteacher role. Mr Di'lasio has had substantial experience supporting schools placed in Special Measures. His values, like ours, are firmly grounded in ensuring all learners have a positive experience of school to achieve their full potential. We are already working together reviewing our school improvement priorities to move forward with a clear plan.

In addition, two Assistant Principals, Mr Richard Jones and Mrs Danielle Taylor, have been seconded from Wales High to support the development of our curriculum and quality assurance processes. Furthermore, a number of Specialist Leaders in Education are to be deployed in Darton College to support leadership and management across key curriculum areas.

As a result of the Ofsted outcome, the school will now be forced to academise under the Government's academy programme. We will be working with the Regional School's Commissioner to ensure that any future Multi Academy Trust that we will be joining, supports the ethos and inclusive philosophy that has been recognised as a strength of the school.

I and staff at every level throughout the school, remain committed to addressing the areas for improvement that the report states. We endeavour to ensure that we continue to maximise the progress of our current Year 11 learners in preparation for their Summer GCSE examinations. Equally, we will implement the necessary changes to accelerate the progress of learners in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10.

I want to reassure you that we value the relationship between home and school and we recognise that continued, clear communication with parents and carers is critical as we move forward. I will share regular updates on progress against the identified areas for improvement via the weekly newsletter, letters home and on the school website.

Finally, I am hugely grateful for the many messages of support that we have received from parents, carers and the wider community during the last few weeks. As a parent, I realise that the report will undoubtedly cause anxiety and uncertainty. It is a huge privilege to be the Principal of Darton College and we will, without complacency, provide the very best education for your child.

If you have any specific concerns regarding the report, please do not hesitate to contact me or any other leader within school.

Yours faithfully

Ms Kate Davies
Principal

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