



16 June 2017

Tupton Hall School Ofsted Inspection 3 and 4 May 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to inform you of the outcomes of our recent Ofsted inspection on 3 and 4 May 2017.

The school's staff and its governors have worked tirelessly over many years with our wonderful students and many supportive parents to provide a good educational experience for all. At Tupton Hall School every child truly does matter, and as Headteacher I have led the school over the last 4 years with the moral principles to do what is right for each child. As professionals and governors we firmly believe that your children attend a good school. Exam results are crucial to a child's ongoing success, but equally important are opportunities to develop their character in a safe, inclusive, stimulating and caring environment. We have worked hard to meet the needs of all students, regardless of ability or background, considering the fact that our intake is fully comprehensive.

Irrespective of the government's drive, which primarily values and then inspects mainly academic outcomes, Tupton Hall School has focussed equally on developing students' skills, knowledge and understanding in order for them to cope in an ever changing, uncertain world. A key success for any school is where individual students make progress until they leave school at 16 or 18 years of age. In recent years over 98% of our students have moved on to further education, employment or training. This is much higher than the national average and shows that the school is performing very well in meeting the needs of its students. Sixth Form progression onto university places, apprenticeships and training is equally impressive and at an all-time high.

Sadly, our most recent Ofsted inspection does not recognise this educational success, grading our overall effectiveness as inadequate. As a staff and governing body we are all extremely disappointed with the judgements made over one and a half days of whole school inspection. We find it hard to recognise the school portrayed in Ofsted's report which contrasts with staff, student and governors' daily experiences of school life at Tupton Hall. Governors have raised a complaint with Ofsted over their judgements.

The inspection report is likely to be published on the Ofsted website on Friday 23 June 2017 **(NB: We have since had confirmation that the report will be released on Tuesday 27 June 2017)** You can access it at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/> It will also be shared on the school website. If you would like a paper copy please telephone the school.

Every school has its strengths and weaknesses and ours is no different. The Ofsted inspection report criticises the pace of improvement as being too slow since the last inspection. Tupton Hall School has the highest number of disadvantaged students of any school in Derbyshire and many have highly complex needs outside the classroom.



We recognise that there is more to do in terms of narrowing the gap between the achievements of these students and others in the school, and this is where the majority of Ofsted's criticism lies. This is the single most significant and ongoing challenge for our school. Over the last 3 years there has been a reduction of more than £1 million in our school budget leading to a reduction of teaching staff from 107 to 89 full time equivalent colleagues. These contextual factors were not considered during the inspection but clearly impact on the speed of change.

What is confusing and frustrating about the overall Ofsted judgement is that only three weeks prior to this inspection the Department for Education scrutinised the school's improvement plans and wrote to governors to say that the school has 'the capacity to improve in a timely manner.' In addition, *your* views given through Ofsted's Parent View website do not match Ofsted's overall view of the school. Of 375 parents, 91% reported that their child is happy at Tupton Hall School, 85% stated that their child was making good progress, 88% agreed their child was well looked after, 86% felt the school was well led and managed and 86% said they would recommend the school to others. We hope that this feedback is valued by parents and carers.

The report raises many positive aspects of school life including our students' behaviour and pride in their school which contradict the general message of the report. On a separate sheet I have included direct quotes from the report for you to see. Many unique and excellent achievements were not inspected or commented on such as outstanding sport and PE, expressive arts, student leadership and partnership work with other schools and agencies. Similarly, little is mentioned about the exceptional staff that work at the school in support of your children, many of whom you regularly speak to me about for good reasons.

We are very pleased that our Sixth Form has again been rated as 'Good.' The majority of teachers delivering Sixth Form lessons also teach lower down the school and many leaders influence Sixth Form learning as well as lower school learning and progress.

Whilst sharing with you our collective sense of extreme disappointment we take the inspection findings seriously and are determined to address the areas of concern in the report. Our improvement plans already highlight the key areas of concern that Ofsted judge to be significant. We are absolutely committed and highly motivated to bring about these improvements quickly to ensure that your children continue to be well served and you remain confident in what the school has to offer. We have already recently made significant changes to leadership and teaching in the school with 7 new leaders and 20 new teachers appointed over the last two years.

Our ongoing partnership work with a local Academy Trust is being strengthened during this term. This will add greater capacity for sharing expertise, developing staff skills and offering greater flexibility of curriculum choice for our students. We will also be extending our work with a National Leader of Education as we plan for the next steps in order to become an Ofsted graded 'Good' school within 18 months. We see these developments as necessary but also transformational in terms of joining a network of schools, facing similar challenges but with the capacity to support and challenge one another.



Tupton Hall School

Aspire • Learn • Achieve

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I would like to assure you that the staff, senior leaders and governors continue to do their very best for your children on a daily basis. Their care, attention and concern for all of our children is unquestionable as is their desire to do their very best for them. At this time of challenge and change I ask for your support and commitment to work with the school. I understand that what is written in the report may cause concern. However, with your support I am convinced that planned changes in school, including new partnerships, will quickly meet the expectations of the Ofsted inspection framework in order to be judged a 'Good' school.

I would like to invite you to an open meeting for parents and carers on Tuesday 4 July 2017 at 6.15 pm. There will be a short presentation and then the opportunity to ask questions of the Headteacher, Senior Leaders or Governors about improvement plans, academy developments and to raise any concerns. If you would like to attend please email the school office at enquiries@tuptonhall.derbyshire.sch.uk confirming how many seats you would like to reserve. Alternatively, please telephone the school reception. If you prefer, you can return the attached reply slip to Student Services by Friday 30 June 2017.

Should you wish to meet me directly please email or telephone the school and a convenient time will be arranged.

Yours sincerely

Andrew J Knowles
Headteacher

David Skinner
Chair of Governors

Open Meeting for Parents and Carers – Tuesday 4 July 2017, 6.15 pm

Parent / Carer Name(s)

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How many seats would you like to reserve?

Please return this slip to Student Services by Friday 30 June 2017



STAND UP TO BULLYING

Tupton Hall School

- Pupils generally behave well in lessons. They are polite and their conduct is orderly.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride.
- Whole-school attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.
- Pupils feel safe at school.
- Leaders have amended the curriculum to ensure that it offers courses that meet pupils' varied needs.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available.
- The sixth form is a strength of the school.
- The headteacher is aware of the school's areas of weakness and is beginning to bring about improvements. Staff, parents and pupils are keen to support him in realising these aims.
- The quality of middle leadership has improved recently. This is bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching in these subjects.
- Recent improvements to some aspects of middle leadership and better teaching are beginning to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The work in current pupils' books in English and mathematics shows indications of improved progress.
- Year 7 catch-up funding has been well used recently to support pupils so that they make faster progress in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff recognise their responsibility in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils.
- Specialist provision such as the enhanced learning faculty is well led.
- The well-established 'aspire' provision continues to provide effective support for pupils who have emotional and behavioural needs.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision off the school site are well supported to develop the skills and behaviour necessary for successful re-integration to the school.
- Governors have the skills to hold leaders to account.
- Governors are committed to the school. They have a wide range of expertise and knowledge and ensure that they maintain an up-to-date understanding of education practice.

Tupton Hall Sixth Form

- The sixth form is a strength of the school.
- There is a strong ethos of high expectation and success.
- Pastoral support is strong.
- Students are extremely positive about the support and guidance they receive.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of academic courses. Currently the sixth form offers only one non-A level course, a BTEC course in music.
- Students' interests and needs are met because leaders are careful in securing placements that match students' aspirations and future plans.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. Students enjoy and appreciate these opportunities. Levels of participation are high.
- The sixth form leadership team is well established and stable. Leaders are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of the sixth form's strengths and areas in need of further improvement. They take decisive action to ensure that weaknesses are tackled quickly.
- Sixth-form teachers have good subject knowledge. They have a good understanding of students' needs and provide appropriate and challenging work that supports students to make good progress. Students say that their teachers provide helpful feedback.
- Attendance in the sixth form is improving and is above the national average. Students are rarely late; they enjoy their learning and are proud to be part of the sixth form.
- The majority of students who re-take GCSE examinations in English and mathematics are successful in achieving a higher grade.
- The school meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes. Leaders have ensured that students are supported to undertake relevant work experience.
- The students and parents who made their views known to inspectors are extremely positive about the quality of education provided by the sixth form.