

9th September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Ofsted Inspection of Longbenton High School - June 2022**

I am delighted to announce that the result of our June 2022 Ofsted inspection is **an improvement in our overall school rating** from 'Requires Improvement' to '**Good**'. Since I began here as headteacher in September 2020, I have been determined to ensure that this was the outcome. I am incredibly proud of what staff and students have achieved in such a short space of time to make this ambition a reality.

I am particularly pleased inspectors acknowledged that:

- The school has been transformed under new leadership; as a result this is a much "improved" school
- We have high ambition for students and an "ambitious" curriculum
- Behaviour is "calm and purposeful" and students have "positive attitudes to learning"
- Disruption to learning is rare but if it does take place, it relates only to a "minority"
- We are a "caring school" who "knows its pupils well"; students "feel safe" here
- Those with SEND "make strong progress"
- Personal development is a real strength which "supports pupils to become confident young people"
- Staff professional development is very strong; staff enjoy working here
- We successfully delivered learning during the pandemic

Ofsted reports are now very short in style and tone; it unfortunately does not fully capture the fantastic verbal feedback we had from the inspection team about the school. The report can be accessed here:

**It is important to note that the requires improvement judgement for the behaviour and attitudes sub-category is related to punctuality and attendance, not issues with student behaviour.** Punctuality and attendance are areas that come under the behaviour and attitudes heading. Outlined in the table below are our strengths within this category and the areas that were identified during the inspection as not quite being fully secure. In the summer term, we were already in the process of restructuring our pastoral team and systems, including the appointment of a second Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Culture and Ethos. Whilst it was recognised by inspectors that we were working hard on punctuality and attendance issues, the impact was deemed not yet sufficiently embedded in our school improvement journey.

With this in mind, whilst we appreciate and understand the legacy challenges of the pandemic, including mental health,



## Longbenton High School

we know you will support us going forward in getting students into school regularly and on time, in order to maximise learning and their chances of success.

Areas within Behaviour & Attitudes where Ofsted inspectors felt we were <b>secure</b>	Areas within Behaviour and Attitudes that inspectors felt still <b>require improvement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The school has high expectations for behaviour and conduct.</li> <li>- Low-level disruption is not tolerated and pupils’ behaviour does not disrupt lessons and the day to day life of the school.</li> <li>- Leaders support staff well in managing pupils’ behaviour.</li> <li>- Leaders, staff and pupils create a positive environment in which bullying is not tolerated. Bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively and is not allowed to spread.</li> <li>- There is demonstrable improvement in the behaviour and attendance of pupils who have particular needs.</li> <li>- Pupils’ attitudes to their education are positive. They are committed to their learning and know how to study effectively</li> <li>- Fixed term and internal exclusions are used appropriately. The school reintegrates excluded pupils on their return and manages their behaviour effectively. Permanent exclusions are used appropriately as a last resort.</li> <li>- Relationships among pupils and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture; pupils are safe and they feel safe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupils have high <b>attendance</b>, within the context of the pandemic. They <b>come to school on time</b> and are punctual to lessons.</li> <li>- Expectations are <b>applied consistently</b> and fairly by all staff; staff make sure that pupils follow appropriate routines.</li> <li>- <b>Students are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.</b></li> </ul>

This report is a crucial step in our school improvement journey and it of course does not stop here. We are as determined as ever to ensure the success of all of our students and to be the first choice secondary school in the area.

Finally, it remains to say that we could not have made these improvements without your parental support and loyalty, particularly throughout lockdowns, school closure and the pandemic. Thank you for your faith in me and my team. I am very happy that this Ofsted report validates what many of you already know (and what our Summer 2022 exam results also show): we are a brilliant school and caring about our students is at the forefront of all we do.

Yours faithfully

Kelly Holbrook  
Headteacher

