

Our Ref: SST/HBR

Monday 6th September 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Re: Ofsted Inspection Outcome

You may recall that the school received a formalised Section 8 Ofsted monitoring inspection on Tuesday 22nd June 2021. During the course of this inspection the school was put through its paces and the lead HMI inspector was seeking to reach a judgement as to whether The Duston School was taking effective action to become a 'Good' school or not. During the feedback meeting on the 22nd June I was delighted that the lead HMI inspector strongly felt that the school was taking effective and decisive action to become a 'Good' school. As a result, the HMI converted the inspection process from a Section 8 monitoring visit to a full Section 5 inspection. The school was then fully inspected on Thursday 24th and Friday 25th June by a team of seven HMI and Ofsted inspectors. Throughout the duration of the week the school was put through its paces, with every element, every area, every phase and every aspect of the school fully scrutinised. 102 lessons were visited, with groups of pupils spoken to for their views on the school. Parents were also canvassed for their views on the school as well, as were staff. I am hugely delighted to share with you the overall findings of the report and the overall judgements that have been awarded to the school, as follows:

- Quality of Education: Good
- Behaviour and attitudes: Good
- Personal development: Good
- Leadership and management: Good
- Early years provision: Good
- Sixth Form provision: Good

The overall effectiveness of The Duston School has been judged as **Good**. This therefore means that Ofsted have judged The Duston School to be a **Good School**. I am hugely humbled and delighted by this massive achievement. This is testament to the relentless hard work of my leadership team, my staffing body, the extensive and frankly brilliant support offered to both me and the school by the Governing Body and Trust, the attitudes of the children that attend the school and the support offered by the vast majority of parents. I truly hope that the community is proud of the school and what we have achieved. In spite of the challenges posed by the pandemic the school has continued to drive forwards and continued to improve. The sky high expectations that the staff have of the pupils are evident across the entire school and in all that we do. I was delighted that the nature and manner with which we safeguard the school community received highly deserved praise as did the overall approach to student care, building positive relationships with the pupils and our

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family feel as a school. The values and expectations of the school were evident in all that the inspection team saw and evidenced. Most humbling of all was that our pupils articulated very clearly and with huge pride that the school has significantly improved in the last few years and that they appreciate that the school cares for them. This, to my mind, is the most humbling of all the praise that has been heaped on the school and our collective work.

Since I have been in post I have been determined to significantly improve the quality of education delivered by the school to further the life chances of the pupils that we serve. I do not take it for granted that the staff share that same crystal clear vision and live and breathe the same high expectations that I have. This inspection report is the culmination of over four years of extremely hard and unrelenting dedication to improve the school. It builds on the incredible set of exam results that were achieved in 2019, where the school was the highest performing school in Northamptonshire and 55th nationally for our A Level outcomes and 4th in Northampton and the 27th most improved school nationally for our GCSE outcomes. Since 2017 the school has also become an IQM Flagship School, an IIP Gold School, a School of Character and received numerous SSAT awards for our achievements. I think it is only right and fair that those successes are once again highlighted and celebrated.

I also appreciate fully that the inspection report rightly identifies areas that we need to continue to work on, develop and improve. I would describe The Duston School as a restless school. We do not rest on our laurels and certainly are not arrogant enough to think that everything is perfect. We do, however, strive and endeavour to improve the school and make it better and better and better for the good of the children that we serve. It is by no means accidental that one of our mantras is Dream-Believe-Achieve. I continue to have an unrelenting dream and belief that The Duston School can only go from strength-to-strength as we move forwards.

The full inspection report is attached for your reference and will reside on our website and on Ofsted's website platform as well.

I thank you for the support you have shown to the school and I would again like to thank both the fantastic staffing and pupil body of the school for believing in the vision and direction of travel that has allowed the school to achieve so much.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Strickland
Principal

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