



WILLIAM FARR

C of E Comprehensive School

Our ref: JMK/SXG

30 November 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

Ofsted Inspection Feedback

Thank you for your support with the Ofsted Inspection of William Farr Church of England Comprehensive School, which took place on 19 and 20 October 2022.

We have now received the Ofsted Report and are delighted to say that the school has been graded 'Good' in all categories. Also, that the areas identified for further improvement were already identified by the school through our own self-evaluation process and included in our Strategic Priorities for 2022-25 (see school website under the 'About Us' section).

The Ofsted Report can be found on the school website under the 'About Us' section.

The landscape for school inspections has changed markedly since our last inspection in 2009 and was carried out under a new framework introduced in 2019. To put our grade of 'Good' into perspective, since the new Ofsted Inspection Framework was introduced, no secondary school in Lincolnshire has currently been graded Outstanding on a full graded inspection. Indeed, Ofsted announced on 22 November 2022 that, nationally, 83% of former Outstanding schools had not been graded Outstanding, with one fifth of Outstanding schools being graded as Requires Improvement/Inadequate.

Chris Russell, the National Director of Education, has said that *'If a previously Outstanding school receives a 'Good' grade, it doesn't mean that the school has declined in recent years, in fact the opposite can be the case'*. The comments follow Ofsted Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman's statement that a *'drop to around one in ten schools being Outstanding, half the current rate, might be a more realistic starting point for the system'*.

[Hundreds of schools in England lose outstanding status after reinspection | Schools | The Guardian](#)

During the two-day inspection, Inspectors visited over 50 lessons across a variety of subject areas, as well as speaking to staff, pupils and governors, scrutinising pupils' books and analysing results from surveys.

A pupil summed up what it is like to be part of the William Farr community when he said to an Ofsted Inspector, *'At William Farr, we are taught to be the best we can. We are not robots; we are treated as individuals and people care about us. We are supported to become well-rounded individuals, ready to take our place in the outside world'*.



We are delighted to see that Ofsted highlighted the quality and ambition of our curriculum, which prepares all pupils well, including those in the Sixth Form, for next steps. This is our core function. They commended the use of assessment, which is *'used skilfully to check what pupils have learned and remembered'*.

The commitment and dedication of staff at William Farr School to achieving high quality teaching, which leads to excellent academic outcomes, is clear. Inspectors praised teachers' pedagogy and subject knowledge and said, *'Teachers are experts in the subjects they teach. They encourage pupils to achieve excellence'*. The quality of teaching at William Farr School has also recently been recognised in an award by the Prince's Teaching Institute.

Three years ago, the school introduced its core values, which underpin the school's vision, and Ofsted highlighted that *'pupils appreciate the school values of compassion, friendship, perseverance, respect, responsibility and wisdom really mean something to them'*. This reflects the strength of our church distinctiveness and strong community of staff when *'one member of staff spoke for the many when they said that this school is the happiest and nicest place to work in. We are proud of our school'*.

Inspectors rightly recognised the strength of personal development in school, which *'ensures pupils engage with life in all its fullness'*, commending Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development of pupils, which *'is of high quality'* and *'embedded throughout school life'*. Ofsted acknowledged the extensive work we have been doing on diversity and equality.

An important part of our education is to ensure that pupils have opportunities 'beyond the classroom' so that we can develop the 'whole child', in addition to our academic provision. When Ofsted visited, they congratulated the school on our extra-curricular activities and house system. As we return to normality after 3 years of Covid disruption, we will continue to offer and to further develop these activities, encouraging all pupils, especially the disadvantaged, to take part as recommended by Ofsted. This is an area the school identified as one of its Strategic Priorities in September 2022.

Good pupil behaviour is fundamental to ensuring schools create the right climate for learning and pupils can fulfil their potential to progress to their next steps. Ofsted reported that *'Teachers have high expectation of all pupils' behaviour' and 'in lessons, pupils are well-behaved, thoroughly engaged and focused on their learning'*. This reflects the high standards and expectations we have at our school.

As we know, in all schools, some pupils continue to face challenges with behaviour, mental health and anxiety issues, especially post pandemic. We have worked hard to ensure that systems and processes are in place to support the diverse needs of our children and this remains one of our Strategic Priorities going forward, as identified in September 2022. We are currently reviewing the rewards and behaviour system in school as part of the development of the Bromcom (Management Information System) Behaviour Module. This is due to be launched later this academic year and will provide a more consistent approach to our rewards system and further improve the management and tracking of pupil behaviour across the school.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are welcomed into our school and staff work very hard to ensure SEND pupils are supported and included in our academic and wider school provision. This is reflected in the exam results and progression to next steps for most of our SEND pupils. We were pleased to see that Ofsted reported on this work, stating that *'the curriculum for these pupils is ambitious'*. Along with the school, Ofsted acknowledged that SEND is an ongoing priority (as included in the Strategic Priorities on the website) and we are currently reviewing targets in student passports so that the curriculum can be further adapted for SEND pupils, as recommended by Ofsted.



The Sixth Form is an intrinsic part of our school community and Ofsted visited a number of Sixth Form lessons, commenting on their quality. They witnessed first-hand the strong relationship between staff and students stating, *'Students in the Sixth Form are fully involved in the life of the school. They value the care and support they receive from their teachers'*. This shows the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Safeguarding was graded 'effective', 'with a strong safeguarding ethos within the school'.

Unlike in 2009 when William Farr School was last inspected, Ofsted no longer consider data, and the progress pupils make when making judgments. Our academic and destination data continues to show that pupils make excellent progress, which ultimately 'opens doors' and enables pupils to be successful in life beyond William Farr School. In 2021/22, all Year 11 pupils progressed into employment, education or training after they left school.

The Department for Education has now published the 2022 Progress 8 data for all schools. We are delighted to say that following the first set of external exams data published in the last 3 years, **William Farr Year 11 pupils achieved a Progress 8 score of +0.32** in their 2022 exams. Progress 8 shows how much pupils have improved (made progress) during secondary school in eight selected subjects, compared to other pupils with similar prior attainment. This means that William Farr pupils, on average, achieved a third of a grade higher in each qualification than other similar pupils nationally. Our most vulnerable SEND pupils also achieved a positive Progress 8 score.

William Farr School has consistently achieved results in the top 10% of non-selective secondary schools in Lincolnshire since Progress 8 measures began in 2016. **Our 2022 Progress 8 score again placed William Farr School in the top 10% of non-selective secondary schools in Lincolnshire.** Indeed, this figure was higher than a third of Lincolnshire's grammar schools. This is a phenomenal achievement with everything Year 11 pupils have gone through during the pandemic and is testimony to the hard work of pupils and the unwavering support from staff. It also shows that despite the pandemic, William Farr School continues to provide outstanding outcomes for pupils.

If any parent would like to talk about the Ofsted Report in general, the Headteacher will be available on Wednesday 7 December and Wednesday 14 December 2022 from 4-5pm for a short conversation. No appointment is necessary, however there may be a waiting time if a number of parents arrive together. Please come to the main office. Any specific pupil-related issues should be raised directly with the appropriate member of staff.

The Senior Leadership Team, Staff and Governors of the school are very pleased with the overall Ofsted result and remain committed to providing high quality education and support for your child so that they can continue to 'engage in life in all its fullness'.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Knowler
Headteacher

The Reverend Canon Dr Jeffrey Heskins
Chair of Governors