

10.3.23

Howard Community Academy Ofsted Inspection

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware, Howard Community Academy received a visit from Ofsted inspectors on the 18th and 19th January 2023.

We are very proud of the way all our pupils, staff and community responded to the inspection. We are thrilled that the report draws attention to our 'happy and caring community' and the 'calm and purposeful' behaviour of the school.

We are delighted to receive a great deal of praise for our ethos of high aspirations for all, our strong leadership, and our commitment to strengthening pupil outcomes. These characteristics underpin our commitment to providing a safe and nurturing environment, where all our pupils can thrive and develop their love of learning.

At the school's last full inspection, all areas were judged to be 'Inadequate'. This highlighted the significant improvements that needed to be made which remained very significant when the school joined Anglian Learning in 2020.

We are really pleased that this report evaluates the key elements we have worked to improve as good – and that the leadership responsible for the improvements is also good. It demonstrates that we are achieving the right things as we continue our journey to ensure Howard Community Academy is the very best it can be. We are delighted that the good start children are given is also recognised, in addition to our safeguarding being effective.

The report recognises the 'legacy of weaker education' evident at the school before it joined Anglian Learning. It recognises that the changes made are leading to a significantly improved education for pupils. In line with our own evaluation, inspectors consider the changes made need time to become fully embedded. Our plans show this work is well underway.

We are very proud of the significant improvements the school has made during the last two years and that so much has been achieved through the period of the pandemic. We are grateful to each and every member of staff, to our fabulous pupils and their families for all their contributions to achieving the improvements recognised.

The full Ofsted report can be found on our website, but I wanted to share some of my personal highlights with you in this letter:

- "School and trust leaders have a strong and shared vision. They are committed to improving pupils' outcomes. They have put in place support and training for teachers. This has helped the school to improve quickly."
- "The school's curriculum is now well planned and sequenced. Lessons include opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning. This helps to remind them and remember what they have learned before."

- “Pupils generally behave well in lessons. They listen carefully and participate actively in their learning. Pupils are helped to talk about their feelings and know there are calm spaces to go to if they feel upset or need to be on their own.”
- “Pupils talk about what they have learned about world religions. They learn about people and lifestyles that are different. They are tolerant and respectful towards each other and their teachers. They welcome new pupils to the school and help them to settle. The curriculum helps pupils understand that people are not all the same. They recognise ‘it is okay to be different’. They enjoy the range of clubs the school offers.”
- “The trust has worked effectively with school leaders to identify appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).”
- “The Early Years Foundation Stage is a bright and engaging environment. Leaders have identified the importance of developing spoken language and communication. As a result, teachers plan activities that help support the youngest children to communicate.”
- “Staff are kind and caring. They take care of the children and focus on their social and emotional needs and welfare. Children are supported well as they move from the nursery into the reception class. Parents are helped to share their children’s learning through effective communication between school and home.”
- “Leaders have united, galvanised and enthused the staff through their vision for success. They have worked effectively to build positive relationships with the community. Staff and most parents are fully behind the improvements that leaders are driving.”

I am full of pride at this recognition of the hard work and dedication of our colleagues, families, wider community and Anglian Learning. Our community remains at the heart of our vision and we can all be proud of what we are achieving together.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my gratitude for the patience, support, and efforts you have shown over the last two years, these have placed us in a strong position to continue to thrive over the years to come.

We will be sharing our plans for the next stages of improvement with our community and seeking the views of you as parents of pupils and all those we work with to inform and shape these.

Yours sincerely

Alison Weir

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Headteacher, Howard Community Academy