



24<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

## Visit from the Regional Schools Commissioner's Office

Shortly before the Easter holidays we were visited by the Regional Schools Commissioner's Office to assess the College's progress since joining CMAT in July 2016. Following the visit the RSC inspector has written to the school to report on his observations. I wanted to share this positive news with you at the earliest opportunity.

The report was very pleasing and found that "the College is moving strongly in the right direction." The report particularly praised our new house system and vertical tutor groups. It said they have "been an effective way of building mixed-age families and promoting a community feel" within the College. The inspector described noticing students chatting happily in groups that often appeared to contain different ages in the large dining hall. The inspector also spoke with some Year 11 students who were very positive about the new house system reporting "that the creation of staff teams and house areas had given them places and people to relate to, a single point of reference for their different needs." The inspector said students saw this as a more efficient system and a considerable improvement on what went before. This is brilliant feedback for us and a reflection of all the hard work that our house teams put in on a daily basis.

During his talk with some of our Year 11 students, the inspector also noted that students were very complimentary in recognising the efforts of our staff to help them catch up and achieve their personal exam goals. The report said students "described how times had changed: the teaching was much better, the staff were visibly 'going the extra mile', and poor behaviour was much less frequent". Students said they would generally recommend the school, and felt that any areas for improvement were being effectively tackled and managed.

Students also spoke highly of the changes we have made to the school building so far and were very complimentary about their ability to have a say in the running of the school. They told the inspector they felt that their suggestions were taken on board and often led to actions. The inspector said he had overheard a lively debate about the proposed new uniform in the corridor and said "such initiatives are a very effective way of involving students and giving them a stake in school life".

The report finally praised our partnership with CMAT, stating that "the Trust has played a key role in bringing about the improvements" and that "its local knowledge and presence have been much valued." The report commended our work with other local schools in the Trust and said that the collaboration "has raised staff expectations about what is possible and contributed to better practice and a climate of improvement" which I agree with whole-heartedly.

We are delighted with the findings of this report and proud of the transformation the College has made so far. There is still much to do to ensure we provide the high quality education for all pupils that the people of Ely deserve but as the inspector so nicely put "there is an important feeling of optimism for the challenges ahead". You too should be very proud of the role you and your children are playing in the transformation of the school.

I would like to thank you all again for your continued support of the College and look forward to seeing some of you at the next Parents In the Loop on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April, 6pm to 8pm.

Yours faithfully



Richard Spencer  
Principal

“ There is an important feeling of optimism for the challenges ahead

... the College is moving strongly in the right direction. ”

Feedback from The Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner  
- April 2017



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Work with other local schools in the Trust has raised staff expectations about what is possible and contributed to better practice and a climate of improvement. ”

Feedback from The Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner  
- April 2017



“ The new house system, with its vertical tutor groups, has been an effective way of building mixed-age families and promoting a community feel.



It was noticeable at break in the large dining hall that students were chatting amiably in groups that often appeared to contain different ages.

The students reported that the creation of staff teams and house areas had given them places and people to relate to, a single point of reference for their different needs. They saw this as a more efficient system and a considerable improvement. ”

Feedback from The Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner  
- April 2017



“ Where Year 11s were very complimentary was in recognising the efforts of the staff to help them catch up and achieve their examination goals

They described how times had changed: the teaching was much better, the staff were visibly 'going the extra mile', and poor behaviour was much less frequent. ”



Feedback from The Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner  
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