

24 February 2020

Dear parents and carers,

As you will be aware, the school was inspected by Ofsted on 21 and 22 January 2020. Today, after a long wait, the inspection report has been published on the Ofsted website and the results of the inspection are now public.

**I am pleased to announce that the school has regained its “Good” overall grading. I am also extremely pleased that our Early Years provision has maintained its “Outstanding” status and that the school has been awarded “Good” in all other aspects of its provision.**

These results have been awarded under the new, much more challenging Ofsted inspection framework that was introduced in September 2019.

All registered parents will be sent a copy of the new inspection report which is much shorter and contains much less information than would have been given in the past. The format and structure of the report is rather disappointing and uses a formulaic approach that simply outlines strengths of the school, whilst identifying areas that the school needs to build on. However, during the inspection process, the school has also received more detailed feedback and will be using this to help accelerate the pace of change within the school. The focus of the school will now be to become a rapidly improving, outstanding provider in as short a time as possible.

As well as commending our outstanding early years provision, the report has particular praise for the whole of primary phase – which was observed to be very strong. Sixth form provision was also highlighted as a strength of the school. In the secondary phase it was observed that pupils achieve well overall by the end of Key Stage 4 (GCSE). However, the inspectors found that more work has to be done to ensure that Key Stage 3 is more challenging for students across all subjects. We have also been asked to deal with the behaviour of a small number of students in the school, whose behaviour can affect others in the secondary phase.

School leaders have already started developing plans to address issues discussed in the report. The academy trustees will be looking at the first draft of these plans when it meets with members of the school leadership team later this week.

**Secondary:** 01604 669200 **Primary:** 01604 669210 **Website:** [www.ccs.northants.sch.uk](http://www.ccs.northants.sch.uk)

**Principal:** David James **Vice Principals:** Andrew Fisher Katherine Patterson Gary Wakefield

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**The Wooldale Centre for Learning, Wootton Fields, Northampton NN4 6TP**

Parents should also be pleased to hear that as part of our ongoing work to improve the school we have been accepted onto the "High Performance Learning - World class school award". This is a two-year, prestigious programme designed to accelerate change and to develop consistent and highly effective classroom practice based around the 'High Performance Learning' philosophy. The "HPL World Class School award" officially kicked off with the January training day which was hosted by our two external HPL mentors.

As parents and carers know, it has been a difficult few years for the school. The school was severely impacted by floods in 2018 and has been disproportionately affected by cuts in education funding which has seen significant reductions in the amount of money the school receives each year from the government. The publication of the inspection report represents a significant step forward for the school. This linked to the government's recent announcement of increased school funding where initial estimates indicate that our school will receive an increase in funding greater than the national average of 4%, which will hopefully allow us to move forward at a more rapid pace.

As a school, we are keen to further develop lines of communication with parents and carers. From today, we will be running a series of parental surveys to gather parents' views on several issues. I would encourage all parents to engage with this exercise, so school leaders are more aware of parental issues.

Andrew Sortwell, Chair of the Trustees would like to add the following message:

*"The trust is delighted that Ofsted inspectors having undertaken a detailed scrutiny of the working and operation of our school have identified the school as being good with outstanding Early Years. The Trust wishes to thank the staff for all the hard work they have undertaken over the last two years to continue to improve our school on our journey towards excellence."*

*The inspection report is a reflection of the commitment and determination of our staff to continue to offer the very best of opportunities to our pupils and students. We are not complacent and will continue with our strategy to become an outstanding school at the next inspection. Well done staff and pupils and students. I have been associated with the school since its very beginning and I continue to serve the school that I am very proud of. It was our first all through school in Northamptonshire and has pioneered this approach that other schools now follow."*

If you have any feedback or comments regarding the outcome of the inspection, then I would be happy for you to share these by contacting the school via email on [office@ccs.northants.sch.uk](mailto:office@ccs.northants.sch.uk).

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I would just like to finish by saying thank you to all students, parents, carers and our dedicated staff. I am fully aware that our new rating would not have been possible without the continued support and effort of everyone pulling together to see us through. There is more to do, and I am looking forward to continuing to work with you to ensure the students at Caroline Chisholm School receive the very best education that we can give them.

Regards,



David James  
Principal