

Dear Parents & Carers

26 February 2010

As mentioned in our half term newsletter, the Academy underwent its first Ofsted Inspection on 3rd and 4th February and we have now received the final report from the two HMI Inspectors.

The full report is attached to this letter and is also available on our website www.oasisacademycoulsdon.org. We encourage you to read the report in full and take note of its findings. As parents, I know that there are two comments in particular (on page 4 of the report) that you will find very reassuring:

**“Staff are emphatically focused on raising standards”
and
“The Academy knows its students very well and the level of care is exemplary”**

We are very pleased that the Inspectors agree with our own view on progress at the Academy. Staff are working relentlessly to raise standards and improve the life-chances of our students and we are delighted that this has been acknowledged by the Inspectors. There is a lot in the Inspection Report that we can celebrate but it is just a small step on our way to become a centre of excellence. Obviously we have noted all the priorities and areas for improvement and staff are now working on development plans and will implement systems to continue our drive to improve standards across all areas.

The main judgement of the Inspection was:

“The Academy has made good progress towards raising standards”

It is important to note that this Inspection was a ‘Section 8 Inspection’ which is a monitoring visit held within the first year of a school or Academy opening to determine progress. The Academy will receive another full ‘Section 5 Inspection’ in about 12 month’s time.

The report notes the ‘**good improvement**’ already made ‘**over the relatively short period of time**’ in students’ attainment in GCSE examinations. The percentage of students gaining 5 or more A* - C grades have risen from 51% in 2007 to 63% in 2009. Whilst those who have gained 5 or more A* - C including Maths and English has increased from 35% to 44%. Inspectors noted that senior leaders have introduced **robust systems to improve** attitudes of learners and these are beginning to have a positive impact with more students on course to reach their targets.

The Academy leadership and management teams have a **strong commitment to raising standards** and know what needs to be done to transform their vision for high achievement into action. The leadership team ‘robustly scrutinise’ their practice and are working closely with external consultants to raise standards further, limit the barriers to students’ engagement and motivate students to reach their potential.

When it comes to care, guidance and support the Inspectors said: **“The Academy knows its students very well and the level of care is exemplary. The systems for ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of students are rigorous, clear and effective. Students feel very safe in school.”**

The Inspectors judged **behaviour in lessons and around the school as ‘good’** and found that students have responded very positively to the Academy’s **strong ethos** which has generated a strong loyalty to the Academy. **Students** told Inspectors that they **feel valued and that staff listen to them.**

Executive Principal - Mr John Murphy

Principal - Mr David Millar

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The Inspectors observed that staff and students **treated each other with respect and enjoyed a good humoured relationship** which promoted students' maturity and confidence and the students themselves feel strongly that behaviour and the Academy has improved. These improvements have been achieved by **consistent practice of staff** and high visibility of senior leaders both inside and outside the Academy. Students also like the fact that more courses are offered that suit their learning needs and Year 11 students particularly appreciate the fact that they are given laptops.

When looking at **teaching and learning**, many of the lessons observed were '**good**' and "always at least satisfactory". Inspectors saw students **enjoying their learning through challenging, stimulating and varied activities**. The students told Inspectors how much they appreciate the fact that **teachers are making their lessons interesting and enjoyable**. The Academy's robust tracking systems means that teachers can target intervention support tailored to specific groups or individuals.

The Academy was praised for having established **good links with primary schools** to support transition and **provides an extensive programme of enrichment opportunities** to help widen students' experiences.

We would like to thank the students their hard work and commitment and we would also like to thank parents and carers for your support. We have had to implement a lot of new systems and structures in order to turn the school around and bring about these improvements; our aim is to create an Academy which students, parents and the community are proud of and by working together, in partnership, we will succeed in achieving our goal.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



David Millar
Principal

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