

14 May 2012

Our ref: HOL/wil

Dear Parent

Re: Ofsted Inspection Report May 2012

This communication includes Westwood College's most recent inspection report. I was not allowed to send it to you until it was published on the Ofsted web site.

As you know, the college was recently inspected by Ofsted. The inspection was carried out under the new Ofsted framework which was introduced by the Government on 1st January 2012 and which has been promoted as being more demanding than the previous framework.

It is interesting to note the national figures in the table below, for the date indicated

Year of inspection	Graded Outstanding	Graded Good	Graded Satisfactory	Graded Inadequate
March 2011	11	22	41	0
March 2012	5	31	40	25

The overall judgement of the inspectors was that Westwood College is 'Good'. In the context of the new inspection framework this clearly makes us one of the country's more successful secondary schools. The level of support given to the college by staff, students and parents indicates that our community recognises that we provide a very high quality of education for our students.

Nevertheless we need to become Outstanding again and we will be working extremely hard to achieve this grade at the next inspection.

There are five sections in the new framework; we were graded as 'Good' in all five sections

Achievement:

The inspectors' analysis of our data gave us a judgement of 'Good'. Whilst I understand the reasons for this judgement it has to be pointed out that they use a very narrow range of data to inform this judgement. THIS IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT REASON NATIONALLY FOR OBJECTIONS, FROM ALL SCHOOLS, TO THIS NEW OFSTED FRAMEWORK.

Our own analysis of our examination results shows a rising trend of attainment over the five years since the last inspection at both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. 2011 saw record levels of performance across all key measures for Year 11 and Year 13 cohorts. The vast majority of key measures are above or significantly above national averages. At both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 students generally made better than the expected progress.

Whilst there has been a small increase in the number of 'vocational' courses studied at Key Stage 4, the vast majority of students have a GCSE based curriculum.

We will continue to provide a traditional, academic curriculum composed mainly of GCSEs for the vast majority of our students **because this is the best curriculum to enable our students to progress to employment or Further and Higher Education**. We will also continue to enable students to have as wide a vocational curriculum as possible where it is the best thing for individuals.

The percentage of students achieving 5+ A*-C grades including English and Maths is 66% which is significantly above the national average of 57%, and the highest score in the history of the college. This measure has seen a 17% increase over the last four years with both Maths and English showing year on year improvement over that time period. The percentage of students achieving 5+ A*-C grades, at 81%, is above the national average of 79%. We are significantly above the national average total points score having achieved 497.7pts (463.9pts national average) despite only minimal changes to the qualifications taken (in line with the pattern of each of the previous three years), we are also significantly above the national average capped points score with a score of 350.1pts (335.1pts national average) and have been for each of the last three years. The percentage of students achieving 5+ A*-G grades 98% remains significantly above the national average of 94% as it has done over the last three years.

In the Sixth Form (Key Stage 5) attainment in 2011 was a record performance. The Average point score per entry was 222.5 (Staffordshire score was 207pts and national 214.4pts); and this represents a 5 year improvement year on year. Westwood ranks 3rd in Staffordshire in terms of average points score per entry (50 sixth forms). Over the period 2007 - 2011 Westwood is one of only 5 Staffordshire Sixth Forms to produce a year on year improvement.

The Total Average Point Score of 823 is also the highest performance achieved in the last four years and, was not achieved by increasing the number of entries per candidate. This is well above the Staffordshire average of 772.2pts and national average of 744.8pts. In the Sixth form we achieved a pass rate for all qualifications of 99.5%, 99% of students achieve 2 or more A levels or the equivalent, 89% of students achieve 3 or more A levels or the equivalent and 10 subjects achieved 60% or more passes at A*/B grades

Our figures are also *significantly* better than those for similar schools nationally for the Government's new 'English Baccalaureate' measure – the group of GCSE subjects comprising English, Mathematics, two Sciences, a Humanities subject and a Foreign Language, all at grade C or above, which has become an important qualification for students looking to enter Further and Higher Education. The pass rate at Westwood was 26% (Staffordshire score was 12% and National 15 %).

As mentioned above, our curriculum equips the students very well for life after Westwood College. Every year over 85% of our students go on to Further Education and are able to access higher level (eg. 'A' level) courses. Many of them then go on to Higher Education. Furthermore, there are very few or often no students from our college who become 'NEET' (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

Behaviour and safety:

The inspectors were extremely impressed with the quality of relationships in the college, commenting that students related very well to each other and to staff. Their behaviour in lessons and around the college was very positive and there was no doubt that they *felt* safe and *were* safe.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

These were seen to be a strength throughout the curriculum. However, there is no separate judgement for this section.

Leadership and management:

It was clear to the inspectors that the college is well run, well governed and has a very good understanding of how to improve further. Hence, they judged Leadership and management to be 'Good'.

Quality of teaching:

On the two days the inspectors saw largely 'Good' and 'Outstanding' teaching; none that was judged to be 'Inadequate'. This was very pleasing because we have worked hard to further improve the quality of teaching and learning in the college over the past 18 months. Under the terms of the new Ofsted framework if the *Achievement* of students 'over time' is judged to be 'Good' then it must be concluded that the *Quality of teaching* over time must also have been 'Good', regardless of the observations made during the inspection itself.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all the support you gave the college in connection with the inspection. The exceptionally high levels of support from parents and students were noted by the inspectors. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss any aspect of the Ofsted Report in more detail.

Yours sincerely



Keith Hollins
Executive Principal