

9th June 2023

Dear Parent /Carer,

I am writing to you as I have now received the report from Ofsted following their inspection of our school on 7th and 8th March 2023.

Whilst I acknowledge and agree with the overall judgments, I am a little disappointed in some of the language used in the report which can be interpreted more negatively than the reality of the situation on a daily basis.

When I arrived at Smith's Wood Academy, a week prior to this inspection, I was fully aware that the school needed significant improvements to be made, and this report has not changed my plan to secure these.

As parents and families, I know this report may cause some concerns and I both understand and appreciate this. As a parent myself, knowing your child is safe and secure at school is absolutely paramount. In my new role, I immediately brought about a number of changes to ensure that students are safeguarded and the systems and procedures around safeguarding are now robust. A recent safeguarding review visit from an external partner has verified the improvements already made.

Smith's Wood Academy has historically had many difficulties which has resulted in a decline in school performance. Irrespective of Ofsted visiting, I am committed to addressing this and need to now draw a line to focus on the future.

In the short time I have been here, I have started to address the areas highlighted by the inspection and improvements with both staff and student performance are already evident. The journey to get this school back to being good, and serving its community well, will not be a quick or easy one but you can rest assured that I will ensure it happens.

Some of the actions that have been undertaken since the inspection include:

- Students have been explicitly 'taught' the behaviour expectations of the school so that they are clear about the daily standards.
- New behaviour systems introduced meaning less lost learning time.
- The curriculum has been modified with immediate effect for Y7 ensuring a greater emphasis on progress.
- The Trust has increased the number of Trust staff in the school in order to support the academy.
- Appointments of new key senior leaders in both teaching and pastoral roles.
- Simplified and clear guidance has been given to all staff about roles and responsibilities and all staff have had training on this.

I now need the support and commitment from you as parents, and families to help us all on this necessary journey of improvement. I need the absolute commitment from our students to understand the role they play in improving their school. I also need the commitment from our staff to support the necessary changes to Smith's Wood Academy.

I will continue to communicate with you explaining some of the significant changes to systems and structures that will help the continued improvement that our community at Smith's Wood both needs and deserves.

Please click on this link to view the Ofsted report:

[Ofsted-Report-Smiths-Wood-Academy-Inspection-Dates-7th-and-8th-March-2023.pdf \(smithswood.co.uk\)](#)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Huntington', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr S Huntington
Principal