

20 May 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are absolutely delighted to be writing to you today with the news that Longsands has been recognised by Ofsted as a 'Good' school following their latest inspection in February 2024.

This is such a watershed moment for our school, and we want to thank our staff for their dedication and commitment to the school; our students for their hard work; and to you our families for your support. Longsands has had a challenging few years, and we are all so pleased that Ofsted has recognised the school as 'Good'.

We are particularly grateful to members of the wider community who have visited the school and voiced their support for us as we have been making the improvements needed at Longsands.

You will of course want read the report in full [\[link here\]](#) but to highlight a few key points, inspectors who visited us in February comment on our 'high aspirations' and how 'pupils value the knowledgeable teachers who support them to achieve well.' They recognise this has not always been the case in the past.

Ofsted note that Astrea has 'worked hard with school leaders to ensure that pupils learn well across an effective and broad curriculum, including in the sixth form.' Our pupils achieve well and are 'well prepared for successful future study and/or employment'.

The report makes clear that we have developed the effectiveness of our work to support students with additional needs with leaders identifying pupils' needs clearly. Staff are given appropriate guidance on how to adapt learning, and as a result our SEND students achieve well – indeed, above average numbers continue with their study into the sixth form.

Inspectors also highlight our focus on reading through the Astrea Reads programme, with 'pupils increasingly confident with challenging texts as a result. Pupils who need it get extra support to help them catch up with their reading. This enables most pupils to access the school's curriculum successfully.'

Whilst leadership and management, quality of education, personal development and the quality of the sixth form are all graded as 'Good', behaviour and attitudes are recognised as needing further improvement. As Ofsted say in their report: 'many pupils recognise improvements in behaviour that have occurred due to the school's actions. They feel safer and happier as a result. However, some do not. Some pupils still need further support to improve their behaviour to meet the school's expectations.'

We agree with this, which is why we have put in place the approaches we have, making very clear our high expectations of how students behave in and around school. Inspectors comment that 'leaders recognise there is still more work to do to support some pupils to improve their behaviour. The school's actions are bearing fruit.'

More broadly, Ofsted recognise that 'the school has made necessary changes, including in how behaviour is managed. These changes have had to address some deep-rooted behaviours throughout the school.'

As we move into this next phase for Longsands, we are keen to work even more closely with our families. As the report notes, we are working hard to 'rebuild positive relationships with parents'. We are totally committed to this work, and our new Parents Advisory Council will play an important role in this.

Today is an important day for all of us and gives us a strong platform on which to build over the coming weeks and months. Thank you again for your support. We will continue to do everything we can to make further improvements – particularly regarding behaviour, in line with Ofsted's conclusions.

Yours sincerely

Dr C Cusick  
**Principal**

Ms R Hackwood  
**Chief Executive Officer**