

Friday 14th June 2024



Armthorpe  
Academy  
ARMTHORPE ACADEMY

# HEADS UPDATE



## Ofsted, school improvement plans, and our final few weeks.

Welcome to the latest Heads Update, in this edition I'm going to talk a bit more about our post Ofsted plans and what is in place to continue the drive to secure a good judgement once again for this wonderful school.

I hope by now you've had a chance to read the report fully, as I mentioned in my letter earlier in the week, although disappointing the judgement wasn't a surprise to me as the GCSE results over the last two years here just haven't been good enough. I do however want to make sure we recognise the positive comments in the report, below are just a selection of those:

### Positive Comments from our report

- Pupils are beginning to benefit from the recent changes to the curriculum.
- Many pupils meet the high expectations the school has for their behaviour
- Many pupils, particularly those who are older recognise their improved experience in school.
- The school now recognises this and is making appropriate changes to improve the quality of education that pupils receive.
- The school now has high expectations of pupils.
- Current pupils access an ambitious curriculum.
- The school has made improvements to the education that pupils receive.
- The improved curriculum is benefiting pupils in younger year groups more swiftly. The school recognises the need to support older pupils who have gaps in their knowledge. The school's improved approach to understanding where pupils are in their learning is also benefiting younger pupils
- The school's recent focus on raising expectations for behaviour is improving the experience of pupils in the school. Many pupils have responded positively to the increased expectations.
- New leaders to the school, trust and those responsible for governance have high ambition for pupils. They are making the school a better place for pupils to attend.
- The many changes the school has made are starting to have a positive impact. Many staff, parents and pupils recognise this

The final 2 points are the ones I am most pleased about, the inspection team could see that what we are doing is working, we just need time, time to embed, time to make these

## Ofsted, school improvement plans, and our final few weeks (cont).

changes part of our culture here at Armthorpe. I am equally pleased that the vast majority of staff, students and parents spoke highly about the last 7 months since I came in as the new Headteacher. Whilst this Ofsted report is based on the progress made since our last inspection 5 years ago, they did recognise the significant improvements made in the recent past.

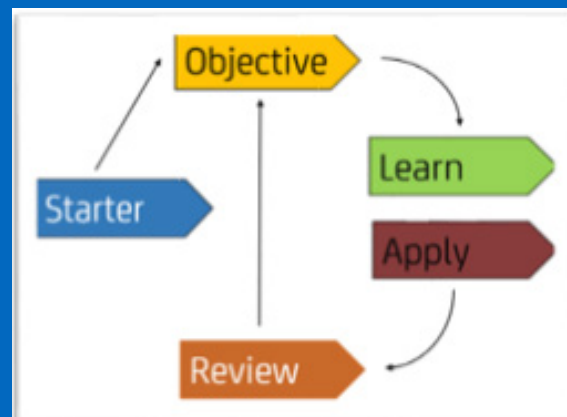
What next?

I just want to go through a few of the changes that we have already made and are planning on making in the upcoming weeks and months to continue to improve the quality of education our students deserve.

1 - We are continuing to align our curriculum with the Consilium curriculums, we will shortly be sharing with you every single subjects 5-year curriculum. This tells you what is being taught and when its being taught. This is crucial in helping you help your child with their learning. You will know exactly what topics they are covering, what learning objectives they need to know and how that links to the wider working world.

2 - We have made the decision to change our learning cycle (the way we teach). Previously we have used a cycle called SMUGA (Sharp Starter, Modelling, Understand, Go, Assessment), through consultation with the staff we are moving to a model used in many of our trust's schools. The new model is called SOLAR (Starter, Objectives, Learn, Apply and Review).

# SOLAR



The recent inspection report noted that the school needed to review its curriculum and ensure there are opportunities for pupils to know more. I am confident that the two changes above will help us positively move towards addressing this point.

On a final Ofsted note, unsurprisingly we are revisiting our practice around attendance. It's crucial that we work together on this to improve school attendance, simply put, if students are not in, they are not learning. The report makes the point that when students attend and meet our standards they do better! There will be more information to come around our revised approach to attendance, but we must think differently about how we encourage more students to attend, more of the time. This target isn't just a school target, this is a target for all stakeholders, we all can help improve whole school attendance.

# Changes to the school week.

You may or may not have seen in the news recently that schools have been instructed to increase the time students spend in school to 32.5 hrs p/week. This was optional for this academic year and is now being made compulsory for all schools from September 2024.

<https://www.strictlyeducationhr.co.uk/news/length-of-the-school-week>

Here at Armthorpe Academy we were 1hr and 15mins short of this expectation so we must find opportunities to increase our working week by this amount of time.

Below is our proposal for achieving this extra time.

Period/Event	Timings
Free Breakfast Club <sup>1</sup>	08:00 – 08:25
Student Movement Time / Equipment Resolution	08:25 – 08:30
Form Time	08:30 - 09:00
Period 1	09:00- 10:00
Period 2	10:00 - 11:00
Break	11:00 - 11:15
Period 3	11:15 - 12:15]
Period 4 / Yr 9 & Yr 11 Lunch	12:15- 12.45
Period 4 / Yr 7 Lunch	12:45 - 13:15
Period 4 / Yr 8 & Yr 10 Lunch	13:15 - 13:45
Period 5	13:45 - 14:45
Student Movement Time / Equipment Resolution	14:45 – 14:50
Assemblies - Monday (KS3) & Thursday (KS4)	14:50 – 15:15
Extra-Curricular <sup>2</sup>	14:50 – 15:50

The main 3 changes are as follows:

1 - Adding 5 minute 'movement and equipment resolution' time onto the start of every day, this time can be used to sort out all uniform and equipment issues before the day starts.

2 - Adding 5 minute 'movement and equipment resolution' time onto the end of every day, this time can be used to return any borrowed uniform or equipment once the day has finished.

3 - An assembly once a week from 14:50 – 15:15 for all year groups, these take place on Mondays for KS3 and Thursday for KS4.

<sup>1</sup> The Free Breakfast Club is optional and is not counted towards compulsory hours.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the above the school will offer weekly extra-curricular clubs that run from 14:50 – 15:50, these are optional and are counted towards the compulsory hours.

If you require any additional information on this matter or anything else mentioned in today's newsletter, please feel free to contact me and I'll be happy to discuss it in more detail.

As always, thank you for your ongoing confidence and support in what I am trying to achieve here at Armthorpe, it's now been a year since I first started to visit. I hope you agree that progress has been made in that time, I genuinely feel that Armthorpe is in a better place than it was 12 months ago, I'm equally confident it'll be in an even better place in 12 months' time.

Warm Regards  
David Bisley  
Headteacher