



The Henry Cort Community College

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CJR/MMC

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to share with you the outcome of our recent Ofsted inspection, which took place on 20 January 2026. This was our first inspection under Ofsted's new framework, which replaces the old single judgement with a detailed report card and sets higher expectations across key areas of school life.

You may find Ofsted's video guide for parents helpful in explaining the new report cards and grades:

[New Ofsted report cards and grades: a guide for parents](#)

Under the previous inspection framework, in June 2023, the school was judged as 'requires improvement'. Under the new framework, schools no longer receive a single overall grade. Instead, each area is evaluated separately. We are pleased that the report demonstrates significant progress since the last inspection, while also providing clear areas for us to continue improving.

Ofsted also determine whether safeguarding responsibilities are 'met' or 'not met'. We are delighted that they have recognised the progress at Henry Cort and made the following judgements:

Safeguarding standards met: Inspectors confirmed that we have established an open and positive culture of safeguarding in which concerns are identified, acted upon and managed effectively. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Attendance and behaviour – Expected standard: We are pleased that attendance has improved, and inspectors recognised our effective support for those who struggle to attend. They also noted our high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct, and the school's effective approaches for addressing poor behaviour, should it occur.

Inclusion – Expected standard: We are particularly proud that inspectors highlighted inclusion as an important part of our culture. They found that staff identify barriers to education effectively and plan comprehensive support. Wellbeing support is particularly effective.

Leadership and governance – Expected standard: Inspectors recognised that leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, and have put in place programmes to deliver high-quality and consistent teaching, to continue to strengthen attendance, and raise attainment. While some programmes are in their earlier stages, they noted their positive impact.

Governors provide the necessary support and challenge, staff are very positive about working at the school and share a commitment to working in the best interests of pupils, and

parents and carers told inspectors that they recognise the recent positive improvements in the school.

Personal development and wellbeing – Expected standard: Our personal development programme was found to be coherent and age-appropriate. Inspectors highlighted the variety of arts and sports activities on offer, and noted that pupils speak proudly about the school council. They praised our impactful careers programme.

There were two areas that were judged to need attention: achievement, and curriculum and teaching. These are both areas that we have already been working on as priorities on our College Improvement Plan, and we are pleased that Ofsted recognised the positive improvements we have made. Ofsted now use a 'secure fit' model, so an evaluation of 'needs attention' does not mean that all aspects of that area are not at the expected standard, but does indicate that there is some work to be done within the area to fully meet the expected standard.

Achievement – Needs attention: Inspectors found variability in pupils' progress through the curriculum. However, they noted that our plans to raise achievement are starting to make a difference. We are pleased that inspectors recognised that many pupils' attainment was much improved in the recent GCSE examinations, and we have previously highlighted the significant progress last summer, but we also recognise that this needs to be sustained and consistent across all groups.

Curriculum and teaching – Needs attention: The quality of teaching and learning continues to be a key part of our College Improvement Plan, as we focus on adaptive teaching and consistency across the school. While inspectors found variability in the quality of teaching, with misconceptions or gaps in knowledge not identified quickly enough in some lessons seen, they noted leaders' accurate understanding of how well the curriculum is working, and our actions to strengthen practice. They also highlighted effective support for those who need extra help with reading.

We are confident that our ongoing work around the curriculum and teaching will lead to further progress in achievement, and will continue to drive improvements with focus and urgency.

We firmly believe this report reflects the dedication of our staff, the character and resilience of our pupils, and your support as families – thank you. We are proud of how far we have come, and excited about the future as the school is on a positive trajectory.

You can read the full Ofsted report card which is also attached to this email, and it will also be published on the Ofsted website in due course.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Rice
Principal

ASPIRE

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