

Dear parent/carer,

I hope that this letter finds you and your families well. As a parent/carer of a child in one of our Trust schools, we felt it important to share with you the successes that have been achieved by our pupils.

Department for Education GCSE Performance Tables

One of our Trust values is achievement without excuses. There is no doubt that the pandemic brought an unintended impact for so many of our students and families. However, the combined efforts of students, staff, and families working together, has meant that the catch-up plans for our students have resulted in genuine success. We have navigated the pandemic with outcomes better than ever before. The strong outcomes of our two secondary schools, Carleton High School and The King's School have been validated in the Department for Education 2022 performance tables published last week.

A key measure that the Department for Education uses to measure the success of a school is called Progress 8. Put simply, Progress 8 measures how much progress pupils have made across their eight key GCSE subjects between the end of Key Stage 2 (age 11) and the end of Key Stage 4 (age 16). This is the first time the Government has released national GCSE performance data since 2019, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The published GCSE performance data for both Carleton High School and The King's School shows that students in both schools achieve half a grade higher per subject than the national average of students with the same level of prior attainment. The King's School scored 0.54 and Carleton High School 0.57 compared to -0.03 National average and 0.07 Wakefield Local Authority average.

Primary school performance

Back in July, we celebrated the excellent primary Key Stage 2 SATs outcomes; 81% of our pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to the national average of 59%. This is on the back of outstanding phonics performance as well as success in the early years and Key Stage 1. An excellent performance and, like our secondary Schools, achieving well above 2019 outcomes with a pandemic in between.

I am delighted to say that in terms of progress measures, all six of our primary schools are significantly above the national average and in the highest 20% for maths, reading, and writing at Key Stage 2.

The reason for highlighting the successes of our children and young people is because it is something to shout about. The last few years have been difficult and much of the news we see and hear in the press is negative. The outcomes that children are achieving in all of our schools is, I believe, a powerful and very positive story for our Pontefract community. By sharing this news with you is a way of thanking you as parents and carers for your support and celebrating the work put in by your son/daughter and the staff across our schools.

Running schools is both a great privilege and responsibility. The leaders and staff in all of our schools are very determined to continue the excellent progress that has been made. We remain humble by virtue of the fact we know that the improvement journey never ends. There are always things that



we can do better and improve upon. There are things that we do not always get right. However, we will not apologise for having the highest of expectations, both in and out of the classroom. We have seen just how well our students respond.

I speak for all of our staff across the schools in that improving the life chances of our young people is the core of our work. Our aim is to continue to deliver outcomes so that more of our children get off to a flying start at primary school, that will give them a strong foundation when they enter secondary school.

Once again thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Julian Appleyard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'A'.

Julian Appleyard OBE

CEO

