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SCHOOL RESPONSE TO OFSTED INSPECTION

You will be aware that the school was inspected by Ofsted on January 20th/21st 2010 and their judgement was that Darton High School requires special measures. The full report is enclosed in this correspondence for your perusal.

Page Five of the Inspection report asks "What does the school need to do to improve further?" What follows has been, and will continue to be, the school's agenda for improvement to transform Darton High School into a high performing school as quickly as possible.

There are three key priorities described by Ofsted and these are:

1. raise attainment and accelerate progress of students;
2. ensure that leadership and management at all levels has greater impact on the school's effectiveness;
3. strengthen outcomes of provision concerning student attendance and high expectations of student behaviour.

Each of these will involve significant changes in the operation of Darton High School, including a change to the ethos of the school.

In the time since the Ofsted inspection, a thorough audit of the practices, procedures and actions of our school has commenced, in order to clarify the extent of the shortfalls in our provision. This process will be jointly conducted by officers of Barnsley Local Authority, other agencies and all employees of Darton High School as and when appropriate to the needs of the school. There have already been significant enhancements to the operation of the school .

Actions resulting from the Ofsted priorities

1. The school, with support from the LA, is ensuring that the teachers have all the necessary skills to promote the kind of learning needed in 2010. This will involve gaining evidence from a number of sources, including observations of lessons, scrutiny of students' work, interviews with students and statistical analysis of students' attainment. The school is ensuring the collection and analysis of data is rigorous and the information it provides will continue to direct change for improvements.

Examples of the better ways of working as a result of this data include:

- ensuring that all teachers understand how to promote learning in every lesson for every student;
- much improved methods of lesson planning and preparation to accelerate student progress;



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- collapsing the timetable for Y11 to focus on final examination preparation;
 - An improved and more consistent approach to the frequency and quality of assessing students' work, including marking of students' assignments;
 - the construction of the KS4 intervention room for appropriate students to complete coursework or sit online examinations;
 - implementation of new courses and pathways to the school, so that a tailor-made personalised curriculum can be offered to each student in the new academic year;
 - increased use of individualised and targeted intervention for students who are falling behind in their studies.
2. Also there has been an analysis and evaluation of the roles of employees at Darton High School with regard to leadership and management. Some of these have been communicated to you in previous correspondence, but as the school has formulated its plans for improvement, the role of each leader, whether a member of the Senior Leadership Team, Governing Body, Curriculum Team Leader, pastoral or support staff has been explored, assessed and, if necessary, redefined in order that each understands fully their role in the transformation of Darton High School. Each individual will have challenging targets, appropriate to their role and will be held to account as new rigorous monitoring systems continue to be introduced to gauge the impact of decisions and actions. Each member of staff has been given clear expectations so that all staff at Darton High School understand what to do and when to do it.
3. Data about attendance and behaviour has been analysed and is being used to improve current practice. Darton High School remains committed to the belief that students attired in school uniform promotes a good learning environment and attitude to learning in lessons. Consequently we continue to place great emphasis on this. To reinforce to students the school day begins with Form Time, we have taken the decision to move back to vertical (year group) registration groups. Form time is a crucial start to the day and offers many opportunities for valuable learning.

Behaviour management in the school has also been re-developed, making our procedures more fit for purpose. Changes in personnel, along with a new monitoring system, are allowing the school to direct resources proactively. We are convinced this will reduce unacceptable behaviour and increase the school's capacity to react to our students' needs.

The school's processes and systems will continue to evolve and improve, because we will continue to monitor and evaluate our actions and procedures.

It is of paramount importance to our future success that you, as parents/guardians, are not only informed of our intentions, actions and accomplishments, but also have the opportunity to provide us with constructive feedback, in order to assist with the transformation required at Darton High School.