



From the Headmaster
Damian J Ettinger BA, MA, PGCE

March 2023

Dear Parents

You will recall that the School had its regular inspection by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) in November 2022. I have now received a copy of their report, which I am writing to share with you as promised.

Within the report you will read that the School was found to be **'Excellent'** in the key Quality of Education measures, which consider 'Quality of pupils' academic and other achievements' and 'Quality of pupils' personal development', for which teachers, pupils, and – by extension – parents, are due great credit. Further, the standards relating to Spiritual, Moral and Cultural Development; Welfare, Health and Safety; Premises; Provision of Information; and the Manner in which Complaints are Handled, were all met. The last five standards do not have a grading, other than 'met' or 'not met'.

However, you will also note that the Report identified work to be done that relates to our Single Central Record – a document that collates all employment checks and when these were completed. In two instances, medical checks, which are required for all staff, were completed but not registered on the Single Central Record in a timely manner. Separately, there were two instances of staff in support roles starting their employment whilst a second reference was still being chased from historic employers. By the end of the four-day inspection, these omissions were corrected.

ISI's policies are, understandably, very robust and these technical oversights on recording practices result automatically in the standards on Safeguarding and on Leadership and Management having not been met. I am sure this will come as a surprise, not least when considered in conjunction with the wholly positive findings of the rest of the report.

I would like first to apologise for this and reassure you of the wider robustness of our safeguarding measures, which we take great pains to enforce and ensure are well placed to fulfil their purpose. Second, I would like to provide you with the steps that I am taking to address the points raised by ISI:

- When our new HR Officer starts work next week, we will ensure appropriate training is conducted regarding the Single Central Record, and that ongoing support is provided.
- Strengthening our procedures on staff recruitment to ensure that no member of staff may begin working at Cokethorpe, whether on site or remotely, until all administrative checks are completed satisfactorily.
- Ensuring the flows of information and oversight for Senior Management of the Single Central Record are improved.

Through these measures, I am confident that we are addressing the steps needed, whilst also providing a more effective overall operation. I have asked ISI to return and conduct a progress monitoring inspection at their earliest opportunity. I am hugely buoyed by this report that rightly highlights the many areas of great strength of our School, and thank the whole community for their efforts.

I will keep you up to date with developments. However, should you have any questions or concerns, you may email me at hma@cokethorpe.org.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jani Stimp". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long horizontal stroke.