



The Armthorpe School

A Specialist School in The Arts and Sport



THE ARMTHORPE SCHOOL

AMBITION RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY PRIDE

The Armthorpe School is an 11-18 comprehensive school of approximately 750 students which serves the former mining village of Armthorpe, situated three miles to the east of Doncaster and five minutes from Junction 4 of the M18. The school benefits from its location at the heart of a well-established and cohesive community. There is strong sense of goodwill and support from parent / carers which are founded principally upon recognition of our student centred ethos and high aspirations for all learners.

As a Specialist School for the Arts and Sport, we are committed to raising the confidence, self-esteem and attainment of our students through learning experiences which allow for active participation and an appropriate degree of challenge. The school's values make clear our expectation that all school members exhibit ambition, mutual respect, willingness to take responsibility, and pride in belonging. These values are a reference point for all aspects of school life, but particularly our work, relationships, behaviour and attitudes.

The school's current accommodation comprises a new £1.5 million Technology block alongside several buildings which have benefited from a degree of upgrading in recent years, but should have been refurbished / replaced under Building Schools for the Future in Doncaster. We have, however, established a Synthetic Turf Pitch which has enhanced our specialist provision and provided new opportunities for school members and the wider community.

During the next three years, the school will undergo significant transformation as a result of new leadership and redefined partnerships. Governors are currently consulting stakeholders on the future status of the school and, in particular, assessing the potential benefits of conversion to academy status as part of an umbrella trust partnership.

The strengths which were identified by Ofsted during our last inspection in September 2009 still reflect the school's identity and special character. Inspectors identified a strong community spirit and determination to improve the life chances of all students. They found that students are proud of their school and are welcoming and courteous to visitors, and that effective care, guidance and support provides for those who are vulnerable or who have special educational needs, enabling them to make good progress. It also emerged from the inspection that the school is particularly successful at re-engaging students in learning so that the number leaving school who are not in education, employment or training is very low.

Ofsted stated that school leaders have established a clear agenda from which to drive further improvement. Not surprisingly, some of our key priorities have been significantly influenced and refined by the outcome of the inspection itself. In particular, we will: raise attainment and achievement, particularly in English and mathematics; use assessment information to plan learning with an appropriate degree of challenge for all students; develop teaching styles which increase all learners' active participation and independence; and improve the post -16 curriculum in order to meet the full range of learners' needs and raise attainment.

Our latest results (Summer 2011) have helped to establish momentum and a positive trajectory which we are determined to sustain. The proportion of students achieving 5A*-C including English and mathematics has risen from 36% in 2009 to 46% this year, and those achieving 5A*-C grades or equivalent at Key Stage Four has risen from 68% in 2009 to 85% during the same period.

Student progress and the quality of their learning experiences are at the heart of all of our work. It is our belief that all students will thrive, if the environment for learning is right. The school is fully committed to the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of learning and teaching, through the development of its staff, and through the dissemination and celebration of best practice. Within this framework, we place great value upon professional autonomy and encourage innovative approaches to teaching. For their part, students are guided by very clear expectations regarding good habits in learning and behaviour; a key aim is to establish a culture of achievement for all. The vast majority of our students appreciate and respond well to this ethos.

To summarise, we recognise that we still have some way to go in ensuring that achievement and standards fully reflect our high aspirations, but we are confident that the provision which we make for all our learners is improving, and that our targets and ambitions are both realistic and achievable.

Colleagues who successfully apply for posts at The Armthorpe School will become part of a friendly and professional team which is committed to making a difference in the lives of the children and young people of the school. Our aim is to become an outstanding school. If you feel that you have a contribution to make, I would urge you to apply to join us.

Andy Cope
Headteacher

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