

Ralph Thoresby School Progress 8 Statement 2018



I am writing to offer a little more detail and explanation around our recent Progress 8 figure which has now been published in the DFE performance tables. While I welcome the use of a progress measure as opposed to simple attainment, it is important to understand that one figure rarely tells the whole story of a school's academic performance.

Ralph Thoresby School has a strong and consistent record of academic performance in recent years. Individual cohorts can vary in ability and engagement but our average Progress 8 figure over the last three years is at national average. In addition to this, our value added performance at A Level and equivalent has consistently been among the best in the city. It is important to add that we are achieving these results *without* removing students from our roll to manipulate the data or forcing students to take courses which boost the Progress 8 figure but have little value in the real world.

As our exam performance has improved, so has our reputation and I am very proud that, in Years 7, 8 and 9 we are oversubscribed. Our GCSE class of 2018 were a wonderful group of young people who performed well (100% of students remained on roll and achieved at GCSE level). This year group were unique in that 10% of the cohort (including many of our highest achievers) did not count in our Progress 8 figures as they had no prior attainment data. We also supported every student, including those with significant social and emotional issues, through the exams and beyond into further education, training and employment. When we adjust our Progress 8 figure to account for the 10 students on our roll who, through no fault of their own, were unable to access full mainstream education, our Progress 8 figure for 2018 rises to -0.05 (very close to the national average). It is also worth noting that our 2018 cohort had a very high percentage (51%) of disadvantaged students. Both key cohorts (disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students) achieved in line with national average.

I am delighted to see that Ofsted are now recognising that our inspection system has been 'placing too much weight on test and exam results when we consider the overall effectiveness of schools'. Our recent Ofsted inspection (16th October) was a very positive experience and the team saw the school at its very best. I am looking forward to telling you more about our inspection when the report is published. In the meantime, I would urge any current or prospective parents and carers to visit Ralph Thoresby and see first-hand the fantastic, all-round education we offer to all our students and not rely solely on the published data.

Thank you for your continued support.

Ambition and achievement for all!

Best wishes,

Will Carr

Headteacher