Featherstone Technology College

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Dear Parent,

**RUMOURS OF OUR CLOSURE ARE UNTRUE**

Featherstone Technology College is not closing! While individual students did well, only 23% of students gained 5 A*-C GCSE grades (including Mathematics and English). However, the 5 A*-C GCSE grades overall remained at a very healthy 51% - our second best results in the college's history. We are confidently predicting that our current Year 11 students will raise the college results back to their previous highs.

The reasons for this unusual dip in results were:

The Mathematics Course we followed, AQA Modular Mathematics, resulted in a big drop in the pass rate at grade C and above, a problem that affected 13 out of 18 schools in the Wakefield district alone, as well as many nationally.

We seem to have had a very severe marker for English. One of the exam papers has gained only half the marks it should have done for many candidates and we are still in contact with the Exam Board to sort this out.

The year group, as measured by primary schools and external testing, were not as able as the students in the previous year. Also, many students came to us from outside the Featherstone area - 19 joined us after the GCSE course started - none of whom gained the important 5 A*-C GCSE grades including Mathematics and English.

As a small college we only need around a dozen students to under-perform in Mathematics or English to produce what looks like a huge change in results.

In nearly every other measure the college has performed as expected, in fact the majority of students here once again met or exceeded expectations against predictions. Please do not forget that only a few months ago Ofsted praised your children and all aspects of the college, judged `good` in all categories:

**- Students achieve well and gain examination results that are better than expected.**

- The college provides a good education for all its students. They feel safe, enjoy their education and benefit from a calm and secure learning environment.

- The good quality of teaching and learning is the major factor, underpinning students' good achievement. Relationships between teachers and students are good and teachers plan carefully to engage students' interest and maintain their concentration.

- Students' personal development is good. They behave well, both in lessons and around the college. Students have a good understanding of how to lead a safe and healthy lifestyle, a strength that has been recognised in the Healthy Schools award.

- Students experience a curriculum which is well matched to their needs and interests.

We value all our children whether they have special needs or not; whether they obtain 5 A*-C grades or not. Nevertheless in the long term we are keen to become part of a larger organisation that will cater for needs of all the students in Featherstone. Clearly, with only 91 students being admitted into the current Year 7 the size of the college will continue to reduce. There are currently two good schools in Featherstone and we very much hope that St Wilfrids will be willing to work in partnership with us so that we can all continue to improve. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact either your child's learning co-ordinator or myself. In the meantime, your child needs support and encouragement from both home and college - please continue to work with us to maximise your child's achievements.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Dr G S Wilson