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After the recent publication, (and furore surrounding), the school league tables or performance tables as I will refer to them, I felt it was prudent to clarify both my own and the schools position regarding the controversy and polarising opinions on this thorny topic.

School performance tables are a vital source of public information that are critical to parents and students within the community in which the school serves as well as teachers, leaders and stakeholders of the school and any prospective employees and future students who will undoubtedly view them and then form opinions on that school. Stereotypically it will be seen as top end – great schools and the converse for the lower echelons of the tables. This viewpoint is unfair on every level and for every school. Performance tables are of course key information, however they are by no means the only source of key information about a school but should never be used in isolation in making judgements about both the school and all of the afore mentioned people associated with that school and community.

As a school leader I take great pride in my schools performance, but this performance is made up of many facets, outcomes and progress for Y11 and Y13 students which are published in schools performance tables are just one of many of those facets. For starters there are 5 other year groups that are not reflected in those tables that have done many wonderful and varied things that deserve equal publicity and recognition also. Having students represent us in simple ways such as being polite to visitors or being responsible citizens around the town are things that we are equally proud of. The charity work, CCF, sensory garden project, the community serving 'Tranquility Salon', are just a snippet of the great work outside of examination activities that occur that we are equally proud of. We have and continue to strive to get a balance between terminal exam outcomes and cultural extra-curricular enjoyment. What must not be under emphasised is the curriculum offer that students receive as that is vital in ensuring success as Ofsted are rightly giving a greater profile in the new inspection framework.

Our lofty position in the performance tables is however a very poignant and timely reminder of the efforts and commitment from both students and staff and also the parental support that occurred particularly last academic year. The commitment of staff to give up copious amounts of holiday time and Saturdays to ensure that students had every opportunity possible to be successful was phenomenal and should never be taken for granted. I hope every student, parent and person associated with HGSC and its community look at those tables proudly but also with a sense of understanding that the real success is in seeing the largest ever intake of Y12 students to sixth form, a huge proportion of first choice prestigious university places taken up, higher level and post 16 apprenticeships offered to our students and remember how that was what it was all for – and not to be top of a league.

I took this position to give the students of Heanor the best chance to do as well as they could, the staff that stayed, the staff that joined me did so for those reasons also and no other. Regardless of performance table position we will never change that philosophy and purpose. Student success is our only purpose.

So in conclusion the success that is highlighted by the performance tables for HGSC are merely a by-product of what we are really here for which is the success of students in achieving their potential and moving onto the next stage of their lives at the end of key stage 4 or 5 respectively after the whole journey they have been on over 5/7 years respectfully.

What it also does give however is the confidence to the next generation of students and the year groups that will follow that not only can Heanor students do well, they can compete and often out compete their peers, that they can be 'better' than national counterparts and they can go onto the best universities, apprenticeships and jobs that this country has to offer and those statements of fact are not teachers, parents and friends telling them to make them believe, they are cold hard facts in black and white in performance tables.

That is priceless for us as a school, a body of incredibly talented, hardworking and committed staff and a community that will continue trying hard every single day to be at the forefront of an aspirant culture and working tirelessly to build self-confidence and self-belief in each and every one of our amazing students.