

Thursday 8th February 2024

OFSTED Outcome

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you may know, Queen Elizabeth's School had an inspection visit from Ofsted last October. The report is now being published, after a considerable delay, as we had concerns about the inspection and had raised a number of complaints with Ofsted.

Overall, the school has been rated as "requires improvement". Whilst the sixth form, behaviour and attitudes, and personal development are all rated as "good", the overall judgement was driven by the conclusions on quality of education and leadership and management.

Turning to the specifics of the report, it is encouraging to see the sixth form recognised as a real strength of the school, providing study programmes that meet our students' "individual learning needs and aspirations", and that they are given opportunities to develop their leadership skills by mentoring younger students. Our students told the inspection team they value our annual careers fair and the work experience opportunities provided and receive useful advice and guidance about their next steps.

Behaviour and attitudes are also recognised positively in the report, with pupils conducting themselves well around school. The inspection team also pointed to our culture of "high expectations" on how pupils behave towards each other and to staff.

Personal development is a further area highlighted, with our personal, social and health education curriculum recognised as appropriate for each year group. Pupils and sixth-form students discuss sensitive topics in a respectful and considered way, and also learn how to keep themselves safe when online and how to look after their mental and physical well-being.

We recognise that, like any organisation, there are always areas that we can improve on. A number of these are highlighted in the report, including:

- "In some subjects, assessment is not used effectively". Since the inspection, we have delivered training to staff on the effective use of assessment in lessons. We are closely monitoring the impact of these strategies and have planned for future development.
- "The school does not have high enough expectations of how well pupils read and write". Since the inspection, we have implemented Sparx Reader into Year 9 to assess reading ages and encourage students



to read texts appropriate to both their reading and chronological age. Sparx Reader will also be integrated into our homework for Year 9 alongside Sparx Maths, to ensure students continue to develop their reading fluency. We have plans to further develop reading and writing across the curriculum.

- "The school does not evaluate the impact of its work well enough." Since the inspection, Initio Learning Trust has established a Rapid Improvement Group to monitor our progress and ensure school leaders are having an impact on the areas for improvement raised by Ofsted. We are committed to developing internal monitoring and evaluation at all levels of leadership.

Overall, whilst there are many positives in the report, the overall grading is unquestionably disappointing. We fundamentally disagree with this assessment and raised our concerns with Ofsted through a formal complaint. These relate to the way in which the inspection was carried out, the behaviour of the inspection team, and the depth of their reviews when coming to a decision on the quality of education we offer at Queen Elizabeth's School. We have also written to Sir Martyn Oliver, who is the new head of Ofsted as he has pledged to make much-needed changes at Ofsted.

We wanted to be completely open with you about our complaint to Ofsted and also to recognise the areas where – legitimately – we believe they were right to point to the need for improvement. Our commitment to you, is that we will continue to focus on these areas so that next time Ofsted visit they will see rapid progress in these areas.

We will be hosting a parents' session on Thursday 29th February 2024 from 5pm to 5.30pm where you will have the opportunity to ask any questions about our improvement plan. I very much hope you will be able to attend. Please click on the link below to book yourself a place on the Parents session:

[Attendance to Ofsted Parents Session](#)

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do get in touch using the school office email address: office@queenelizabeths.com

Yours sincerely,



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Initio Learning Trust



Simon Firth
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