



3rd December 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

At the end of the last academic year in June, a team of Ofsted inspectors visited East London Science School for a three-day inspection covering all aspects of life at our school.

The inspection report has now been published on the Ofsted website and is included with this letter. The overall judgement is that the school is Inadequate, and has been placed into Special Measures. As a school which prides itself on its high standards and academic aspirations, this is a very disappointing judgement for the school to receive and I know that parents will feel the same way.

As part of the inspection process, the inspectors asked parents to express their thoughts about the school on the Ofsted ParentView website. Although many of you told us that you were happy with the school, far too many said that there were serious problems.

The Governing Body accepts the overall conclusions of the report. At the end of their inspection visit in June the inspection team gave a detailed briefing on their areas of concern. The Interim Principal and the Senior Leadership Team have been working throughout the summer and in the autumn term to address the issues that were raised.

The issues included

- **Safeguarding:** The inspectors said that the school's culture of safeguarding was poor.
- **Special educational needs:** some pupils with SEND were not receiving the support they needed to learn successfully.
- **Curriculum:** There were weaknesses identified in the way the school supports students' personal, social, health and economic education – known as PSHE; in the standard of Careers provision, and in the absence of a Religious Education curriculum during the pandemic.
- **Assessment:** Ofsted said that too much time was being spent preparing pupils for tests.
- **Behaviour:** The inspectors saw and heard about behaviour problems which disrupted pupils' learning in class.
- **Communication:** the inspection team noted that communication between the school and parents had been poor in the previous year.

The details are in the report.

To stand on the shoulders of giants

Some of the actions that have been taken since the inspectors left include

- **Safeguarding:** The safeguarding team has been rebuilt, led by the new Safeguarding Lead Jennifer Copestake. There is a senior person responsible for safeguarding at each of the school's three sites. The whole staff body received extensive training in safeguarding from an external consultant over the summer.
- **Special Educational Needs:** The school appointed a new specialist SENCO in the summer to support pupils with Special Education Needs.
- **Curriculum:** there is a new PSHE curriculum, delivered through a 1-hour lesson each week. Religious Education has been re-introduced with the option for pupils to take the Religious Studies GCSE examination in the future.
- **Assessment:** tests are now termly instead of half-termly, allowing more time for pupils to master the material.
- **Behaviour:** all pupils now have a 'scholarly behaviour record card', to reward positive behaviour and ensure clarity and fairness when sanctioning poor behaviour.
- **Communication:** We hope that you feel that communication with you has already improved. Parents evenings have restarted, there are more opportunities to meet school staff, and we are looking at every aspect of how the school engages with our parent community.

While these responses are positive, there is a great deal more to do.

The Governing Body is supporting the school to make sure that the senior team has the resources, skills and capacity needed to sustain the improvements made so far

Parents will have questions and feedback about the issues raised in the report, the school's response, and the changes that are being introduced. That is why we would like to invite you to meet with the leadership team through a series of drop-in sessions over the next few weeks. Details will follow shortly.

The Trust has also been working closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner at the Department of Education, whose concern is to make sure that the school receives the long-term support it needs for sustained and rapid improvement. We welcome this support, and I will write to you with more information about this soon.

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Although there will be many changes and challenges to come, the ambition of the school is to offer a high-quality academic education to everyone. This continues, as does the primary focus of the school – to provide the best for our pupils, and instil a love of learning that lasts a lifetime.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Hinde". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'K'.

Kevin Hinde

Chair of Governors

On behalf of the East London Science School Trust

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