



FOREST HILL SCHOOL

ASPIRING TO EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

SPECIALIST SCHOOL IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

8 February 2022

Outcome of Ofsted Inspection, October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to you following the publication of the Ofsted report for the inspection of the school which took place on 7 and 8 October 2021. Thank you for bearing with us for the four months since the inspection was conducted. As you may be aware, this far exceeds the normal timescale for report publication following an inspection. This is because we had significant concerns about the conduct of the inspection, and several of the key judgements made by the inspection team. These concerns led us to follow Ofsted's procedures in responding with our comments to the content of the draft report, and subsequently to submit a formal complaint to the inspectorate about the inspection and its outcome.

Despite these efforts, the overall outcome of the inspection is that Forest Hill School is judged to be not yet good. Whilst we are pleased to receive 'good' judgements for personal development and sixth form provision, we are disappointed that the inspection team did not recognise the many other strengths of the school, or the significant progress which has been made in all areas since the 2017 inspection. Forest Hill School is a place transformed since that inspection, with step changes in standards of behaviour, attendance and classroom experience for our students. We expected that this could have been better recognised and commented on in the report. Their judgements and comments differ significantly from the overwhelmingly positive feedback given by Forest Hill parents in the annual parent survey last summer, and in the Parent View survey carried out by Ofsted as part of the inspection process. They also do not match with the views of external support partners which work with the school. Our thanks go out to the many parents who took the time to complete surveys. Your support is, as ever, highly valued.

This being said, we are not a complacent school and our improvement agenda was already focused on the areas for development identified by the inspection team. Although we have ongoing concerns about some of the judgements, we will work with the recommendations in the report as we move forward on our improvement trajectory in the coming months and years. As ever, we will seek guidance and support from a range of expert partners from outside the school. Parents will receive regular updates on our progress with this agenda. We will be working towards a follow-up Ofsted monitoring visit which is likely to happen early next academic year. This visit will not be a full inspection, but rather a brief means of ascertaining the progress made by the school. The full inspection should happen within two and a half years and we can assure you that all of our energies will be directed towards ensuring that inspection yields judgements which are a true reflection of Forest Hill School.

It is important for you to know that the Governing Body are fully aware of all aspects of the inspection, the response to it so far, and future plans to secure an improved outcome when Ofsted next visits. Governors will work closely with school leaders to ensure this.



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We understand that the outcome of this inspection is not what any of us would have wanted, and that you may wish to know more about how we intend to respond to it. To that end, at the next Parents' Forum on [REDACTED] a significant section of the meeting will be devoted to that very matter. If you wish to register to attend please follow the link below.

[REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



Michael Sullivan
Headteacher



Keith Knox
Chair of Governors