



Bexley Grammar School
Danson Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BL
A Specialist Language College and
IB World School
Tel: 020 8304 8538

Headteacher: Mr S C Elphick

e-mail: enquiries@bexleygs.co.uk

Dear Parent/Carer,

I follow last week's update with two items this week, one that I wasn't expecting to be writing to you about (our Ofsted visit) and the second one of a rather more personal nature.

The first is to give you brief feedback on our Ofsted experience since you and your children will be anxious to know the outcome. The lead inspector emphasised more than once in his feedback to governors last night that the provisional outcomes he presented last night are confidential and subject to the quality assurance process at Ofsted and may be changed at any time until the report is published. The whole process will take 3-4 weeks. I am simply not permitted to tell you or staff the provisional judgements before then.

However, I can tell you that the feedback was very positive and although there are some areas for development, there are no significant concerns. I am very pleased and I'm smiling. I can also tell you that the parent and student survey results were very positive indeed - the lead inspector commented on how high the percentages of positive responses were compared to norms. Your children were amazing and inspectors repeatedly commented on their exemplary behaviour. Thank you all for your support; I have felt the community rally around over the past three days and have received some beautiful messages of support which I promise I will respond to individually.

The second item is entirely unconnected but coincides in timing this week - I have to share this now for the process to have time to run smoothly.

I have been planning for over a year but it is now time to tell you that I will be retiring at Easter next year, at the end of the Spring term of 2023, exactly nine years since I was privileged to become the headteacher of Bexley Grammar School. I have written my letter of resignation to the Chair of Trustees, Mr Woodcock, told my senior management team last night and then told the rest of my staff this morning.

I will keep this brief but please believe me when I tell you that the timing of this news has absolutely nothing to do with the Ofsted inspection this week!

I want you all to know that the primary drivers for this decision are personal, with my ageing parents at the top of the list. As I said to prospective parents and year 6 pupils at our open

mornings last week (as I do every year), this is the only school I've worked at where I genuinely want to come to work each day; it will be a wrench for me to leave. We have faced significant challenges over the past decade but I have always felt tremendous support from the whole school community at those toughest moments, for which I am deeply grateful.

Throughout the last academic year, I have worked with the Chair of Trustees and my two deputies on succession planning in the leadership team to ensure that the seven-strong team is ready to support a new leader in taking the school forward. I had banked on having our outstanding status renewed by Ofsted last year to provide a clean slate for the new headteacher but the inspection has turned out to be in the same week as my planned announcement; we will have to wait a little longer for that final judgement for a new headteacher to take forward.

In sending your children to Bexley Grammar School you place a great deal of trust in us everyday; I ask you to extend that to the Trustees as they appoint my successor and to my hugely experienced leadership team who will work with this new person from Easter to preserve the best of BGS and to take the school forwards and upwards in its relentless pursuit of excellence.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Elphick', written in a cursive style.

Steve Elphick