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EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

From the Chair of Governors: Charles Beer

13 September 2023

Dear ECS Community

The School has received a Report from the Independent Schools Inspectorate, following an unannounced inspection in April. The Report has identified certain areas where the appropriate standards have not been met. I wanted to write to you to explain the implications of this and how the Governing Body has responded.

The Inspectors have found that, in handling a complaint, the Governors concerned did not follow the school's own policies correctly and did not deal with the matter in a timely manner. In the process of considering this aspect, they also found that there were failings in the monitoring of certain wider risks and procedures. The Governors have accepted these findings.

These findings all relate to failures of governance. You should be reassured that the senior management of the school has done all that it should in the making and implementing of school policies. In particular the Inspectors found that the school manages the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils well.

The Governors deeply regret the failures of governance which led to this outcome. They have complete confidence that the Headmaster and staff of the school were and are fulfilling all their obligations correctly and are ensuring the best education, safety and wellbeing of all your children. There is nothing in this report which suggests otherwise.

Following the inspection in April, one of the governors has resigned, and the Chair of Governors, who was anyway due to retire at the end of last term, stood down early. Both had been suffering from ill health. We have appointed a new Safeguarding Governor, Michael Totterdell, and following a selection process within the Governing Body, I have been appointed Chair. We are also in the process of recruiting new governors to fill identified skill gaps on our board, and have a number of promising applicants.

Following a review of governance undertaken by independent assessors last year, we are taking the actions required to make sure we have the appropriate policies and board-level risk assessments in place and to ensure that these are properly monitored as part of our governance responsibilities. We will also be making sure we provide full support to our excellent senior leadership team who do such a fantastic job of educating and looking after the pupils of Exeter Cathedral School.

Yours sincerely

Charles Beer
Chair of Governors