

OPEN LETTER FROM A PARENT

1st February, 2018

REACTION TO OFSTED REPORT

Upon reading the Ofsted report of Gloucestershire International School (G.I.S) my initial reactions are those of sadness and disappointment.

Sadness that such a antiquated inspection process has to take part at such a modern, forward-thinking school, and disappointment that a government body could be so narrow-minded and near-sighted as not to be able to see the broader picture.

My other reaction is one of being patronised, I had to pull my son out of a school regarded as “good” by Ofsted due to safety worries, I would never ever place my son, who is the most precious thing to me, in a setting where I believed he was at risk! Rather, my son has felt at his safest and most happiest in his time at G.I.S.

I am proud that my son is at G.I.S, proud that he is treated not as a number but a human being with feelings, thoughts and ideas, proud that he is deeply cared for both mentally, physically and academically, and proud that he feels safe and happy, able to talk to any teacher and together find a solution to any problem he may have. I have every trust in the Principal and his vision for the school.

I found the report narrow-minded in that it does not take into account that many of the children (mine included) would not even be in an education placement if not for G.I.S due to anxiety, mental health, behavioral or special needs issues. That is surely an achievement in itself?

Academically my son has exceeded my expectations (which are high! And I also feel the teacher’s expectations are high too!) he actually finds maths fun, and says the way that it is taught is positive and refreshing, he was so happy that recently he was in lessons able to answer a GCSE maths question and this in turn has greatly improved his confidence in a subject that he had struggled with.

However I feel that Ofsted should also look more behind the outdated purely academic success and as mental health is very much talked about now - I find it strange that in this area which G.I.S. simply excels at there was no mention of this in the report.

My other son is at a school graded as “outstanding” by Ofsted, and yet I see so very many ways in which G.I.S vastly outdoes that school. What a shame that Ofsted sees only score tests and the ability to fill in paperwork. I feel that on this occasion Ofsted have let G.I.S. and all of its very hard-working staff down badly by labelling it as an inadequate school, my sons and all the other parents and children I have spoken to tell a different story... one where they are all very happy, confident, feeling safe, and actually enjoying school!

Written by a parent of Gloucestershire International School.