



30th January 2023

Dear Mayor Rahman,

We the undersigned are all headteachers of the schools located within the Old Bethnal Green Road and Weavers “Liveable Streets” schemes and we would therefore be severely impacted by the proposals the council published on 19 January.

We have experienced Bethnal Green before the new street layouts and after. And it is clear to all of us that the recent changes to our local streets have brought about significant improvements to the safety and health around our schools.

Before, the immediate area around our schools was dominated by speeding vehicles, noise and fumes. Now, we can see from the data provided that there has been a significant reduction in cars using the roads around our schools and that this has positively affected air quality.

From the summer 2022 consultation results that you have recently published, we can see that support for the changes is a majority view in Bethnal Green and Tower Hamlets as a whole.

Are the current schemes perfect? Surely not. Can they be improved? Yes, we think so.

Ofsted requires us to identify and mitigate threats to children’s health and safety and the proposals are a threat to safe arrival and departure from school. Ofsted also requires us to communicate with stakeholders and this is why we are speaking out to make our position on this issue clear.

That is why we are deeply concerned by the proposals you have published at the start of a three-week consultation process. You haven’t put forward any options for improving the schemes by building on what we currently have. Instead, you are presenting a choice between reopening roads such as Old Bethnal Green Road to more than 6,000 vehicles per day or keeping the layouts as they are.

You are furthermore confusing matters by saying that schools such as ours will only be able to benefit from improved pedestrian crossings if the current street layouts are removed. Why should we have to choose between a safe, low-traffic area for our students and a zebra crossing outside our school? Controlled crossings in sensible places would significantly improve the current layouts, without the need to re-introduce thousands of dangerous and polluting vehicles every day around our schools.



Headteacher: **Simon Ramsay**

Deputy Headteachers: **Jason Bonning**

Steven Farmer

School Business Manager: **Srividya Srivathsan**



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A Learning Community

Please reconsider your proposal and work with us and other stakeholders and the wider community on a third option, which accepts that the current layouts are popular and successful, but could be better. Don't go back to square one. Look to improve what is already there. You are very welcome to meet us at one of our schools and walk around the neighbourhood to find out more for yourself.

Yours Sincerely

Annette Rook, Headteacher Lawdale Junior School

Ann Wood, Headteacher Elizabeth Selby Infant School

Barbara Lo Giudice, Headteacher Virginia Primary School

Oliver Woodward, Headteacher Columbia Primary School

Simon Ramsay, Headteacher Oaklands School



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