

East London Connect Review 2019

As we enter the final day of 2018, it gives me great pleasure to reflect on some of the significant moments, which have shaped the work of East London Connect throughout the year.

We have reached a significantly higher number of pupils in 2018. Our education and career sessions enabled us to speak to 500 pupils aged between 14 to 17 years old, compared with just over 260 pupils of a similar age in 2017. But as we increase our impact, East London Connect is committed to maintaining the highest level of quality services. At Catholic Palmer Academy in Seven Kings, one of our newest schools, we offer bespoke career and educational sessions, in line with the nationally recognised Gatsby Career benchmarks. We ran employability skills sessions as well as invited Phillip Beevers, an Engineering Director at Google London, to share insightful career advice. East London Connect was also one of the launch panellists for the Young and Giving's Mentoring scheme, an organisation helping increase diversity and career advice for young people aged 18-25.

We also organised educational trips specifically targeted at addressing the increasing topical issue of under-representation at universities in the UK. In partnership with Gonville & Caius College at Cambridge, a group of talented year 9 and year 10 pupils from East London Science School in Stratford, met a range of different Black and Ethnic Minorities(BME) students at Cambridge. Through seeing people from similar backgrounds, it dispelled misconceptions about Cambridge students and opened perhaps unimagined futures. One year 9 pupil at East London Science School, summed up how this changed his perspective: "I never would have considered applying to Cambridge but after meeting Chris, (a Black English undergraduate student), I think I might apply". Similarly, we also provided information about a BME Conference at the college, showcasing representation at Cambridge to sixth formers in East London. We had three successful applicants including one student from London Academy of Excellence(LAE) in Stratford. Imran from LAE felt the conference gave him "a better insight into the admission process at Cambridge". We would like to say a special thank you to Rebecca Bradley at Cambridge who has been instrumental in planning these events.

To continuously evaluate and improve our impact, East London Connect were successfully selected as part of the UCL's Institute of Education(IOE) educate project. The project brings researchers and educational practitioners together to ensure evidence-based outcomes. It was a fantastic opportunity to refine East London Connect's theory of change and improve its impact assessment. We now have a mentoring scheme that offers a structured university preparation programme, helping students from underrepresented backgrounds make informed decisions about higher education. East London Connect has also developed an online learning platform that will help reinforce information from our mentoring sessions. In partnership with the African Caribbean Society(ACS) at UCL, we have just over 20 mentors from different disciplines, to help make a difference to the next generation of young people from diverse backgrounds. Jocelyne from the ACS has been a tremendous help in coordinating training and mentoring planning.

As East London Connect builds its impact and communication channels, we are grateful to free hype at UCL for creating our new branding and infographic material (attached to this review). In addition, we also extend our thanks to the Stronger Stories Team in Brighton, for using storytelling techniques to help us develop a story that permeates and influences all the work we do.

Looking forward to 2019, we have exciting plans to expand our impact. We will be launching a work experience scheme for underrepresented groups at the Financial Conduct Authority in Stratford's Olympic park, and embarking on diversity consultancy with a large property development company, plus much more.

Finally, I would like to say a massive thank you to the Trustees and everyone who has supported in some way.

Wishing you a fantastic 2019

Richard

Founder East London Connect