

GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2023

TERMLY REVIEW

Welcome to our Spring Term update!

As we near the end of the Spring Term, Governors have been reflecting on a busy school year so far. Since September, there have been two full Governing body meetings, two sub-committee meetings for each of the schools and two resources meetings to review school finances. There have been a number of themes for discussion including national, local and Federation priorities. In our role as 'critical friends', we have asked questions to clarify, understand and challenge the school leadership team. A key priority has been comparing each school's performance data and development plans and talking about how the pupil premium grant is spent to ensure the best possible outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. We have also overseen investment in pastoral care, such as our learning mentors, speech and language therapist support and therapeutic support from the Unlocking Potential foundation who work in our schools three days a week.

We have been hearing from the Headteachers about the current challenges of teacher recruitment and how the leadership team are working hard to ensure that every class has consistent high quality teaching.

Our many successes as a school partnership have not gone unnoticed by others, and we are proud that our schools continue to host best practice visits from other providers including this year from the DfE to see our Spanish provision, from Southend to see curriculum provision and from other Hackney schools as part of our local support work.

We hope that this newsletter gives a flavour of what we do. If you would like to know more about our system of school governance then we also have a section on the school websites that you may find useful.



PARENT SURVEY OUTCOMES

Our three schools continue to be excellent learning spaces for our children and we were delighted with the positive outcomes of the recent parents' surveys, again with high levels of response from our communities. During the Spring Term meetings, we reviewed the outcomes of these surveys with the school leadership teams to understand the strengths and what we can strive to do even better. Our parent survey summaries are accessible on the school website in the parent section as a suggestion made by one of our associate governors, to ensure both celebration and transparency of the outcomes.

GOVERNOR LINK VISITS

In addition to our meeting structure, key Governors undertake link roles for curriculum, inclusion, behaviour and safeguarding. Governing boards have a statutory duty to promote the wellbeing of pupils, including mental health and emotional wellbeing. It is well known that mental health and wellbeing influence the physical and social health, attainment, and success of children and this is a consistent focus throughout our link visits.



During these visits, our link Governors meet with a member of the leadership team to see the Federation's policies, processes and actions. They also meet and talk with pupils to understand their received experiences. Visits have been undertaken to look at the Early Years curriculum, the wider curriculum, including history, art and music in KS1 and KS2 and a visit to look at the provision for SEND pupils.

GOVERNOR TRAINING AND SELF-REVIEW

As a Governing Body, we strive to be the best we can be. In order to achieve this, we undertake a Governor Review every three years to health check our systems and structures and to identify strengths and areas of focus.

The Chair of Governors and Executive Headteacher met with the Hackney Governance Team to undertake a self-review audit to benchmark what we do against national expectations. This was a very useful exercise that has supported us to identify how we can further improve our skills.

This year, all Governors have undertaken safeguarding training and individual governors have undertaken a range of training courses including tackling inequalities and the anti-racism agenda, how to ask effective questions of school leaders and how to manage risks.



SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our school complaints policy follows guidance from the Department of Education. We hope that you should never have a need for this, however issues inevitably arise from time to time. Our complaints policy is available on the school website and in our reception areas. Complaints are best dealt with by the school leadership team and only very rarely would governors need to become involved. It is important that if there is a concern the class teacher and school staff are given the opportunity to work with you to resolve problems and individual Governors are not involved. Our schools have a strong success in resolving concerns or complaints quickly and to satisfaction. We have a strict policy on how concerns and complaints should be dealt with to ensure fairness and transparency to all parties and the Chair of Governors will only become involved to decide on the best way forward if all other attempts to resolve issues have not been successful.