

GOVERNOR UPDATE

Autumn 2018



Last academic year was a very successful one for our schools partnership, and we are fortunate to have such a committed community and team of staff who are all seeking the best for the children who attend our schools. Our recent 'World Week' highlighted the incredible diversity of our schools, which have nearly 40 different home languages spoken and children from all over the world. We are very proud to have schools that invite their communities to be as involved as possible and an environment where children flourish and achieve so well. As school Governors our role is to act as 'critical friends' and make strategic decisions as a group, whilst the operational management of the schools remains the responsibility of the school leadership teams. We meet both as a full Governing Body and in school subcommittees each term, watching the performance of each school closely. It is evident that our schools benefit enormously from working in partnership and we are watching local and national developments closely to make sure that we can continue to retain the autonomy and local accountability that have supported our successes.

In the past year all three schools have continued to win many awards in recognition of their best practice including the anti-bullying quality mark, the inclusion quality mark and the science and geography quality marks. The recent Ofsted inspection at Southwold highlighted the great things that our schools are doing and this is credit to everyone involved. This year we have begun an innovative Teaching Apprentice scheme, training our own teachers in order to counter the national teacher recruitment difficulties faced by schools and we continue to build our partnership work with other schools and London Metropolitan University. We hope that this new Governor newsletter helps you better understand our work but please also follow our schools on Twitter or Facebook or take a look at our updated school websites to keep up to date with everything that we do. Thank you for your support in making sure that our three-school partnership continues to be such a success.

CONTINUING SUCCESS AT VIRIDIS SCHOOLS!

In the Summer term of each year, Year 6 children take their standard assessment tests in reading, grammar and mathematics and writing skills. Children in year 2 are also assessed in reading, writing and mathematics, primarily by teacher assessment. Both of these end of key stage assessments are compared to other schools in England and published nationally as an indicator of relative performance.



The Percentage of Children achieving the Expected Standard at the end of Year 6.

	Reading	Writing	Maths	Grammar, Spelling & Punctuation	Reading, Writing & Maths
Orchard	95%	90%	95%	97%	85%
Southwold	86%	93%	95%	95%	86%
Hoxton Garden	84%	97%	97%	97%	84%
National Average	75%	78%	76%	78%	64%

All three partner schools do extremely well compared to other schools, with our children achieving and making progress that is significantly better than expected and typically in the top 10% of schools nationally. We are particularly proud of how well children from disadvantaged backgrounds do compared to other pupils in England. These measures are an important recognition of the hard work of children and staff, but also show that having a rich and exciting curriculum, alongside high expectations and great teaching, make a real difference to how well children do with these crucial reading, writing and mathematics skills. As Governors we are committed to ensuring that this rich curriculum remains an integral feature of our schools.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN TALKING ABOUT?

Governors have been reviewing reports from the School Improvement Partner, the Local Authority, the Department of Education and Ofsted to inform their understanding of how the schools are doing relative to others. Each term the Headteachers provide a report to governors which details key areas such as teaching, the curriculum, behaviour and safety.

Governors have also been discussing issues that affect all three schools such as the Government's agenda regarding the future of local authorities and schools funding, as well as the many premises issues that having grand old Victorian and Edwardian buildings hold. This term we are also undertaking a self review which we will use to make sure that we continue to be effective in our important role of holding the school leadership teams to account. There is more information about our meetings as well as our annual calendar of meetings on the school websites.



GOVERNOR VISIT TO SOUTHWOLD SCHOOL



The Governor visit morning this term was to Southwold school and there was a focus on the mathematics curriculum. We have updated and improved our mathematics curriculum this year so that it includes more problem solving activities and even greater challenge for confident learners. All three schools have also adopted a new online times table testing programme, which allows teachers to establish which times tables children know confidently and which ones they need to learn. Children are expected to know all of their times tables to 12 x 12 off by heart by the time they reach the end of Year 4.

Governors spent the morning visiting classrooms, meeting staff and speaking to children. A group of children were also invited to present their learning and experiences of mathematics, which led to a very useful question and answer session. Next term

Governors will visit Hoxton Garden School, with a visit to Orchard planned for the Summer term.

WHO ARE WE? GOVERNOR PORTRAITS



James Gowland is our Chair of Governors. James is a qualified accountant and a finance director for a firm based in Canary Wharf. He has two children who have attended Orchard primary school. James has several years experience as a school governor and currently chairs both the full governing body and the resources sub-committee.

Richard Allen. Richard Allen is our Vice Chair of Governors and Chair of the Southwold Subcommittee. He has been a Hackney primary school governor since 2006 and a Hackney resident for 21 years. Beginning as a parent governor at Southwold he has been an active and enthusiastic participant in the transition to the Federation. Richard works in organisational development and consultancy at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Much of his working life has been spent working for organisations directly associated with children's services and learning disability. This includes a period with Barnardo's and as Director of the Parenting Fund which was aimed at strengthening parent support services. Two of his three children have attended Hackney primary and secondary schools.



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