

## GOVERNOR UPDATE

### Summer 2019



This is our final termly newsletter of the year. We hope that this has been a useful way to share what Governors have been doing and how we work with the school leadership teams to support the best provision for our communities.

This year we have held three full Governing body meetings, one extraordinary meeting and each school has held a local subcommittee meeting each term. We are sorry to see the departure at the end of this term of Mr Hall who has achieved so much for our schools but

have every confidence in the continuing excellent work of our Headteachers' Mr O'Brien, Ms Davie and Ms Adams to ensure that we continue to be successful and that all children, regardless of their starting points, achieve better than those in other schools nationally. We hear regularly how the high standards that are attained in reading, writing and mathematics are not achieved at the cost of a very broad and rich curriculum offer. Our recent gold awards for our Spanish and Science curriculum and our many trips and visitors are testament to this. In the last term we have undertaken a further Governor self review to evaluate our combined skills against those needed for our strategic role and were pleased to note the balance in skills that has resulted from accommodating representatives from all three schools. We have agreed with the principles of the new Hackney Schools Group and intend to be active partners within this group, working together with other Hackney schools to ensure that our pupils get the very best education we can provide. We continue to host visits from other schools and partnerships keen to know more about what we do and what makes us successful including recent follow up visits from Sweden and Japan as well as other Hackney Schools and a primary school in Suffolk. We look forward to sharing more updates with you in the new academic year.

## GOVERNOR VISIT TO ORCHARD SCHOOL



The Governor visit morning this term was to Orchard school and there was a focus on provision for reading. We spent the first part of the morning visiting classrooms and meeting with the school leaders responsible for making sure that children who attend our schools become confident readers and are secondary school ready. We were interested to hear about the systems that our schools use to ensure that

each stage of a child's reading journey is catered for and that children who are struggling with reading are helped to grow in confidence. A group of children met with us to explain their experience of reading at school and how the school has helped them. They told us about the reading books they are taking home as well as the reading lessons that they receive and the opportunities that they have had to meet with visiting authors.



## HOW DO OUR SCHOOLS SUPPORT & DEVELOP STAFF?



Each term we receive a report from school leaders who outline the ways in which teachers and support staff are given the opportunity to develop and progress their skills. A fantastic progression route has been developed over the years, with many teachers who have joined us as teaching students or newly qualified teachers going on to become leaders in our schools. Staff development sessions are joined up across the three schools, with a weekly staff meeting to share ideas and explore the most recent theories of both learning and teaching. We have also been running our own apprentice teacher and leadership development programmes. For five days each year there is a teaching training day when all staff attend sessions to develop skills. Evaluations are gathered from staff to make sure they have been successful and inform future sessions. School leaders have also been exploring with teaching staff ways to reduce workload pressures with an audit of what could be improved or changed and a review of our marking policy. We will be asking school leaders further about the impact of this work on our ability to recruit and retain the very best teachers.

## SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Each year Governors consider the schools safeguarding policy and take note of any new guidance from the Government. Safeguarding is a particularly important area for schools as it is the way in which we make sure that all children are safe and their needs are met. We make certain that there are clear systems in place for the reporting of concerns as well as preventing issues from arising in the first place. All Governors have received safeguarding training, and in our annual safeguarding report from the schools we are able to check that school staff also hold up to date suitable training. Our most recent policy is available on the school website and in school reception areas.



## WHO ARE WE? GOVERNOR PORTRAITS

Our Governing body includes parent and staff governors who are elected with 4 year terms of office as well as co-opted governors who offer specific skills such as finance, legal or premises expertise.



**Alberta Senyah is a co-opted governor.**

Alberta has worked in schools for over 12 years in an administrative function. She has two children aged 11 and 15, and has worked at both Orchard & Southwold Schools.

**Hannah Lownsborough is a co-opted governor.** Hannah is a Hackney resident and a consultant working on campaigns in the UK and internationally. Recently, she has worked on international trade with SumOfUs.org, helped to train campaigners with ActionAid International, and authored a report on the future of campaigns with Save the Children International. She was previously a member of the founding team of 38 Degrees, and before that was an education researcher with the thinktank Demos.



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