

Chair of Governors Update

9 September 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back and we hope you all found ways to have a lovely, restful break.

To open the first edition of these updates, we briefly reflect on how governance adapted to the challenges over the past 18 months. We have also included recent announcements and reports, as well as governor training for the key matters of interest that are common across our schools. We recognise how much you value the support and guidance offered to help you navigate through these challenging times and would like to remind you to hold the date for our next **Hackney Governors Virtual Forum at 5:00 – 6:00 pm on Thursday, 30 September**. We will send a separate invitation, joining link and agenda for this event.

During the last 18 months, we have seen a swift adaptation to virtual board meetings and increased governor participation. Governing boards and their leaders embraced new strategic responsibilities around the use of technology, remote learning and curriculum recovery. There was a deeper focus on equalities, anti-racism and safeguarding pupils from sexual harassment and abuse. We are indebted to our chairs and their governors, who continued to give generously of their time to support our school leaders. Most of all we are proud of the determination and resilience with which all of our school leaders and their staff retain a strong focus on high quality education and achievement for all our children.

As we prepare to emerge from the pandemic, we aim to spotlight clear guidance, best practice and collaborative developments of the two strategic priorities that we know are common for Governors across all our schools:

- **Providing high quality education:** curriculum, recovery of learning, addressing gaps in achievement and using robust assessment data to hold schools to account.
- **Addressing equalities and anti-racism:** to include developing our mission to Get Hackney Youth Governing and diversifying governing boards so they can draw on wide ranging perspectives to inform decisions for the communities they serve.

We will also share advice, information and training about development of the key systems such as SEND, Inclusion and Reducing Exclusions; Engagement with Parents; Wellbeing of Students & Staff; Strategic Planning; Risk Assessment as well as collaborative development across our Hackney family of schools and key partners. Our governing boards have an overarching role in ensuring compliance with legislation and statutory regulations, so we will also clarify these matters through guidance, a compliance checklist and termly agendas, which we hope will support and promote effective governance.

As always, we encourage you to get in touch if you have any query regarding governance, no matter how small, as it is always our pleasure to help.

Sincerely,

Maggie Kalnins, Leader of Governance Services

The content:

- Quality Education and high achievement for all
- Promoting Equalities and anti racism
- Systems and Support: Governance advice, information and training to support key systems:
 - *SEND & inclusion; including reducing exclusions*
 - *Engagement with parents*
 - *Well being, health and safety of students and/or staff;*
 - *Safeguarding*
 - *Recruitment, development and retention of staff*

- *Strategic business/ financial planning and risk management*
- *Effective collaboration with the Hackney family of schools and key partners*

Future Dates of Hackney Governors Virtual Forum (5 to 6:00pm):

- Thursday 25th November 2021
- Thursday 27th January 2022
- Thursday 17th March 2022
- Thursday 5th May 2022
- Thursday 30th June 2022

Overview of Governors Training Programme for 2021/22 is attached

Quality Education and high achievement for all

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- The Department for Education recorded a webinar, "[Preparing for the Autumn Term 2021](#)"
- Amanda Spielman, Chief Inspector: [Ofsted's research on education during the pandemic, remote education and curriculum](#) (ResearchED National Conference 2021)
- Ofsted inspections will resume this term, with updated [Education Inspection Handbooks](#). They have also published guidance on how the [Education Inspection Framework](#) will be applied when inspecting early years settings in schools.
- DfE Direction places a legal duty on state schools to continue to provide [remote education](#) for pupils who cannot attend school due to Covid-19.
- [School Led Tutoring Grant](#): This guidance provides information for schools and academy trusts on how they should plan, access and deliver tutoring for the academic year 2021/22.
- [Understanding your data](#): an updated guide for school governors and academy trustees

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [What do Governors Need to Know about the Ofsted Inspection Process?](#) 5 October 2021, 9.am to 11.am
- [How do Governors Fulfil their Professional and Ethical Responsibility?](#) 6 October 2021, 5pm to 7pm
- [How does the Chair of Governors Shape Strong Governance and what is Distinct about their Role?](#) 2 December 2021, 5pm to 7pm

Promoting equalities and anti-racism

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- [White working class pupils](#) – Commons Education Committee reports on the educational achievement of white working-class children - they found students have been "let down by decades of neglect and muddled policy thinking".
- The Children Society - [The Good Child Report](#) shows modern life continues to erode the happiness of young people.
- [A fair start? Equalising Access to Early Education](#) Sutton Trust August 2021 - this report examines the 30 hours entitlement from a variety of different angles, with key contributions from experts in the field:
- A time of need: [Exploring the changing poverty risk facing larger families in the UK](#) Kitty Stewart, Aaron Reeves and Ruth Patrick
- [Higher Education on Hold](#): Access to higher education for young people with insecure or unresolved immigration status

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [Tackling Inequalities: Hackney Young Black Men Initiative – Understanding Cultural Competency, Racial Identity and Unconscious Bias](#) 20 October 2021, 5pm to 7pm

Systems and Support: Governance advice, information and training to support key systems:

SEND & Inclusion; including reducing exclusions

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- **SEND: 'Young People on the Margins'**: Bart Shaw and Simon Knight. CfEY Head of Policy Bart Shaw speaks to Simon Knight, Joint Headteacher at Frank Wise School and National SEND Leader at Whole School SEND, about all things SEND (special educational needs and/or disabilities).

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [SEND Webinar for Governors](#) - hosted by Hackney Education in partnership with Whole School SEND and NASEN 14 October 2021, 5pm to 7pm
- [Tackling Inequalities: How can Governors Improve Outcomes for those at Risk of Exclusion and What Should they know before Considering an Exclusion?](#) 10 November 2021, 5pm to 7pm

Engagement with parents

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- Hackney Education presents “**Parents as Partners: A collaborative approach to a shared journey**” This online event **on Thursday, October 7 2021 from 6 – 7:50 pm.** is for parents in Hackney, particularly those from the Black community, parents of young black men, and other ethnic communities who may have felt the impact of this past year the hardest.

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [Stakeholder Engagement and Complaints: How do Governing Boards Ensure Effective Engagement with Stakeholders and Effectively Manage Complaints?](#) 17 November 2021, 5pm to 7pm

Well being, health and safety of students and/or staff

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- [Letter regarding Covid-19 vaccination for young people](#) From Annie Gammon (Director of Education) and Sandra Husbands (Director of Public Health)
- The **HR Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions** document has been updated ready for the start of the new term on 1st September 2021 and can be found [here](#).
- DfE Guidance: Promoting and supporting **mental health and wellbeing** in schools and colleges.
- View [Coronavirus data](#) to keep you informed of key areas of interest Numbers are creeping up, Hackney is low compared with other London boroughs -
- New guideline from NICE recommends **ensuring children and young people are fully informed about their health** so that they are empowered to take an active role in their healthcare.

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [Wellbeing: How do Governors Ensure the Development of Emotional, Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children?](#) 13 October 2021, 9am to 11am

Safeguarding

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- ['Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' advice has been updated](#), in line with the revised [.Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) Ofsted has also published its [review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges](#). Schools are expected to understand and take account of culture in

school, and explain what they are doing to ensure tolerance and respect, in which pupils feel safe. Peer on peer abuse and sexual harassment, mental health and recognition of issues relating to inclusion and equality need to be part of the school's safeguarding approach. Governors and trustees should ensure a good understanding of these matters so they can effectively support and challenge school leaders and designated safeguarding leads.

- **Youth Endowment Fund (YEF)** new Toolkit, shows proven methods to reduce youth violence.

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [Safeguarding: How do Governors Fulfil their Responsibility to Safeguard and Protect Children?](#) 14 October 2021, 9.am to 11.am
- [Safeguarding: How do Governors Fulfil their Responsibility to Safeguard and Protect Children?](#) 1 December 2021, 5pm to 7pm

Recruitment, development and retention of staff

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [Staff Welfare, Morale and Workload: How do Governing Boards Create Excellent Workplaces that Support Staff Welfare, Manage Performance and Oversees Organisational Changes?](#) 21 October 2021, 9.am to 11.am
- [What do Governors Need to Know to Ensure the Performance Management of the Headteacher leads to School Improvement](#) 21 October 2021, 5pm to 7pm

Strategic business/financial planning and risk management

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- DfE update of: **Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts**
- **Led Tutoring Grant:** This [guidance](#) provides information for schools and academy trusts on how they should plan, access and deliver tutoring for the academic year 2021/22.
- **Institute for Fiscal Studies: School spending in England: trends over time and future outlook**
- **School and Trust Governance during the Coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic - Findings from investigative research (July 2021)**
- **DfE - Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts** (August 2021 update)

Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [How do Governing Boards Make the Right Strategic Financial Choices for their School?](#) 4 November 2021, 5pm to 7pm
- [How do Governing Boards Strategically Assess and Manage Risks in their Schools?](#) 17 November 2021, 5pm to 7pm

Effective collaboration with the Hackney family of schools and key partners

Relevant Announcements and Reports

- **The Hackney Schools Group Board** plays an important role in the strategic direction for Hackney education and how the Hackney family of schools continue to work together, developing the best possible provision for all our children and young people.

