

# Chair of Governors Update

7 October 2021

Dear colleagues,

We are delighted to share key headlines from last week's Hackney Governors forum with a direct link to [video](#) and [slides](#) from the event. We had the pleasure of hearing from Jacquie Burke (Group Director, Children and Education) and echo her comment that Governors are leaders, drivers and shapers of our communities. By governing school, you play a crucial role, supporting and challenging leaders in their endeavours to keep our community of children safe, educated and inspired.

In this edition we address key matters, including:

- Headlines of the successful outcomes for Hackney students at GCSE and post 16, with reference to pupils educated in our special schools
- Highlights about how highly effective schools provide high quality education and how best to prepare for the return of Ofsted inspections
- Hackney wide priorities and a particular spotlight on two of our developing priorities, Parental Engagement and SEND, and particular highlight our [Send Webinar for Governors](#) on Thursday, 14 October 2021, 5pm to 7pm

We also draw attention to your school websites, which offer a fantastic window to portray your culture and values, and help build trust with parents and the community. Explaining how you provide high quality education and who is governing the school are not only a legal requirement, people really do want to know. In your endeavours to engage stakeholders, we strongly encourage you to assign a governor to ensure your mission succeeds.

On a final note it is heartening to see our children happy and thriving back in school. Reflecting on this and the recently published report [Children's Commissioner's Big Ask](#) that captured voices from all ages, ethnicity, social and economic backgrounds, and vulnerabilities. They told us they wanted the same thing. To create a better world, a good home life, a good education, a job, enough money, friends, to feel well, to be treated fairly and to look after the environment.

We know that as school Governors this is a message that will resonate and that we are equally committed in providing this and more for our young people!

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 **Autumn/Spring** 2021/22

**Quality Education and high achievement for all**

**Key Notes From Governors Forum**

**(Forum Video: 17:01:30 - 17:05:30) Jacquie Burke** - Group Director Children and Education: **Governors are leaders, drivers and shapers** of communities who are relied on to keep children safe, educated and inspired but are also tasked with the delivery and priority of vision, holding executive leaders to account for performance as well as overseeing the finances. Schools need governing bodies that have a **balance of diversity, knowledge, skills and experience to enable efficacy**. Hackney has also been at the forefront of introducing greater diversity into school leadership and governance in recent years which shows significant commitment, with more to do. **Governors should systematically work together to identify and respond to children's needs early**, whether this is learning, emotional or safeguarding, ensuring that every child from every community is afforded the right support at the right time. Governors should **consider disproportionality**, identification in terms of black and ethnic minority

children and unequal distribution of economic resources, to ensure that every child gets what they need because opportunity is not equally distributed.

**[\(Forum Video: 17:48:00 – 17:56:40\)](#)** Hackney wide priorities include the promotion of equality and anti-racism, partnership working with parents and professionals, excellent workplace leadership, high quality professional development. We also focus on offering quality school places, including, specialised SEND places and supporting schools for children from our Orthodox Jewish communities. These priorities aim to ensure the best possible achievement for every Hackney child, promoting wellbeing and inclusion, reducing exclusions and recovery from the past 18 months because whilst they have been remarkably resilient, some children have experienced learning gaps, anxieties and concerns. A local system of support, challenge, guidance and service as part of a democratic process is really important. Engagement with parents and carers to ensure their sense of belonging to the community around the school. These priorities should be also recognisable within schools. [Slide 5](#)

**[\(Forum Video: 17:18:30 – 17:23:30\)](#)** Celebrating successful outcomes for Hackney students - we see above average and strong GCSE passes in a continually improving timeline,. [Slide 13](#) There is continuous improvement to post-16 outcomes over recent years and more secondary schools are successfully delivering a diverse range of academic and vocational courses, with students moving on afterwards to universities and colleges in Europe and USA, as well as Oxford and Cambridge. [Slide 14](#) Every special school in Hackney has developed its own curriculum. It is useful for governors to be aware of the tools that teachers use to assess and recognise successes. [Slide 15](#)

**[\(Forum Video: 17:24:00 – 17:40:08\)](#)** How do our schools offer a rich curriculum, assure learning recovery, address achievement gaps and prepare for Ofsted ? Ofsted defines learning as altered long-term memory which is where information sticks, based on the research done around the new Ofsted framework. [Slide 18 & 19](#) . They will consider external data up until 2019 although internal data will not be considered. [Slide 27](#).

CPD, often an afterthought, is core and fundamental to delivering teaching in the classroom. [Research findings by Andy Tharby](#) conclude that schools often incorporate a scattergun approach to CPD and they do not really measure its impact. Governors should be questioning the schools' training and development offer, mindful that teaching is a craft that is never fully learnt. [Slide 25](#)

How inclusive is your school, how this is represented in policies and curriculum is a key area of leadership and management. Governors, Staff must be aware of protected characteristics, and create an inclusive environment for children to learn about the wider world. [Slide 26](#)

**Highly effective schools have a coherent curriculum**, building blocks of sticky knowledge and genuine ambition that all children will have the opportunity to access learning and achieve well, regardless of need. They think about **curriculum content, unconscious bias and cultural reference points**, assumption of pupils' prior knowledge and experience and how the school can be relevant for them. Listening to pupils and being open about this as a supportive process. [Slide 29](#)

**Statutory assessments** at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3 are due to come back. Information about key stages 4 and 5 may not come out until February 2022. [Slide 28](#)

**Schools are responsible for publishing the school curriculum every year on their website**, including religious education phonics and reading schemes in key stage 1, courses available to key stage 4 pupils and information about how people can find out more about the curriculum should also be published. Further information is available in a government guidance document. **Allocating a governor to audit the website is advisable.** [Slide 22](#)

#### **Relevant Announcements and Reports**

- DfE: **The Big Ask survey report** unpacks the views of 557,077 children about their families, communities, health and wellbeing, school life and their future, as well as the experiences of children in care.
- **Ofsted's YouTube website** where they outline their approach.
- Ofsted releases updated **guidance for summary evaluations of multi academy trusts**
- Effects of **educational disruption on primary school attainment in summer 2021.**
- Research into **Alternative Provision** :the aim of filling in some of the evidence gaps uncovered by the Centre for Social Justice's '**Warming the Cold Spots of Alternative Provision**' report. A **summary** of key findings.
- EYFS Framework: [Development Matters](#)
- '**Governing in a multi-academy trust (MAT)**' NGA explores the views, experience and practice of those governing within a MAT both at board level and local academy committee level.

#### **Governor Training - hosted virtually**

- [How does the Chair of Governors Shape Strong Governance and what is Distinct about their Role?](#) Thursday, 2 December 2021, 5pm to 7pm
- Governor for schools share free **Session Resources** - videos from recent conference
  - **School governor impact report from The University of Manchester** :[Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - **What is good governance in 2021** [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - **Hot topics in governance** : [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - **The future of school governance:** [Recording](#)

## Promoting equalities and anti-racism

### Key Notes From Governors Forum

We will place a spotlight on this at our next Governors forum, Thursday 25th November 2021.

### Relevant Announcements and Reports

- Black Caribbean girls are twice as likely to be excluded than white peers.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion amongst CEOs in the Academy Trust sector
- Nuffield Foundation: Trends in early childhood poverty in the UK
- Blueprint for a Fairer Education System, ASCL propose an overhaul of school admissions to prioritise children from disadvantaged backgrounds as a step towards closing the attainment gap between rich and poor.

### Governor Training - hosted virtually

- Tackling Inequalities: Hackney Young Black Men Initiative – Understanding Cultural Competency, Racial Identity and Unconscious Bias Wednesday, 20 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? Wednesday, 10 November 2021, 5pm to 7pm
- Governor for schools share free Session Resources - videos from recent conference
  - **Diversifying governing boards:** [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)

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

*SEND & Inclusion; including reducing exclusions*

### Key Notes From Governors Forum

(Forum Video: 17:06:10 – 17:17:35) Hackney Vision for SEND provision: key priorities and developments SEND Partnership Board has identified **four key priorities** - Clear, accessible services; more local provision; a supportive graduated response and joint commissioning of services. These are informed by research and feedback from families and school [Slide 8](#). Ways to **provide earlier offers of support are being explored** for children who display behavioural issues at school, struggle with poor attendance and would benefit from early intervention and assessment within Early Years. There is a significant rise in numbers within the SEND community. **More local provision is required.** Governors may have seen information about **expansion around special schools** or the call for **expressions of interest for running additional ARPs**. Education state strategy will be taken to Cabinet in December which

will specify some exciting plans for SEND provision, incorporating an equitable and local offer across the borough. [Slide 8](#). Hackney's Graduated response has been launched, based on well established principles to build on good practice taking place across the local area. Children only spend about 30% of their working time in schools, so the wider system including health and social care is also paramount in meeting children's needs. [Slide 9](#). We have strengthened CPD focus on SEND leadership, and developed a Hackney SEND review toolkit and resources to support SEND link Governors. [Slide 10](#)

### Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [Send Webinar for Governors](#) Thursday, 14 October 2021, 5pm to 7pm

### *Engagement with parents*

#### Key Notes From Governors Forum

[\(Forum Video: 17:41:00 – 17:46:40\)](#) Debra Robinson System leader for Parent/carer Engagement is newly appointed to support school leaders to develop, shape or enhance the culture in schools to make it more engaging, particularly for parents that schools seldom hear from. [Slide 36](#). We are also hosting a "**Parents as Partners: A collaborative approach to a shared journey**" October 7 2021 from 6 – 7:50 pm.

### Governor Training - hosted virtually

- [Stakeholder Engagement and Complaints: How do Governing Boards Ensure Effective Engagement with Stakeholders and Effectively Manage Complaints?](#) Wednesday, 17 November 2021, 5pm to 7pm
- Governor for schools share free [Session Resources](#) - videos from recent conference
  - Engaging parent governors: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)

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

#### Key Notes From Governors Forum

[\(Forum Video: 17:48:00 – 17:56:40\)](#) Compared with the national picture, prevalence of Covid in Hackney is lower and the impact of schools sending bubbles home is much less. Mitigation is around hand hygiene, keeping socially distanced where possible and ventilation. **All staff should be testing and recording twice weekly and pupils in secondary school should also be testing twice a week.** Vaccination roll out to 12-15 year olds, is on school sites, delivered by the health service, with parental consent required and is a sensitive and controversial issue for some.. [Slide 4](#)

### Relevant Announcements and Reports

- **COVID-19 vaccination programme for children and young people:** guidance for schools: 12 to 15 year olds in England will be offered one dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine this autumn, the government have announced.

### **Governor Training - hosted virtually**

- [Wellbeing: How do Governors Ensure the Development of Emotional, Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children?](#) Wednesday, 13 October 2021, 9am to 11am
- Governor for schools share free **Session Resources** - videos from recent conference
  - Mentally healthy schools: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)

### *Safeguarding*

#### **Key Notes From Governors Forum**

[\(Forum Video: 17:24:00 – 17:40:08\)](#) A particular focus this year is keeping children safe in education. Ofsted survey on sexual harassment and abuse in schools revealed that staff and leaders rely too much on pupils to self report. A safe forum must be provided by the schools. [Slide 31 & 32](#)

#### **Relevant Announcements and Reports**

- **Keeping Children Safe In Education** : updated statutory guidance
- The 'Everyones Invited' website and subsequent **Ofsted review**

#### **Governor Training - hosted virtually**

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

### *Recruitment, development and retention of staff*

#### **Relevant Announcements and Reports**

- **CEO and headteacher performance management resources**: to guide annual appraisal meetings

#### **Governor Training - hosted virtually**

- [Staff Welfare, Morale and Workload: How do Governing Boards Create Excellent Workplaces that Support Staff Welfare, Manage Performance and Oversee Organisational Changes?](#) Thursday, 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](#) Thursday, 21 October 2021, 5pm to 7pm Governor for schools share free **Session Resources** - videos from recent conference
  - Supporting your alumni's professional development through school governance: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - Professional and Personal Development: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)

### *Strategic business/financial planning and risk management*

#### **Key Notes From Governors Forum**

[\(Forum Video: 17:24:00 – 17:40:08\)](#) information that should be on school websites is referenced in . [Slide 23](#).

### Relevant Announcements and Reports

- The **get help with technology programme** has also been announced, offering grants to cover the costs schools and other settings incur in providing
- The **DfE's school-led tutoring guidance**: information for schools and academy trusts on how they should plan and deliver school-led tutoring for the academic year 2021-22 as part of the National Tutoring Programme.
- **Internet connectivity costs (DfE Grant Funding)**: Schools can get government-funded support to help disadvantaged pupils in years 3 to 13 to access the internet where face-to-face education is disrupted.

### Governor Training - hosted virtually

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

Wednesday, 17 November 2021, 5pm to 7pm

- Governor for schools share free **Session Resources** - videos from recent conference
  - School governor impact report from The University of Manchester :[Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - What is good governance in 2021?: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - Hot topics in governance with Better Governor: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - Remote governance and your board: [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)
  - The future of school governance: [Recording](#)

*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