



Wednesday 9 September 2020

Dear colleagues

We hope all governors and school leaders have been able to take a break during August, making time for family life, to rest and restore your vitality!

It has been heartening to see our schools start to welcome back all pupils at the start of this academic year. We know that a safe return for all staff and pupils was made possible through the dedicated work that school leaders and their colleagues undertook during the summer.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact on the health, social and economic wellbeing of our communities, we know the resilience of our schools will be further tested. School leaders will be depending more than ever on the trusted and continued support of their governors. Collaboration between education, health and social services will also be crucial in tackling the challenges still to come. As we resume within this 'new normal', the key priorities for our schools are:

- **Ensuring safety and wellbeing** of all staff and children;
- **Supporting attendance and participation** of children, especially those of families who are shielding, at risk, have other vulnerabilities and/or are most anxious;
- **Providing high quality education** that re-engages all children back into learning, addressing wellbeing and inequality issues, and especially offering support to accelerate the progress of those whose lives and learning have been affected most;
- **Preparing effective contingency plans**, which will include blended school and home learning, so that high quality education can continue in the event of a localised lockdown.

To support the governance of our schools in responding to the 'new normal' we will guide you with our [Roadmap for Continuing of Strategic Governance in 2020/21](#). We will be hosting [half termly forums](#) and sending a [monthly update that references key articles and training opportunities](#). We will also be delivering a full [governance training programme](#), and suggesting termly [agendas with key questions](#). We are likewise providing a [clerking and advisory service](#) that is open to new clients seeking our expert support. You will find all our [previous updates and tools here](#) and if you [subscribe here](#), we will include you in our future communications.

If you have any query, no matter how small, or you wish to find out how our services can support your school, we encourage you to get in touch as it will be our pleasure to help.

Sincerely

Maggie Kalnins, Leader of Governance Services

Hackney Governors Virtual Forums:

(Invitation open to Hackney schools only. We will separately share a joining link and agenda with Hackney Chairs, School Leaders and Business Managers)

Autumn Term

- ❖ Thursday 24 September 2020 , 5pm to 6pm – hosted online
- ❖ Tuesday 24 November 2020, 6pm -7.00pm– hosted online

Spring Term

- ❖ Thursday 21 January 2021, 5pm to 6pm – hosted online
- ❖ Wednesday 24 March 2021, 6pm -7.00pm this will be Face to Face if possible

Summer Term

- ❖ Thursday 29 April 2021,, 5pm to 6pm – hosted online
- ❖ Thursday 24 June 2021, 6pm -7.00pm this will be Face to Face if possible

Roadmap for Continuing of Strategic Governance in 2020/ 21

The following notes, further reading references and training opportunities are provided as guidance to complement the roadmap themes and key questions, which we have updated for the Autumn term and **can be viewed here.**

Theme 1: Reopening to wider groups of children – what have been the successes and what are the challenges still to be addressed?

Risk assessments and safety procedures

- **Health and Safety Executive (HSE) spot-checks:** will take the form of an initial phone call to review the measures taken for reopening, to minimise spread of the virus causing COVID-19. Calls made to schools will evaluate knowledge **DfE Guidance for full opening - School** (England) and the control measures required under health and safety legislation. Where there are concerns, further intervention may include a visit to the school.
- Public Health England (PHE) have published their **report on the preliminary results of the COVID-19 testing and antibody prevalence surveillance in schools programme,** which concludes no evidence that pupils and staff in schools were at increased risk of COVID-19
- **Guidance on full opening of schools** includes information about use of Face coverings
- PHE has published a series of **Education ‘action cards’ to support COVID-19 outbreak management** clarifying key steps to quickly identify and contain a potential Covid-19 outbreak.

- DfE **guidance for schools on how to plan for potential local lockdowns** - sets out four “tiers” of action that may be needed, depending on the level of government intervention. It includes how secondary schools and colleges may have to put in place a rota system for their pupils and in areas with the most serious level of government intervention, school will have to switch back to only allowing vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers on site.

Continuity of Learning and Pastoral Support

- DfE have launched **Wellbeing for Education Return** programme. It is important that governors consider the impact of COVID-19 in strategic discussions about the assessment of physical, mental health and wellbeing of pupils throughout the school.
- The Government has published **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2020**, it replaces previous versions and this year includes a new requirement on mental health. In light of the changes to KCSIE and emerging issues as a result of lockdown, staff are being refreshed on principles in addition to guidance regarding evolving issues. This publication needs to be referenced in safeguarding policies and published on school websites.
- **Checklist for school leaders on behaviour and attendance** published by the DfE to help support schools to re-engaging their pupils from the autumn term, including suggestions on how to work with families to ensure all pupils attend and how schools ensure effective behaviour policies and practices to support pupils on their return.
- **Attendance and Changes to School Roll:** in assuring continual duty to monitor attendance and changes to school roll, governors should understand how their school is supporting attendance of all pupils and monitoring why children are removed from roll.
- **Temporary changes to the school exclusion process** – update on changes to exclusion process confirms meetings of governing boards or independent review panels relating to exclusions between 25 September 2020 and 24 March 2021 should be held via remote access if it is not reasonably practical to meet due to COVID-19. Changes to procedural details are explained within the document.
- **Social and Emotional Learning and the New Normal** - CfEY and STiR
Education

Governor Training - hosted virtually, open to all schools within and beyond Hackney, **book here:**

- ❖ **Wellbeing:** How do governors ensure the development of emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children? **Tuesday, 13 October 9am – 11am**
- ❖ **Safeguarding:** How do governors fulfil their responsibility to safeguard and protect children? **FREE TO ALL HACKNEY SCHOOLS Wednesday, 14 October 9am – 11am**

Technology

- **DfE expectations for remote learning** are expected to be published soon.
- The DfE will provide more **laptops and tablets for disadvantaged children to access remote education** if local COVID-19 restrictions are required.

Communication

- **Parental engagement in the wake of COVID-19** – NGA Guest Blog provides 10 useful suggestions focused on strategic matters.
- **Returning safely to school**, also translated to Turkish and Bengali to share with families. Further resources available at East London Health and Care Partnership, DfE has also created a new **Back to School** campaign.

Theme 2: Preparations for September and beyond - planning for different scenarios

- **The EEF guide to supporting school planning: a tiered approach to 2020-21** - (1) high-quality teaching, (2) targeted academic support, and (3) wider strategies.
- **Schools' responses to Covid-19: The challenges facing schools and pupils in September 2020** reports pupils are on average three months behind on their learning as a result of partial school closures, with deprived pupils and those from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds more likely to be affected.
- **Ofsted in the Autumn Term 2020** – will visit around a 5% cross section of all schools, including inadequate schools (all of which can expect a visit) and a letter of the visit will be published. They will focus on what is working well and any challenges. A set of research questions are being asked which will be combined nationally, such as ‘what the plans are for a blended learning model, what are the schools plans to ensure equality of access?’ Inspectors will also look at: Safeguarding, Behaviour and Well-being, and where there are concerns also at Off-Rolling e.g. children being encouraged not to return once schools open and pupils exclusions.
- **Early years language and speaking skills support package** used to tackle the impact of lost teaching time on reception aged children and will provide language skills training and resources to children who have been worst affected at a crucial point of their development.
- NASEN have collated **New COVID-19 SEND Review Guide** - for each group of stakeholders there are 10 statements to highlight the key areas pertinent to understanding and delivering effective practice for children with SEND as they return to school.
- **Special education and the return to school study** has found that roughly 20,000 pupils with SEND are unlikely to return to special schools in September, due to concerns about safety, medical vulnerability and the needs and behaviours of pupils.
- **Ofqual Chair, Roger Taylor** open letter addresses distress caused by the awarding of exam results

Governor Training - hosted virtually, open to all schools within and beyond Hackney, **book here:**

- ❖ **Ofsted:** What do governors need to know about the Ofsted inspection process? **Monday 5 October 9am – 11am**
- ❖ **Introduction to governance** – How do governors fulfil their professional and ethical responsibility? FREE TO ALL HACKNEY SCHOOLS **Tuesday, 6 October 6pm – 8pm**

Theme 3: Staffing matters

- The Hackney Education **coronavirus HR guidance for headteachers** has been updated ready for the autumn term.
- **Early Years Workforce Review** - Sutton Trust, August 2020

Governor Training - hosted virtually, open to all schools within and beyond Hackney, **book here:**

- ❖ **Staff Welfare, Morale and Workload:** How do governing boards create excellent workplaces that support staff welfare, manage performance and oversees organisational changes? **Wednesday, 21 October 9am – 11am**

Theme 4: Inequality and community cohesion

- Education Policy Institute (EPI) **annual report on the state of education in England** - reveals impact on the attainment gap has been a continuing concern caused by lack of access to technology/internet, tuition, and lack of other crucial support and stability.
- **Race and Racism in English Secondary Schools - Runnymede Perspectives June 2020** reports matters about race and racism in England's secondary schools.
- **How to increase diversity of race on school governing boards: a panel discussion** Governors for Schools webinars - September 2020
- **Promoting anti-racism in schools – the governance of preparing all pupils for life in modern Britain** - July 2020
- **Racism exists. End of story. So do something about it** - chair of governors Olayinka Ewuola

Governor Training - hosted virtually, open to all schools within and beyond Hackney, **book here:**

- ❖ **Tackling inequalities:** Hackney Young Black Men initiative – understanding cultural competency, racial identity and unconscious bias. **Tuesday, 20 October 6pm – 8pm**

Theme 5: Financial management matters

- **Funding** – schools are bearing a significant additional COVID-related costs and we await further update on whether there will be further 'Extraordinary Costs' funding.
- **Covid catch up premium** – schools will need to account for how this funding is being used to get back on track and ensure the curriculum has a positive impact on all pupils.
- **Teacher's Pay** - From 1st September 2020, starting salaries for new teachers will increase by 5.5%, while the upper and lower boundaries of the pay ranges for all other teachers will increase by 2.75%. This equates to an average 3.1% increase on the collective wage bill for teachers from 1st September 2020.
- **Financial Transparency:** information to be published on a school's website. From 1st January 2021, Maintained schools, will need to publish the number of school employees with gross annual salary for employment at the school is equal to or exceeds £100,000. For Academies, this requirement commences from 1st September 2020

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book here:

- ❖ How do governing boards make the right strategic financial choices for their school?
Wednesday, 4 November 6pm – 8pm