

# GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2022

## TERMLY REVIEW

Welcome to our Spring Term update! As we approach the end of the second term, Governors have been reflecting on the busy school year so far. Since September, we have held two full Governing body meetings and each school has held two local subcommittee meetings. Governors in their role as 'critical friends' to the school make strategic decisions as a group, whilst the operational management of the schools remains the responsibility of the school leadership team. Governors regularly undertake training opportunities and have the opportunity to attend Hackney Borough meetings to hear about best practice from other Governing Bodies of other local schools and Federations.

This term, Orchard received the report from the inspection which took place just before Christmas. It is widely recognised that the new education inspection framework sets a high bar for an outstanding judgement, and although we were disappointed not to have been judged such in all areas on this inspection, there were many aspects to celebrate in the report that outlines the very strong provision for the pupils at Orchard School. The report demonstrated that Orchard is offering a good standard of education for pupils, with particular emphasis on the outstanding provision in Early Years, the strength of the rich curriculum offer and reading provision. It was pleasing to read that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Personal development was also judged outstanding. All three schools continue to receive termly visits from our School Improvement Partner based at Hackney Education to evaluate standards and inclusion alongside school leaders.



## GOVERNOR VISIT MORNING

The Governor Visit Morning this term was to Southwold School and there was a focus on the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum and pupil voice. The Governors who attended were extremely impressed with the number of opportunities pupils get to be part of different groups such as Digital Leaders, School Council, Eco Schools, Language Captains and Art Ambassadors. Governors met with a group of children to hear first hand about their experiences. A tour of the school was given by school leaders as well as a presentation about the PSHE curriculum.



# WHAT HAVE WE BEEN TALKING ABOUT?

There have been a number of themes for discussion and we have been talking about current national focus and school development by asking questions of school leaders.

## School Finances

This year has been a challenging year for school finances, which have been impacted by COVID 19. Despite employing short term teachers to cover staff isolation, increased cleaning requirements and the need to provide additional resources to enable pupils to catch up on missed learning, we are pleased to report that our assessment for the school's finances for the year remains in line with the budget forecast.



## COVID Catch Up

Governors have been looking at the data that shows the impact of COVID recovery in accelerating pupil performance and recovering any lost learning. Data shows headlines in line with pre-pandemic comparison as a result of carefully planned interventions and booster groups alongside quality first teaching.

## Parent Surveys

Thank you to everyone who completed the Autumn Term parent survey. In the school subcommittee meetings this term, Governors looked at the results for each school. We feel very proud about the overwhelming positive responses including '99% of parents across the three schools agree that the schools provide a good education for their child' and '99% of parents said their child enjoys school.' It is clear that the parent community continue to hold our schools in very high regard. Outcomes from the survey have been discussed with leaders alongside the school action plans of further ideas to enhance our school offer. Outcomes from the survey will be published on the school website later this term.



## Wellbeing

As a governing body, we focus on wellbeing and review staff and pupil survey summaries to make sure we understand how people are feeling. As we continue on the journey to our new normal, focus has been placed on making sure we sustain both physical and mental wellbeing long term across the school communities. We listen to the actions leaders take for both pupils and staff, ask questions and look for impact over time.