



HIGHGATE

PRIMARY SCHOOL

July 2019

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

The Governing Body of Highgate Primary School has been very busy this year, but you may not have been aware of us! We are writing to outline what we have worked on, and what the impact of our work has been.

We have had seven Full Governing Body meetings (including one training meeting), and well over 20 sub-committee meetings. Governors have also visited the school with a specific focus many times this year, and various members of the Governing Body have met for example to conduct interviews, discuss events, or consider plans for the future.

Full Governing Body meetings follow a set agenda, which includes a significant amount of time discussing the “Head Teacher’s Report to Governors”. This is our chance to hear from William about the key aspects of his work since the previous meeting, and for William to report to us about attendance and attainment, as well as learning events such as trips and visits. It is a chance for us to ask questions, and satisfy ourselves that the school is running well. It is also a chance to think ahead, and make plans to help the school become even better over time.

There are several key subcommittees including:

- Curriculum and Standards
- Safeguarding
- Resources (finance, staffing, premises management)
- Family Centre
- Communications Committee (press releases, Facebook, Twitter etc)

Each subcommittee is made up of four or five Governors, as well as William, who is on all the subcommittees. These subcommittees look more deeply into the running and progress of the school. For example, Curriculum and Standards committee considers changes that could be made, to improve the Highgate Primary Curriculum, and reviews pupil progress and attainment regularly throughout the year. The school Senior Leadership Team reports to this committee, and much time is spent reflecting on pupil data. The committee considers carefully how resources (such as staff time, or financial resources) have been used, and how this is reflected in progress and attainment. The committee also considers how groups of pupils are being supported, and evaluates results in detail, in order to make plans for the future.

The Resources Committee has responsibility for scrutinizing income and spending, as well as having a strategic overview of staffing and premises management. The Playground Project, for example, which was significantly funded by the PSA (an extraordinary achievement), also received some funding from grants, and from the school budget. The Resources Committee evaluated the details of this funding, ensuring that the school would remain financially viable into the future. The Governing Body has a strategic role, rather than an operational role, which means we advise and support the Senior Leadership Team, and frequently question them to ensure we understand their plans and actions.



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As well as the work of the subcommittees, Governors have visited the school, to understand the progress being made in various areas. For example, Sharminee Kumaredevan, Claire Meier and Jake Baker made visits related to the school Curriculum, in the areas of English, Science and Dance/Movement. Laura Eden visited the school several times to check the Safeguarding procedures, and ensure that records are adequate and up-to-date. Liam Frost, Steve Porter and Sharminee Kumaredevan have visited to look at data in detail.

At Governing Body Meetings, William has told us about many events which have had an impact on pupils; some highlights include:

- • Robert Winston visiting, and presenting a Science assembly, and then touring the school;
- • Sean Wallace (barrister and winner of Mastermind) speaking at the school about his achievements;
- • William taking a group of pupils to the Jamaican High Commission for a Christmas celebration;
- • Michael Batoux's Supper Clubs;
- • Sporting events

The Governing Body has closely followed the progress of the new Cookery Classroom, and the Playground Project. Many governors were present at the after school picnic opening of the playground on 20 June, a typically sunny, informal, Highgate Primary event at which children and adults enjoyed themselves in a relaxed and spontaneous way. Currently there are strong links between the PSA and the Governing Body, with several Governors also being closely involved with the PSA. This is a very good thing, and helps to ensure that all those who have a stake in supporting the school are working and thinking together.

There have been some recent changes to the Governing Body. Ruth Vince and Ollie Parsons will be leaving to new jobs, and their roles on the Governing Body will be filled by other staff members. We are very grateful to Ruth and Ollie for all they have done as governors over many years. We celebrate staff members moving on to more senior roles in other schools, where they will continue their exceptional work. Staff movement provides well-deserved opportunities for others to take additional responsibilities within Highgate Primary School. Sharminee Kumaredevan has also left the Governing Body after an extraordinarily active and effective four years during which she has been closely involved in pupil progress, curriculum, and staff wellbeing. Joining the Governing Body recently are Leona Asamoah, Julie Bland and Sam Evans, offering skills in finance, human resources, fundraising, marketing, community engagement, and project management (for starters). From September Jake will be stepping down as Chair, with Steve taking on this role.

As part of its own process of self-review, the Governing Body held a training event in June. We took a skills audit of each member of the Governing Body, and will collate this to identify key strengths and possible areas where we should seek to appoint new governors in the future. We also decided at this meeting to create a new subcommittee, the Community Committee, with a remit to develop the school as a resource for the community (in addition to being a school of course). This committee will look at possibilities for after-school use of the premises; adult education; weekend and holiday events; and will include the Family Centre in its remit. We plan to develop the school as a community resource, both as a source of income for the school (to secure the school's future), and also as part of the school's wider role as a central part of life for pupils and families.

The Governing Body is keenly aware of the energy, warmth and dedication of the staff at the school. We would like to thank them all for all their professionalism, humanity and forward-looking optimism, which has been essential in giving the pupils such a great experience this year. We also thank William, who is such a consistent source of practical, and imaginative, ideas about how the school can develop.

We would also like to thank the PSA, whose commitment, hard work, and sheer imaginative brilliance inspires awe year after year.



The Governing Body has 12 full members, five of whom are elected Parent Governors. The term of office of each Parent Governor is four years, so there are vacancies most years. Any parent can stand to be elected as a Governor. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that there is a range of skills amongst the governors. The Governing Body welcomes suggestions from Parents/Carers/Families. You can contact us at governors@highgate-pri.haringey.sch.uk, and we usually attend Parent Consultation Evenings to be available for informal discussion. The school web pages including recent minutes of Governing Body meetings, and details about Governors, can be found here <https://www.highgateprimaryschool.co.uk/our-school/governors>.

With best wishes for the summer,
Jake Baker
on behalf of the Governing Body.



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