

**July 2019***Inspiring belief in God and one another*

## **An introduction to the Governors in 2018-19**

This year has seen major changes to the School's governing board. We would like to recognise the longstanding Governors who retired last autumn: Mr Mark Frost, Mrs Karen Harrison, Mr Graeme Madge, Mrs Rachel Vaz, Mrs Sally Wyeth-Isaacs, and Mrs Hayleigh Cowell. We thank all these former governors for their dedicated service and efforts on behalf of the School.

The current School governors are: Ms Anne Messer (Chair), the Revd Craig Holmes, Mrs Cecilia Thwaites, Mrs Hurst and Mrs McCarthy. Our parent Governors are Mr Darren Stephenson and Mr Allan Joseph, who were elected in January. In June, we expanded our governing board to include two further members of the local community: Mr Shehzad Awan and Mr Mayank Taneja.

## **Summary of the 2018-19 School Year**

Our meetings this year have focused on:

- Receiving regular reports from Mrs Hurst and Mrs McCarthy about the life of the School, and evaluating their key decisions.
- Adopting new policies to comply with the Trust, and ensuring these policies are being implemented across the life of the School. You can find all the new policies on [the School's website](#).
- Understanding the new finance and accounting systems, and planning the School budget.
- Monitoring safeguarding and health and safety incidents as they have arisen.
- Monitoring pupil progress, which is tracked half-termly by the staff.
- Celebrating the achievements of the pupils and staff.

Governor visits to the School this year have focused on pupil progress, classroom displays and book corners, monitoring of work and marking in pupils' books, the Christian ethos of the School, Safeguarding registers, registers of medicines and first aid incidents, the support given to pupils with Special Educational Needs, the integration of the new nursery pupils, and the work of the Ocean and Atlantic centres. We thoroughly enjoy all our classroom visits, and it's been wonderful to receive a warm welcome from the children and teachers.

# GOVERNORS' REPORT TO PARENTS

## Reports from Link Governors

### *Safeguarding*

Keeping our children safe is the School's highest priority, and every person who works or volunteers in the School shares this responsibility. As the Governor for safeguarding, it's my responsibility to take the lead in checking that the School's leadership and staff are following the requirements and expectations set out in its [Safeguarding Policy](#), which was adopted in November 2018.

I have visited the School twice to talk specifically with staff about the way the school is implementing the policy, as well as to inspect the School's Single Central Record. The Record keeps a register of all adults who work or volunteer in the School, and confirms that all necessary checks have been made as to their suitability, together with the evidence provided.

Within the School, it's also my duty to check that Safeguarding information is clearly displayed in all the classrooms in a way that children can understand. This information tells them who they can talk to if they have any concerns. This is also something which is explained to the children on a regular basis.

At every Governors' meeting we also receive a Safeguarding report from the head teacher and are able to ask questions relating to any incidents.

If you have any specific safeguarding concerns you should speak to the class teacher or member of the senior leadership team in confidence. But if you have any questions relating to the School's approach to keeping children safe, I'll be happy to speak with you. -- *Craig*

### *Special Educational Needs*

I have spent one afternoon meeting with the SEND Leader, looking round the Ocean Centre, meeting children and learning how SEND children are supported within the school. My first meeting revealed what a wide-ranging and important subject this is. It is such a specialist area that, in order to fulfil my duties as governor, the SEND Leader and I agreed that I would carry out regular visits, so as to become familiar with the children and the teaching. This will give me a deeper understanding of the work involved, which will enable me to then make meaningful assessments against the [SEND Policy](#).

Both the SEND Leader and I felt that this should become a long-term relationship, in order to continue to provide worthwhile support. -- *Cecilia*

### *Health and Safety*

I took up the responsibility of health and safety when I joined the governing board in February. I spent some time with Mrs Hurst and Mr O'Neill getting an understanding of procedures, and it's surprised me how many checks are involved under the [Health and Safety Policy](#). Mr O'Neill and I spent some time walking around the school looking at some small issues and what plans were in place to rectify these. Going forward, I will continue to visit the school on a regular basis to review compliance with the policy, and to support Mr O'Neill. -- *Darren*

# GOVERNORS' REPORT TO PARENTS

## **Finance**

Mrs Wynter and Mrs Hurst have worked closely with Hounslow and with the Trust to manage the School's finances this year. The School ran two separate budgets: one from September to November 2018, and another from November to July 2019, after becoming an academy. This has been a financially complicated time for the School, as it took until July 2019 for the local authority (Hounslow) to close the School's account and transfer the outstanding funds to the School's new account. The School has been supported by the Trust through this time.

Now that the School has become an academy, one of the Governors' jobs is to ensure that the School runs balanced budget and complies with the Trust's Finance Manual. Mrs Wynter has learned to use the two new accounting systems which are standard in all Trust academies. At our July meeting, the Governors approved a new budget for the next School year. Starting in September, we will receive monthly and quarterly budget reports to ensure that the School is on track to meet its budget. We hope to appoint a specific Finance Governor in September 2019. -- *Anne*

## **Special thanks to staff**

It's been a uniquely demanding year for Mrs Hurst, Mrs McCarthy, and the office staff team of Mrs Wojtas, Mrs Murray and Mrs Wynter, who have been at the front lines in helping the School become an academy. They have made sure that the School has all the correct policies in place – and that we are following what the policies say. Mrs Wynter has been especially busy transitioning the School to the new finance and accounting systems. The Governors are hugely proud of what the staff team have achieved this year, and we thank them.

## **Staying in touch**

Please feel free to contact the Governors at any time, about any issue affecting School life or any questions you may have. You can reach us at [governors@strichards.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:governors@strichards.hounslow.sch.uk). Anne and Craig are often in School as well.

Minutes from our meetings during the 2018-19 school year are available [here](#).