

Governing Body Review of the Year 2019/20

As we are approaching the end of the summer term, here is a summary and review of the last academic year.



Greenway Primary
& Nursery School

Governing Body Membership Changes

Louise Farrow's term of office as a Local Authority appointed governor came to an end during the autumn term. Louise sat on the Personnel Finance and Premises Committee; supported the Governing Body with their Equality responsibilities; and acted as a link governor for English/Writing. Louise had a long association with the school as both her children had attended here when they were younger.

Alison Hoffman first joined the Governing Body in 2011 as a parent governor and then became a co-opted governor – her second term of office has now come to an end and she has decided to step away from governing. We are very grateful to her for chairing the Personnel Finance and Premises Committee as well as the Pay Committee during her time as a governor. Some parents will have met her through her work chairing Parent Forum and staff will know her as the governor contact for the staff survey and for all her work in improving the garden areas of the school – thank you Alison!

Beverley Murphy has been a stalwart of the Governing Body as staff governor for many years and has given invaluable support to us all – she will be sorely missed but we wish her and her husband a very happy retirement.

We have been delighted to welcome five new governors to the Governing Body – many of you will know the four parent governors elected in the autumn term (Nicola Burton, Pam Campbell, Rich Millar and Tim Winmill) through your respective children. Ian McCaul has joined the Governing Body as the new Local Authority appointed governor and comes with a wealth of experience in special educational needs. If you have a moment do take the opportunity to have a look at their short biographies on the school website – we feel very fortunate to have such a talented group of people join the Governing Body.

Actions taken by the Governing Body through 2019/20

Corona-virus: This has been a highly unusual year for so many reasons and we have been very aware of the challenges faced by the entire school community during this difficult time. The amount of guidance issued by Government and the Local Authority on almost a daily basis along with advice from the teaching unions has been quite extraordinary. As governors we have worked hard to keep abreast of this to support the school in adopting the right approach for our children and staff during lock-down and the period covering the subsequent easing of restrictions and have met regularly on a virtual basis to discuss all relevant matters. Ensuring an appropriate balance between remote learning and the mental health and wellbeing of all families and staff has not been easy but we are confident that everyone has done their absolute best.

We are delighted with how well the school community has come together in ensuring that all those children who wished to return to school this term have been able to do so and are very pleased to report that approximately 70-75% of our eligible children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 were in school for 4 days per week from 1 June (2 days per week for Year 6) and over 90% of our children in all year groups have been back in school for 2 days per week from 22 June.

Governor Louise Collins supported school in surveying parents as to whether they would wish their child/ren to return to school as lock-down eased and Vice Chair of Governors Fiona Duck was instrumental in ensuring that signage for opening the school up to children post lock-down was in place – thank you Fiona!

70-75%
of Nursery, Reception,
Year 1 and Year 6
returned from
1st June

90%
of all children
returned from
22nd June

Actions taken by the Governing Body through 2019/20 (cont'd)

Vision and Values: Partly due to our having so many new governors and partly due to the plans for the Chiltern Educational Trust having foundered, we felt it important in the first part of the year to revisit our vision and values for the school. Staff and parents have been supportive of the streamlined adjustments and you will see these on the school website. It is clear that whatever steps staff, governors and parents take for Greenway, the children are at the centre of everything, so the agreed updates have made this even more explicit.

School Plan for 2019/20: With the Senior Leadership Team and our external advisor, governors contributed to and began the monitoring of an ambitious school plan linked to the new Education Inspection Framework and the new curriculum. We have continued to monitor the School Plan, particularly in its teaching and learning objectives and those targets set for pupils' achievements and standards accepting that objectives were put on hold during lock-down.

We were pleased to support the school with the launch of the Achievement for All project at the start of the academic year and know that staff are looking forward to picking up with families when school returns in September.

Standards: As formal testing has not taken place this year, we do not have Year 6 data to share with you – testing will start again next year. In January, Governors undertook bespoke training on the new Education Inspection Framework which was very helpful particularly for our new governor intake. Prior to lock-down governors also regularly visited the school to monitor areas of the School Plan not least this year to consider how Shared and Guided Writing is being delivered alongside a specific governor visit investigating writing standards across the school which confirmed that the school's internal assessment of pupils is accurate.

There have also been governor visits associated around special educational needs provision; data; the curriculum (and specifically a 'deep dive' that took place with regard Reading); and a visit around how mental health and well-being is being considered within the school. There has also been governor attendance at a sports conference; statutory governor health and safety and safeguarding visits; and attendance at school events such as parental workshops.

Budget: Throughout the year the Governing Body monitor expenditure against budget headings and prepare and submit an annual return to the local authority at the end of the financial year. Governors undertake regular visits to the school and are appraised of the administrative systems used by them. Due to exceptional circumstances governors agreed a budget with an in year deficit for 2020/2021 which is covered by a carry forward – although this was higher

than had been anticipated at the start of the financial year all schools are facing difficult times.

Pupil Premium: Governors monitor the spending of Pupil Premium to ensure that the money received is used in the most effective way for the benefit of those particular children eligible for it. You will see a summary of how this money has been spent on the school's website. We are delighted that external providers of support services used by the school continue to praise the school's exemplary approach in how pupils' needs at Greenway are supported – governor links Fiona Duck and Michelle Webb meet with the school's INCO Dani Roe on a regular basis to specifically discuss the provision for those pupils with additional needs.

Premises: We support the school in monitoring a rolling programme of improvements and we are very pleased to have Governor Nick Brown's expertise as a qualified surveyor on the Governing Body who supports us in undertaking regular visits to monitor that identified issues are swiftly addressed. We have had to have the library roof replaced and also work undertaken to the gas pipes supplying the school. We are grateful to all involved for ensuring that there has been minimal impact to staff and children.

Parent Forum: We would like to thank all parents/carers who have been on Parent Forum this year and all those who have fed views into their representatives. The Greenway Parent Forum continues to prove an effective method of communication between school and parents and we are grateful to Governor Alison Hoffman for chairing this so effectively. We will appoint a new Chair for Parent Forum from within the Governing Body at the start of next term to enable us to ensure that effective channels for communication and feedback are maintained.

GSA: Governors have been pleased to work with the school and GSA in supporting many fund-raising events. The money raised has been invaluable in supporting delivery to the children in a wide variety of ways:

- the Daily Mile running track;
- music delivery for Key Stage 2 children;
- weekly cornet teaching for Year 4 pupils;
- the provision of a teacher planning tool to support the delivery of Personal Social and Health Education for the whole school;
- plus payment for external flooring for the outdoor play equipment – this will be installed over the summer holiday period weather permitting!



Actions taken by the Governing Body through 2019/20 (cont'd)

Governor training: All Governors undertake training annually to support them in their roles and responsibilities and this year has been no different with our new governors attending induction and safeguarding training as well as the entire Governing Body having training around the school's Vision and Values and the Education Inspection Framework.

School Website: Governors and school leaders will be reviewing the school website in the coming months and considering how this may be improved.

Staff Survey: We have also undertaken a staff survey this year which was coordinated by Governor Alison Hoffman and are grateful to staff for their support with this. The results showed overwhelmingly that staff at Greenway believe the school provides a positive working environment. Many of the comments from staff focussed on the supportive leadership of the school and the happy atmosphere and culture, as well as the children and wider school community.

Sport: Governor Beth Baylay has spent a very great deal of time and effort in working with the school around the installation of the Daily Mile running track and we know how much this has been appreciated by all of the children (and staff) particularly when they started their return to school as lockdown has been eased. We will continue to monitor the use of Sports Premium funding and provision of sport across the school next year and are sufficiently confident in the widest possible contribution that sport delivers to our pupils to be developing this as a key area for Deep Dive consideration in any future Ofsted inspection.

Music and Other Achievements: you will have seen information related to the Greenway Socially Distanced Band in the monthly newsletters – we are all very proud of their achievements and congratulate them in all that they have achieved during lock-down. This year school has also organised wonderful trips to the O2 in London for Year 5 and to St Albans Cathedral for the choir to sing at the annual service for the Hospice for St Francis.



Greenway Summer Camp: Governors have worked hard with staff to provide a summer camp for at least 85 Greenway families and more than 100 pupils over the summer holidays which will support those parents needing childcare and acknowledges that many children have been missing out on interaction with their peers during lock-down. In particular, Governors Louise Collins and Pam Campbell have worked hard in producing a survey for you to complete around your requirements and then worked up a business case to support its delivery to you. We wish everyone involved lots of fun over the summer!

We wish those staff leaving the school this year (Mrs Murphy, Miss McGuire, Mrs Saunders and Mrs Huggett) the very best of luck in the future.

We appreciate that this has been an extraordinarily difficult year for so many people and are hoping that things will get back to some level of normality in September even if it is a 'new normal'. We are looking forward to working with the school in the new academic year when we hope that every child will be back at Greenway.

Wishing you all an enjoyable summer.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth O'Reilly MBE

Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing Body