

Primary Advantage Federation Annual Governance Statement 2017-18

Primary Advantage Federation (PAF) vision, schools and governors

Our schools achieve significant benefits for our pupils by working together. We are committed to a shared responsibility for; the provision of the highest-quality education, and improving the life chances for all pupils in the wider community, within and beyond our own schools. This is a transition year for the federation as it has just grown by two schools and is evolving its governance approach accordingly, to consolidate its successful journey.

Vision

- Every teacher is a great teacher; every school is a great school. We aim to move incrementally towards excellence in all aspects of our work.
- All pupils will make good or better progress and will be properly equipped for the next stage of their schooling.
- Learning environments are of high quality where pupils feel safe and secure, known, valued and motivated to learn.
- Curriculum provision is bespoke, broadens horizons, and inspires our pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Our learning community provides growth opportunities for pupils, staff and families.

Schools

Our federation now consists of eight Hackney primary schools:

- Holy Trinity CE Primary School
- St John & St James CE Primary School
- Springfield Community Primary School
- St Matthias CE Primary School
- St John The Baptist CE Primary School
- Morningside Primary School
- De Beauvoir Primary School
- Gainsborough Primary School

Governors

Our 14-person Central Governing Board (CGB) consists of:

- Two parent governors
- One local authority governor
- One staff governor
- One executive principal – ex officio
- Nine foundation governors:
 - i. Four Bishop of Stepney nominations
 - ii. One London Diocesan Board for Schools appointee
 - iii. Two Hackney Deanery Synod appointees
 - iv. Two co-opted Governors nominated by other foundation governors and appointed by the CGB

The CGB delegates some functions to a Scrutiny and a Business Committee

Business interests and attendance

The business interests and attendance for CGB members are on the federation website 'our governance' page. For Local Advisory Board (LAB) members they are on each school website. The CGB has met three times (one meeting per term) this year. Meetings have been generally well attended.

Core functions of the Central Governing Board

The CGB has a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the Executive Principal to account for the educational performance of the federation schools and pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Central Governing Board Objectives

In September 2016, the governing body identified three objectives for development.

Objective 1

Improve attendance so that all schools are above the national average, with all schools working towards being in the top 30% of schools nationally

Progress and impact

Governors have made good pupil attendance a focus because we recognise the impact on children's learning and development. Governors have been monitoring attendance centrally and at each school Board meeting. Headteachers provide Governors with data which shows how well our schools perform against national and borough averages for overall attendance. We also monitor the proportions of pupils who are regarded as being 'persistently absent' with attendance below 85%.

- Headteachers have been asked to help ensure families are both challenged and supported to improve the attendance of pupils. For example, our schools have identified staff (such as a pastoral manager, learning mentor or school home support worker) who monitor attendance and track pupils for whom attendance is becoming a problem. Where necessary, we have also bought in extra support from the local authority. Our schools also celebrate good attendance, recognising this through assemblies and certificates. We have reported individual pupil attendance in the school reports at the end of the last academic year, to help parents monitor attendance too. Headteachers across the Federation also share good practice and discuss ways to improve attendance.

As a result of all this work, Governors have been pleased to see an improving trend in overall attendance in our schools. The proportions of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced.

Objective 2

Secure attainment to continue to be above national expectations, with a focus on the attainment and progress of more able pupils

Progress and impact

Our primary schools are split into three key phases of learning; Early Years (Nursery and Reception), Key stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6). Schools are required to carry out standard assessments at the end of each phase.

Governors have reviewed the data for the end of each key phase of learning for the academic year 2016/17. Each school has been asked to publish their data on individual school websites. Governors would like to thank schools for their continued commitment to achieving great outcomes for all our students:

- At the end of the Early Years phase, school performance is in line with both Hackney and National averages.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving at the expected standard in reading, writing and maths is above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving above the expected standard is also above the national average.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, for the Federation as a whole, the proportion of pupils achieving at the expected standard in reading, writing and maths is 16% above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving above the expected standard is broadly in line with the national average.

Governors will continue to monitor carefully and encourage school leaders across Primary Advantage to keep sharing good practice, helping ensure the best outcomes for all of our pupils, with a particular focus on the more able. We have asked the Teaching Schools to continue their focus on professional development for staff, in order to sustain the best provision for pupils amid a challenging wider context for staff recruitment and retention.

Objective 3

Continue the focus on governance to secure the direction of travel for all eight PAF schools

Progress and impact

Governors have continued to focus on effective governance for our schools, to enable us to support continued improvement across the federation. The process to expand the federation has now concluded; we are a federation of eight schools including Gainsborough and De Beauvoir. Both before and after the expansion, Governors invested significant time in thinking about how our systems and structures can achieve our strategic goals, whilst allowing each school the flexibility to make decisions that are in the best interests of their own school communities. We have agreed to continue with our model of delegating responsibility for individual schools to smaller groups. These groups are now called Local Advisory Boards (LABs) and include members such as parents, people from the wider community and staff.

We will continue to develop our Governance structures and are now focusing on implementation and the development of best practice.

Other work completed by the Central Governing Board

Training and development

Governors have ongoing access to training offered through Hackney Learning Trust, LDBS and HASGA. Support is also offered through services such as The Key and Modern Governor.

Teaching School

In addition to our eight schools, Primary Advantage also has a centrally coordinated Teaching School. The Teaching School coordinates professional training and development for all PA schools as well as other schools in Hackney, London and across the country. The teaching school also develops approaches to teaching and learning, the curriculum and helps share best practice. For example, we have developed a comprehensive maths programme and an approach to assessment called the Fundamentals. Details of the work of the teaching school can be found on the Primary Advantage website. Governors support the work of the teaching school and receive regular reports about its priorities and impact.

Policies

Governors have reviewed policies in line with the agreed cycle, including: Equalities, Looked After Children, SEND, Health & Safety and Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Finance and administration

The Schools Financial Value Standards have been completed for all schools and budgets are closely monitored to ensure expenditure is effective. The CGB and LABs have reviewed the budgets for the previous and new financial years. All schools have successfully passed local authority audits and are working on ensuring financial procedures are reviewed by the LABs at each meeting. Again, the wider context is challenging but all PA schools are in a good financial position.

School development

Governors and LAB members have actively contributed to the School Development Plan in our schools through attending INSET Days, link visits, learning walks and meetings with staff. More information can be found in the LAB Annual Governance Statements on each school's website.

Objectives for 2017-18:

1. To improve attendance so that all schools are at least in the top 50% with all schools working towards being in the top 30% of schools nationally.
2. To review the business functions of the expanded federation and teaching schools to ensure that:
 - a. finance and admin teams are trained and supported to fulfil their roles;
 - b. all schools are fully compliant with financial procedures and
 - c. the business functions of the federation are efficient and cost effective.
3. To continue the development of assessment across the federation with a focus on peer and self-assessment.
4. To continue the development of governance systems and structures to ensure the effectiveness of the Central Governing Board, its two Committees, and the eight Local Advisory Boards.



