



Federation of  
Westminster Special Schools  
& Bi-Borough Inclusion Service

## **GOVERNORS' ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS and CARERS**

**June 2022**

## Introduction

We are pleased to present the Governing Board's Annual Report to parents and carers of pupils attending the Federation Special schools. Over the past academic year apart from the usual transaction of business the Governing Board and the committees have been focussed on:

- **Safeguarding pupils** which is a key priority for governors and the Federation. We follow the requirements of the government document "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and all governors undertake safeguarding training.
- **The recruitment of an Executive Headteacher** to replace Jo Petch who resigned at the start of the year. We are pleased that we were in a position to make an appointment and Noel Gibb will be starting as Executive Headteacher in September 2022.
- **Corona Virus and the implications for pupils, staff, schools and governors.** The Corona Virus caused unprecedented challenges to the Federation Special Schools and services over the last year with numerous restrictions. As most of these restrictions have now been lifted both schools and the Bi Borough Inclusion Service have gradually returned to normal working but using some of the benefits and changed ways of working developed during covid. The Bi-borough inclusion service has continued to support children with special needs in mainstream schools and has developed new ways of delivering training. Governor meetings have now returned to "in person" and we are planning to re-start our programme of school visits very shortly.
- **Recruitment of governors and associate members** to replace governors as they complete their time on the Governing Board. We recently filled our vacancy for a Parent Governor and a staff governor should be appointed in the very near future.
- School improvement and the quality of provision
- The Federation Development Plan, schools and service development plans. The Governing Board continues to monitor and contribute to these to ensure continuous improvement.
- The ongoing development of a curriculum to meet the changing needs of all pupils

- Ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is always at a high standard so that pupils get the best provision that we can offer
- Ensuring that the Federation website is compliant, providing all the information that parents need.
- GDPR Compliance – It is very important to ensure that schools and the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service adhere to this regulation to ensure only necessary information is kept and that it is held safely and securely.
- Pupil attendance and wellbeing
- Managing the schools and services within budget limits.

**The Governing Board has three main functions:**

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Federation, Federation schools and the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service
- Holding the Executive Headteacher/ Headteachers/Head of the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service to account for the educational performance of the Federation Schools and the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service, its pupils and the performance management of staff and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the Federation, Federation Schools and Bi-Borough Inclusion Service and making sure the money is well spent

**Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.**

The vision, ethos and strategic direction is set out by the Governing Board in consultation with the Executive Headteacher and the Federation Leadership Team. This provides a framework for the Executive Headteacher / Headteachers/Head of Bi-Borough Inclusion Service and the Federation to discharge their duties and responsibilities. Both schools and services continue to improve although they are considered good schools and services we strive to be even better. This is putting the vision and ethos into practice with a clear strategic direction.

**Holding the Executive Headteacher/Headteachers to account for the educational performance of the Federation schools, their pupils and the performance management of staff**

The Governing Board has a range of highly skilled and experienced governors who know both schools and services well. Governors have a detailed knowledge about the quality of provision in both schools and services. Governors receive regular reports and presentations on the performance of the Federation and its pupils and there is a programme of visits to both schools.

There are currently two committees; The Planning & Organisation and The Pupils and Learning Committee. Both of these committees support the work of the Governing Board and give detailed scrutiny on a range of topics reporting back to them with their recommendations or reporting on the decisions made on behalf of the Governing Board

The committee structure is reviewed on a regular basis and the current arrangement is as the result of a recent review.

The Federation, supported by the Governing Board and committees constantly strives to deliver the best educational experience for our pupils. With that in mind, an extensive review of the curriculum has taken place and governors receive regular reports and updates on how the curriculum is meeting the needs of all pupils.

At governors' meetings the Executive Headteacher/Headteachers and Head of the Bi-borough Inclusion Service present detailed reports which are then subject to careful scrutiny and questioning by governors as appropriate. Governors are robust in their questioning of the Federation management team holding them to account for the operation of both schools and the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service.

The Governing Board receives regular reports on the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of pupils. It receives budget information and approves the budget and expenditure for the Federation from the income it receives from the Local Authority and other income sources. It also approves the staffing structure for both schools and the Bi-borough Inclusion Service. Governors then monitor expenditure against the budget to ensure money is well spent supporting the needs of pupils. It approves the policies and procedures for the running of the Federation, ensuring that the schools and services run smoothly.

Governors have a key role to play in overseeing the arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils. Governors are vigilant in working with the Executive Headteacher and senior leaders in keeping pupils safe. Governors and staff are clear and understand their statutory responsibilities. All staff, including governors are well trained in order to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

As part of holding the Executive Headteacher to account governors are responsible for the Executive Headteacher's performance management. This is carried out by a panel of three governors led by one the Co-Chairs of

Governors with the help of an adviser. Each year key objectives are set for the Executive Headteacher. Governors then monitor performance against these objectives. These objectives provide a framework for work throughout the schools and services. There are also regular reports on the performance and management of staff.

### **Governor Attendance at Meetings.**

This is monitored closely and records kept. Governors have in general a very good attendance record and are dedicated and committed to undertaking their role and responsibilities. There are a few occasions when a governor cannot attend which is usually due to illness, work commitments or child care difficulties. However, governors have a Code of Conduct and Practice which includes attendance at meetings. If a governor breaches the Code then action will be taken as prescribed. All governors are required to work within the Code of Conduct and Practice when they take on the role of governor or associate member.

### **Governor Training**

All governors bring a variety of skills, knowledge and experience. However, we are required to undertake a range of training which is ongoing so that governors continue to develop skills and knowledge to ensure that we are equipped to be effective in our role on the Governing Board, in committee and during visits to the Federation. A record of governor training is kept and each year governors update their skills audit which is used to support training and development.

### **Conclusion**

The Governing Board has significant responsibilities and functions. It is important that governors are effective and that we review and evaluate the work we are doing and how we are doing it on a regular basis. We do this by self -evaluation, feedback from federation staff, parents and pupils. We also take on board any assessments or evaluations from external agencies such as Ofsted, the Local Authority, external consultants and auditors.

The work of governors can be demanding and challenging but also rewarding. On the Federation Governing Board we have a dedicated group of governors who have wide ranging experience and knowledge who give their time on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the Federation, pupils and their families. The Federation Governing Board is fortunate to have such a strong team of governors. There are two parent governors on the Federation Governing Board who bring a parent perspective to discussions at meetings.

I hope that you find the information in this report helpful. Governors routinely contribute to newsletters to parents. If you would like any topics relating to governors in the newsletter please let us know.

June Simson and David Dyer  
Co-Chairs of Governors  
Dated June 2022