

GOVERNOR UPDATE

Autumn 2017

A year since our inception, the Viridis Schools Governing body have met as a full Governing body four times, established school sub-committees and held a fact finding Governor visit morning to each school site. Governors act as 'critical friends' to the school and make strategic decisions as a group, whilst the operational management of the schools remains the responsibility of the school leadership teams. In our governing body structure, each Governor holds a role that oversees all three schools and is also a member of a sub-committee that is linked to each school.

Thank you for your support in making sure that our three-school partnership continues to be such a success. In 2017 all three schools again achieved results that were above those nationally, with the progress children make whilst at our three schools significantly higher than in all other schools nationally. All three schools were invited to join the Mayor of London's School for Success programme and also recently achieved the International Schools Award. However, we are not complacent in knowing the challenges that our schools face and the importance of ensuring that every child who learns with us receives an excellent education with a focus on a variety of rich curriculum experiences as well as attaining high standards in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.



We hope that this new Governor newsletter helps you better understand our work to make sure we get the best for children at all three schools and capitalise on the many benefits that partnership working is bringing. We have given details of some of these partnership projects on the back of this newsletter but please also follow our schools on Twitter or Facebook or take a look at our school websites for updates.

THE MAYOR OF LONDON'S SCHOOLS FOR SUCCESS PROGRAMME

All three of our partnership schools were asked to be part of the Mayor of London's Schools for Success programme as they were identified as all being in the top 118 London schools (approximately 6% of London primary schools and secondary schools) in ensuring high levels of progress with low prior attaining pupils. The focus of the programme is how best to support these pupils and we have been asked to support other schools and share what we do. This will complement our existing work hosting visits from other schools nationally and internationally which this term has included Japan, Norway, Suffolk, Lambeth and Haringey schools!



WHAT HAVE WE BEEN TALKING ABOUT?



During the last year Governors have undertaken visits to all three schools to meet with staff and children comparing what they see with what they understand from the termly reports that they have received from each school. This term they were back at Southwold visiting classrooms, meeting with pupil ambassadors and hearing about what it means to be a pupil leader at our schools. Governors have also met both as a full governing body and in school subcommittees. They have been discussing issues that affect all three schools such as the Government's agenda regarding the future of local authorities,

recruitment and sourcing funding to support our rich curriculum offer. They have also looked at key priorities using data provided by the Department for Education on how well different groups of our pupils do. There is more information, both about this data and who our Governors are, on our school websites.





As well as our recently successful joint application to be awarded the International Schools Award, our ongoing three school collaborative projects include a joint curriculum which ensures a range of innovative, inspiring and creative opportunities for our children. We constantly share expertise and seek joined up projects wherever we can, working with a wide range of external partners. These have recently included:

- A three year ongoing project with our published award winning **author in residence**, Nicola Davies, who works with children from all three schools. Nicola's most recently published book, 'Animals Behaving Badly' was dedicated to our school's partnership.
- A successful joint bid for **Erasmus** funding which has allowed staff and children from all three schools to travel to Spain and build links with our Spanish partner school. Children from our Spanish partner school have also been able to visit us.
- A winning entry into the **Mayors parade** which resulted from a joint arts project
- Inter School's sports and athletics competitions led by a shared **Lead PE teacher**.
- A shared **school gardener**, who leads projects at all three schools. This has resulted in each school having Gold award winning gardens and links with the **Worshipful Company of Bakers** that have enabled children to grind their grown wheat into flour and bake bread and a project spinning flax to make clothes with a local spinner.
- A joint **Federation Choir** made up of children from all three sites, that has performed at our Local Hospice and care homes for the Elderly along with shared musical projects such as Gamelan and work with **Apollo Music** who work with us to give children the experience of hearing string and brass quartets in the classroom.
- Joint meetings between the **pupil councils** from each school site sometimes using the Hackney Council chambers.
- Joint training and meetings for our playground **peer mediators** who are our pupils that support in the playground to resolve conflict, **language captains** who support Spanish language teaching and **Digital Leaders** who support ICT.
- **Artists in residence** working with children from all three schools to create large scale sculptures in our school common areas and murals for our playgrounds. This year we are working alongside the Bow Arts organisation at all three schools to run workshops which will brighten up learning spaces.
- A **shared cycling manager** supported by **TFL** who runs cycling workshops for our Year 5 and 6 children. Hoxton Garden will join this programme in the Summer 2018 term.
- The joint achievement of awards such as **Arts Mark Gold**, **The Science Quality Mark**, **Geography Quality Mark** and the **ECO schools Award**,.
- All three schools have also achieved the **Inclusion Quality Mark** and **Parent Partnership Award** as a result of the sharing of best practice and ideas and our work with our local communities.
- All three schools take part in **DebateMate** schools competition's and have weekly chess lessons with **Chess in Schools**, also attending the London Chess Classic.
- We also share Speech & Language and Occupational Therapists as well as work with the **UP charity**, **SideBeSide** therapeutic support to share and co-ordinate a wrap around care of our most vulnerable pupils which sees them thrive at our schools partnership.



Southwold School
Detmold Road
London, E5 9NL
Tel: 0208 806 5201

www.southwold.hackney.sch.uk



Orchard School
Holcroft Road
London E9 7BB
Tel: 0208 9857785

www.orchard.hackney.sch.uk



Hoxton Garden School
Ivy Street
London, N1 5JD
Tel: 0207 739 8591

www.hoxtongarden.hackney.sch.uk

