

## Governing Body Blog 2021-22

Full Governing Body meetings are held once per term, with smaller committee meetings and governor visits in between. After each meeting, a Governor will write a short summary of what was discussed. Full minutes are available on request and if you would like to know more about the work of the Governing Body or get involved please contact the Chair of Governors.

### September 2021 Blog

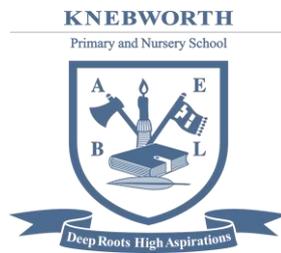
The full governing body met on Wednesday 22 September, continuing to use Zoom as we have found that this enables those of us juggling other responsibilities such as work and children to participate more easily. We intend to alternate between virtual and in-person meetings moving forwards so that we can work in the most effective way possible by benefitting from the advantages of both. At this meeting we welcomed Dharsh Perera, our new Associate Governor. Dharsh is a parent of a child with SEND and will be an asset to the governing body.

At the meeting we looked at the school evaluation and development plan which is reviewed termly. This plan is ambitious, but achievable, and sets out our five strategic priorities, how we intend to achieve them and our progress so far. Ultimately our goal is that by the end of this academic year the school will be performing at the standard that Ofsted inspectors would consider to be Outstanding. The school's staff have been working terrifically hard and has delivered many of the actions set out in the plan, so we're well on track.

We were also updated on the additional funding the school receives through the Pupil Premium and Covid Catch Up Premium, and how the school intends to spend the money. This extra cash is there to help ensure that pupils who are at risk of falling behind are supported to achieve their potential. There has been a recent increase in the number of children qualifying for the Pupil Premium and the school is reviewing its strategy to ensure that funding is appropriately targeted.

A regular item on our agenda is health and safety and we've recently undertaken an internal audit to check that effective health and safety policies are in place being adhered to. The senior leadership team will be updating the staff handbook and providing some refresher training to ensure that all staff are fully aware of what's expected. At the same time we considered a recent incident involving a newly installed piece of playground equipment.

*Deep Roots*



The suppliers have repaired the equipment and provided a report on how the incident occurred and what has been done to rectify the problem and prevent it from reoccurring. We are satisfied that the equipment is safe and that the company has taken measures to prevent further incidents of this nature.

Following our external behaviour review last term the school has updated its behaviour and anti-bullying policies. These are also available on the school website. Recently a member of our governing body has taken specific responsibility to work with the school's senior leadership team on developing communication with parents and stakeholders, and they will be looking at how best to ensure that everyone is aware of the contents of these important documents. We are increasingly using videos to keep people informed about many aspects of school life, so parents may see some short clips on this topic in the near future.

Governors were also given a briefing on a recent Stakeholder Voice survey, circulated to parents and guardians, staff and governors last term. We asked for feedback on what people thought was working well in school and what they thought the school could do better. The survey received 83 responses and we're very grateful for their insight. The school has recently sent to parents a 'You said, We did' document on how the school is responding to feedback.

During the meeting we discussed an outline planning application to build around 230 new homes on land at the back of the school. There are concerns about how additional traffic from this development may affect the safety of children travelling to school, which we intend to put in writing to the planning authorities. We also need to consider how this development, and others in the neighbourhood plan that will increase housing in the area, will affect the demands on education. The school needs to consider its longer term vision and what we want in the future. The planning process may provide opportunities for the school to expand and to upgrade or replace our facilities, we need to explore and understand these fully, along with the challenges of increasing Knebworth's population.

Written by Nik Watson.



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