

# Director's Report to Governors

## Including Governor's Training Summer Term 2020



# Introduction

I have included my latest blog below - which may be superseded by the time this goes to print but I think it will provide a background to some of the work taking place as we move to the next stage of the response to Covid-19.

## Welcome to an unusual Director's Report.

Week 10 - It's (another) bank holiday week, but it feels no different? I am writing this on Thursday evening the sun has shone all week and apart from my South Bank jogs all I have seen of the sun is from this desk looking out at a deserted Mulberry Towers. Yes the latter will remain pretty deserted for some time to come, though extensive work is underway and you will receive plenty of communications in due course.

The complexities and challenges are extensive especially as each day brings yet another suite of announcements. This morning "track and trace" (I remain none the wiser....) and this evening more on schools. Let's be clear lock down was brutal but easy - the transition to the new normal is anything but!

Most of my energy and that of Christine's was devoted to the schools and what is euphemistically called a re-opening - completely missing the fact that circa. 80% have been opened since day 1 of lock down for the children of key workers and vulnerable children... and this has been an unsung success story. I have expressed my thanks and to those of others to our brilliant teachers and support staff who have invented creative ways of managing the new normal on which we



can build. Phoenix ASD School which caters for particularly challenging young people has been effectively managing 50 pupils a day.

As you know, we have been, and will continue to, work closely with Public Health colleagues, our Head Teachers and the Unions to achieve – at the right time and the right pace – a phased increase in pupil numbers. There is much talk of the 5 tests and much dispute over whether or not they are passed. What matters to us is mitigating risk and demystifying myths and provide a safe and nurturing environment for our children. The checks and balances will become more sophisticated and planning is crucial. All schools are different. The really big issue is, of course, the fear factor and for that information/information/information...is the key. But my biggest worry is that the children who really need to be in school will become the disappeared – and hence all our worries over “hidden harm”.

Which brings me to our social workers and I cannot let this blog go without referencing Dan and Mary-Anne's appearance on Bank Holiday Monday <https://youtu.be/G-BtL6tOABI> – yes a much truncated piece following an interview that lasted the best part of 3 hours, but they absolutely conveyed the challenge and the vital importance of “face to face contact”. You know it matters. You tell me that. Your stories about the steadily increasing numbers and the intensity of some of the presenting problems - be it domestic violence; an increase in teenage violence on parents; or the nature of the referrals that are coming through. This and more will emerge, colleagues, over the coming months and we must be prepared. I understand that we are once again experiencing pressure on our Edge of Care Services and the corresponding increase in the numbers of children entering the care system. You tell me that though much can be done using Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp, but sometimes young people just need to see you. All of that requires careful planning – PPE where appropriate, but let's not over-kill – we are not in the bio-hazard sphere... yet.

This week I was also interested to hear about some of the stories from our Permanency & Fostering Recruitment Teams where staff have responded well to the “virtual” challenges, whilst at the same time responding to a significant increase in fostering enquiries which is predictable. We have also seen a rise in SGO (Special Guardianship Order) assessments – for the uninitiated this enables children to remain within their family network.

Meanwhile lock down may be easing, but some of our most vulnerable children remain locked in (the ‘shielded group’) and I was overwhelmed to see the quantity and quality of the packs that we are providing for all ages. The speed with which this has been put together is awesome as the below picture will testify.

Finally for this week a note on money which will inevitably form a bigger part of our discussions going forward. You are, I know, clear on my position on agency staff and I am truly sorry to



have to wave goodbye to some, but I am delighted that more of you are looking to covert (as did I 5 amazing years ago). We have also been awash with applications from newly qualified social workers. We are also seeing an increase in applications from experienced social workers and weekly interviews are planned for the forthcoming 6 months. No excuses - give me one good reason why folk would not want to come and work in this amazing London Borough and what a place to build a career and earn your spurs.

Thank you to all governors and school leaders for all your effort in continuing to support your schools and community during these challenging times.

We will try and organise a 'meeting' with Governors in early July and further details will be shared in due course.

**Debbie Jones**  
**Director**  
**Children and Culture Directorate**

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## Training and dates for the diary

The training programme for Summer term for governors and school leaders are listed below. Due to our current COVID-19 climate we are only delivering 2 online sessions this term. A training Schedule for Academic Year 2020/21 will be published and sent to all governors by mid July.

It is good practice to undertake external governance reviews periodically to ensure that school governance is effective. We have experienced facilitators and Governing Boards can arrange external review through Governor Services.

Governor Services offers three types of training opportunities:

- ➔ Central training for all governors
- ➔ In-school training for whole governing bodies
- ➔ Clerks' briefing for independent clerks

## School-based training

Governing bodies that wish to make enquiries regarding school-based training or external Governance review can contact Governor Services for further information.

Email: [farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

**You can book a place on these courses through GovernorHub, using the contact details below or by telephoning Governor Services on 020 7364 3141/4617.**

## Summer Term 2020

Courses	Date/time/venue	Descriptions
<b>Director's meeting with governors</b>	Online Session TBA Attendance: Free	The Director's termly meeting with governors: workshops, items from governors, discussion and debate. To reserve a place, book through GovernorHub, contact Governor Services, e-mail: <a href="mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk">farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a> Attendance: Free
Pupil Disciplinary – Exclusion Panel Session	Tuesday 9 June 2020 5.30pm – 6.30pm Online Session	To reserve a place, book through GovernorHub, contact Governor Services, e-mail: <a href="mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk">farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a> Attendance: Free

## Bespoke Sessions

Governor Services also offers one bespoke school-based training session as part of the SLA with schools (more information on the SLA from Governor Services can be obtained by contacting [farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk))

Schools can choose from the following list (this is not an exhaustive list and training suggestions are welcomed):

- ➔ Understanding governors' roles and responsibilities
- ➔ Preparing for Ofsted
- ➔ Bespoke finance session
- ➔ Tailored understanding the data for your school
- ➔ Pupil exclusions
- ➔ Maximising early years funding
- ➔ Online safety
- ➔ Meaningful engagement with parents
- ➔ Admissions and appeals training
- ➔ Holding school leaders to account – appropriate challenge and support

# For Action

## LA response to COVID-19

### Contact for enquiries:

**Christine McInnes**

Divisional Director Education and Partnership

Email: [sharon.thomas@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.thomas@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: Governors

Firstly, I would like to say a huge thank you for the work you are doing to support schools – whether this is holding virtual meetings, being available on the phone for school leaders as support, or volunteering your time in other ways.

The pandemic has triggered a statutory emergency response within the council, with the establishment of a Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) and a Gold decision making and governance structure. I have included links to two presentations below which explains the Tower Hamlets COVID-19 Response and explains the work of the Children's Services Operational Group.

You can find the presentation on the Tower Hamlets COVID-19 Response [here](#). Under this structure, at Bronze level, we established two sub-groups, one focusing on medically vulnerable children and the other on socially vulnerable children. These groups have ensured the system response is robust and we are effectively supporting targeted children.

As time goes on, an emergency response becomes less appropriate and we have started planning for the longer term which includes increasing the numbers of children attending school. The government's ambition is that Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 return to school and Years 10 and 12 to be offered 'some face to face support' from 1st June. The Council is committed to ensuring the mental and physical health and safety of children and young people, their parents and school staff. This means that on the 1st of June we are anticipating schools will continue to be open for children of key workers and those that are vulnerable, but we are not expecting schools to start admitting a significant number of pupils beyond these groups straight away. Our expectation is that having assessed potential demand from parents, school leaders will phase the start of additional children, ensuring that the school can be safely managed and reviewing the risks regularly. As schools are so different, it is likely the return of pupils and some headteachers

are confident that they are ready to admit additional children from the 1st June. If the risk assessment shows evidence that the situation is becoming unsafe, then leaders can review their decision.

A suite of Risk Assessments have been disseminated to headteachers to be used in preparation for opening. This should include protocols to ensure:

- ➔ The avoidance of contact with anyone who has symptoms
- ➔ Minimising contact and mixing
- ➔ Frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices
- ➔ Regular cleaning of settings.

We are working closely with school leaders and THEP to support and guide schools to open where it is safe to do so. You can find the presentation on 'COVID-19 infection protection and control in educational settings' **here**.

Please note, there is new guidance being issued regularly and some of the information provided may need to be reviewed. Updated information will be available on the THEP, Local Offer and Tower Hamlets Council websites.

FOR ACTION

## Governance coping with COVID-19 : a “new normal”?

### Contact for enquiries:

**Paul Aber**

Head of Training Development, National Governance Association

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Email: [paul.aber@nga.org.uk](mailto:paul.aber@nga.org.uk)

### Audience: School governors and trustees, members of local governing bodies

Coronavirus (COVID-19) was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation on the 11 March 2020. It has been and remains the major concern for school leaders monitoring and dealing with the risks and implications in an evolving situation and now trying to work out what comes next and how to manage this.

Readers will be aware at the time of this writing article all state schools closed to almost all pupils until further notice from the afternoon of Friday 20 March, less than two months ago. The closure applies to all children, except those of key workers and those who are “most vulnerable”, including those with social workers and education, health and care plans.

### What does this mean for governors, trustees and members of local governing bodies?

As we will all now know this unprecedented situation has raised and continues to raise new questions for schools and their governing boards to deal with. You and other conscientious governors and trustees across the country want to know how to best fulfil your governance roles and support your schools as well as dealing with your own changed personal circumstances. You will also be considerate of the enormous task that staff have in ensuring continuity of education and making the reduced provision work on the ground.

At NGA we have been supporting those governing by providing additional focussed guidance and advice on key areas. There are many areas but here are three key things to focus on.

Stay strategic. First be careful not to be tempted to stray from the strategic into the operational. You will want to help and support more and be keen to understand that your school is doing the right thing as far as possible (even more than usual) but you do need to let your staff get on with things.

FOR ACTION

Support your senior leaders. They will be under a lot of pressure for obvious reasons and so it's important to maintain sensible contact and check that health and wellbeing, particularly mental health of all staff is being properly monitored.

Make the most of virtual meetings to continue to fulfil your governance functions and be prepared to adapt. Most boards have moved quickly to holding virtual board meetings due to the impact of COVID-19 and have found them a useful and flexible alternative.

Experience over the last few weeks has taught us some lessons about how to do governance in a virtual way; here are a few ideas for you to think about whether your preferred system is Zoom, Go-To, Skype or any other platform for that matter.

- ➔ Remember that all normal governing board meeting rules apply to a virtual meeting.
- ➔ Think of your clerk - it's harder to minute when you're not able to see everyone and who is speaking, so I would encourage everyone to be brave enough to turn their video on,
- ➔ Remember that governing board business is confidential so be careful to check you're in a place where you won't be interrupted or overheard and do mute when you're not talking (family members and pets can be a distraction!).
- ➔ Listen carefully to others and come in at the right time. If you are using the video function, it can help the chair if people raise their hand to speak so people don't talk over each other.
- ➔ Prepare your IT in terms of setting the virtual system up before the meeting. It helps if everyone can use headphones with a microphone if possible (could be the ones which came with your mobile phone). Test the system you are using before the real thing – this will hopefully mean that the meeting can proceed without hiccups.
- ➔ Do as much prep for the meeting in advance as you can. So for example where decisions that were required or questions you want to raise, note this on the agenda ahead of the meeting and share with the chair and clerk, so that clerk and chair can manage the meeting accordingly including planning where quorate decisions are needed and making sure that a quorum is present. If you are working with electronic versions of the papers then why not download the papers on the screen (in tabs) beforehand, so you don't have to rely on an internet connection and have any buffering issues when loading documents.
- ➔ Ensure that you are clear about the timing of the meeting and that everyone is expected to join the meeting five minutes beforehand to enable it to start on time.
- ➔ Be prepared to flex your agendas and sometimes at short notice to reflect the actions that the senior leader and school have to take to manage the effect of the pandemic in your school, how the school is caring for the vulnerable children and children of key workers, wellbeing of staff in school, social distancing measures in place in school, and students access to learning and how this is monitored.

- ➔ Why not use this as an opportunity to try and shorten the length of the meeting? Aim for an efficient hour or maybe an hour and a quarter. Consider deferring items so you can focus on priorities and spend enough time on items. Consider using more regular, shorter meetings to keep on top of things as they arise, the situation can change very rapidly as we all know.

We don't know how long it will be necessary to work in these new ways, but we do know that all those governing are adapting well to the changes and are getting better at doing things in different ways. We at NGA will continue to support this. And, who know, it may just be that the "new normal", whatever it turns out to be may bring with it some new and better ways of making sure that governance business is done beyond just the possibility of wearing face masks at meetings.

FOR ACTION

## Finance Update

### Contact for enquiries:

**Shamila Ganeshalingam/Steve Worth**

Senior Accountant Schools/Schools Funding Advisor

Email: [steve.worth@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:steve.worth@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: School Governors

This briefing provides an outline of the financial arrangements introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Several government publications are available on the financial implications of the pandemic, notably:

#### 1. **Coronavirus (COVID-19): financial support for schools.**

##### **School funding: exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) for the period March to July 2020 - GOV.UK**

This confirms that schools will continue to receive budget shares and SEN top-up funding as normal and that governing bodies should continue to manage budgets effectively, redirecting resources where necessary. It also sets out that schools will be able to claim for additional costs related to specific areas where these cannot be met from existing resources. Claims are not expected from schools unless the additional costs lead to an overspend against in-year resources. Where claims are made, the additional funding limits are determined with reference to pupil number and range from £25k to £75k in mainstream schools with a limit of £50k for special and AP institutions. Schools should maintain a record of additional COVID-19 costs in case there is a need to make a claim.

#### 2. **Coronavirus (COVID-19): financial support for education, early years and children's social care.**

##### **<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care>**

This confirms that grants for the early years free entitlement will continue to be paid. It also sets out the circumstances in which maintained schools can seek support due to loss of locally generated income. The guidance does, 'not in general, expect schools to furlough staff' but where private income streams have, 'stopped or been reduced and there are staff that are typically paid from those private income streams, it may be appropriate to furlough staff.'

However, 'Schools should first seek to make the necessary savings from their existing budget or consider options to redeploy those staff before furloughing them. Only after all potential options have been fully considered should schools furlough those members of staff.'

FOR ACTION

A point consistently made by the DfE is that support for schools over and above normal funding should not lead to the creation of financial reserves. So if the loss of local income can be contained within resources normally available there should be no additional support.

The guidance also emphasises that, 'All organisations are expected to have adequate and effective governance arrangements and controls in place to ensure public funding is spent effectively and appropriately.'

### **3. Coronavirus: free school meal guidance for schools.**

#### **Providing free school meals during the coronavirus outbreak - GOV.UK**

This sets out the requirement to continue to support pupils eligible for benefit related FSM, whether at home or in school. The cost of meals for pupils eligible for free meals (both benefit related and infant free meals) and taking them in school will be met by the school.

Arrangements to provide meals for pupils eligible for benefit related FSM at home can be through the government funded National Voucher Scheme (NVS). Schools making alternative arrangements may recoup the additional cost of providing out of school meals over Easter. The additional cost of other out of school arrangements may be eligible for funding under item 1.

This publication also sets out support to catering suppliers at risk of failure due to school closures. It limits support to 25% of contract values and for the period to the end of June. Further details can be found at: [guidance for public bodies on payment of suppliers](#)

### **4. Funding for the cost of statutory free school meals.**

Funding for benefit related FSM is included in budget shares. Schools receive funding through two FSM related factors, current eligibility and 'Ever 6', many pupils currently eligible will also be counted as Ever 6 and schools will receive both allocations for such pupils. In Tower Hamlets for 2020-21 the amounts per eligible pupil are:

Current FSM - £532.71 (£2.80 per meal day) in both mainstream phases; Ever 6 - £662.93 (£3.49 per meal day) in primary mainstream and £964.81 (£5.08 per meal day) in secondary mainstream.

Both of these factors, plus others, are proxy measures for the additional costs schools face in providing for pupils from deprived backgrounds. One of these costs is the provision of FSM to eligible children.

Schools will also continue to receive Universal Infant Free School Meal funding for the summer term. This allocation will be based on numbers taking meals at the October 2019 and January 2020 censuses and therefore will not be affected by the drop in numbers taking meals.

### **5. Budget setting (maintained schools only).**

The deadline for this has been extended by a month to 30 June. Setting a budget should be treated as a high priority as good financial management remains a key goal, particularly in the current circumstances. Extensions beyond the end of June would need to be justified and agreed/not agreed with individual governing bodies depending on circumstances.

Governing bodies are able to amend (vire) budgets during the year in accordance with their schemes of delegation.

## **6. PE and Sports Grant.**

Funding is in place for the summer-term but, when asked about next year's funding, the response from the Education and Skills Funding Agency on 11 May was, 'We cannot say anything for 2020-21 at this stage.'

## **What does this mean for governors?**

Governors need to be aware of the normal and exceptional funding available during the COVID-19 pandemic to meet the Government's expectations that, ***'All organisations are expected to have adequate and effective governance arrangements and controls in place to ensure public funding is spent effectively and appropriately.'***

FOR ACTION

## Tower Hamlets Education Partnership (THEP)

### Contact for enquiries:

#### Tracy Smith

Director of Tower Hamlets Education Partnership

Tel: 020 7364 2710

Email: [tracy.smith@the-partnership.org.uk](mailto:tracy.smith@the-partnership.org.uk)

### Audience: School Governors

This report comes 5 weeks into lockdown and, along with everyone else, our work has changed as a result.

The Government's instruction to close schools but keep them open for vulnerable children and children of key workers needed a swift response. We worked closely with the Local Authority to set up systems and structures to support schools at the start of the crisis and have made it a priority to contact school leaders to offer support, advice and guidance.

This has been vitally important; however, we are very conscious that our role is to ensure that we promote, support and facilitate a sense of our schools as a community and part of THE Partnership at a very challenging time and to continue to collaborate and connect our members.

Our work has included:

- ➔ Working with the LA as part of their Strategic Reference Group to plan responses to government, help set up hub systems of schooling and support schools with the day to day business under new circumstances
- ➔ A Keeping in Touch Bulletin to HTs which focuses on supporting them with updates, resources, wellbeing and answering key questions. This was issued daily initially but is now twice weekly and planned as part of a communications strategy with the Local Authority.
- ➔ Developing a dedicated COVID-19 area on the website with information and guidance documents, the KiT bulletin, the online professional learning directory and information about LBTH services to schools and parents
- ➔ Developing remote learning resources for children, teachers and parents and sharing these on our website
- ➔ Developing a THEP Online Learning Directory to support professional learning. The link to the brochure is [http://https://www.the-partnership.org.uk/web/online\\_learning\\_directory/473461](http://https://www.the-partnership.org.uk/web/online_learning_directory/473461)
- ➔ Direct contact with every Headteacher in the Local Authority (including schools not in THEP) to identify the support we can give and to support their well being
- ➔ A weekly secondary HT meeting, 'coffee mornings' with heads and a fortnightly meeting of the HT Reference Group.

FOR ACTION

All our KiT Bulletins and resources can be found on our website [www.the-partnership.org.uk](http://www.the-partnership.org.uk)

We are currently working on how we offer our professional learning and leadership programmes remotely but will continue to offer all our programmes. Our session for Governors on the 11th May has been cancelled, however we are keen to continue to offer training and development for Governors and will liaise with governor Services about this.

## Recruitment: Director of Secondary Education and Partnerships

I am delighted that we have appointed Daniel Burton as Director of Secondary Education and Partnerships. Daniel is currently an HMI and has been a school leader in secondary schools in London. Daniel's experience and skills means he compliments the current team well. He takes up post on the 3rd June.

We have started the process to recruit for 2 posts for Primary Maths and English but this has been temporarily halted.

## What does this mean for governors?

For any suggestion about training needs please contact THEP [info@the-partnership.org.uk](mailto:info@the-partnership.org.uk)

FOR ACTION

## Free COVID-19 transport delivery service for LBTH Council

### Contact for enquiries:

**Farhad Ahmed**

Traded Service & Business Development Manager

Tel: 07720 684290

Email: [farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: School Governors

Governor Service has sourced free COVID-19 transport delivery service for LBTH council including all Schools from Transport for London (TFL) Dial A Ride (DAR)

### What is TFL DAR

DAR is a membership-based service that provide free door to door transport to people with permanent or long-term disabilities.

Due to current lockdown measures many users are unable to use the service and resources have been redirected, Governor Services has managed to tap into this resource for the use of LBTH at no cost. TFL DAR is offering LBTH an exclusive be-spoke service that not only covers our food hubs, but schools, children's centres and any other pickup address we deem necessary.

LBTH COVID-19 Food Distribution Hubs currently located at the PDC and New City College Poplar, along with our children's centres and numerous LBTH schools have started utilising this free service and hopefully you can feel the benefits too.

### Booking Process/Guidance

- ➔ Booking information to be sent to [farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk) no later than 16:00hrs the day before transportation, a minimum of 2 days would be ideal.
- ➔ Once booking information accepted by DAR team, you will receive a confirmation email.
- ➔ If you require vehicles on a set day and time every week, a rolling weekly booking can be set up.
- ➔ Provide driver with schedule once at pick up address, which can include multiple returns throughout the day for collection to drop off.
- ➔ Vehicles to be loaded by LBTH staff/volunteers.
- ➔ Deliveries can include food baskets, family support kits to any essential items required by LBTH residents/families/children.

FOR ACTION

- ➔ DAR will provide vehicles with drivers ranging from black cabs to larger Vito's ideal for heavy bulk deliveries. Vehicles allocated will be black cabs unless larger vehicles requested.
- ➔ DAR can provide vehicles throughout the week, including weekends.
- ➔ Drop offs can be made to locations across London.
- ➔ Requests can be made for multiple days throughout the week, including weekends.

For further information including booking template, please contact Farhad Ahmed on 07720684290 or email [farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

FOR ACTION

## School aged immunisation programme

### Contact for enquiries:

#### Vaccination UK

School Immunisation team

Tel: 020 7613 9044

Email: [towerhamlets@vaccinationuk.co.uk](mailto:towerhamlets@vaccinationuk.co.uk)

### Audience: School Governors

While COVID-19 is disrupting our daily lives, it's important to ensure children are vaccinated where services are available. It is important that children keep their vaccinations up to date because they protect them from serious diseases. It also means that when children can return to interacting with other children, they'll have protection from some other diseases. The school immunisation programme (provided by Vaccination UK) deliver DTP & Meningitis ACWY, HPV, MMR catchup clinics and the nasal flu spray during the academic year.

Due to current closure of schools, the school aged immunisation programme (ages 4-16) is currently on hold. Children who have missed planned sessions will be vaccinated when schools reopen. When the service resumes, there will be a period of catchup alongside the routine schedule. Success is seen in schools where governors, teachers, parents and children have a good understanding and awareness of the programmes and their importance. For this reason, it will be crucial for all schools and governing bodies to support VUK to vaccinate all children and help parents understand the importance of vaccinating. Your support to facilitate opportunities to promote parent awareness and acceptability is extremely important.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/whoweare/vaccovid19.html>

### What does this mean for governors?

We ask for your support to actively promote the immunisation programme and raise awareness of the importance of immunisations.

FOR ACTION

## School Health and Wellbeing Service

### Contact for enquiries:

#### Geraldine Collins

School Health & Wellbeing Service Lead

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Mobile: 07714 741748

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### Audience: School Governors

School Nurses are working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic through video and telephone contacts and prioritising :

- ➔ children who have a safeguarding status
- ➔ Undertaking reviews of Health Care Plans
- ➔ Undertaking health needs assessments

The nurses have reported that remote working has enabled parents to discuss in detail their child's health and health care plan. As a result we have many more updated assessments and health care plans than previously.

School Nurses (SNs) are working extremely hard to ensure this information is shared with families and schools so that on return to school there will be up to date health care plan information for the school to implement when the child is in school. This includes medication and SNs will work with SenCO's to ensure that the correct medication is in school, labelled, stored safely but accessible during the school day along with a signed care plan.

We are also having focused conversations about whether it is appropriate for children to be in school where appropriate, and support the return to school for others.

Where children are in the "Shielding Groups", especially those with severe asthma, we are working with the Local Authority to support families and to offer families information and advice on the wider support that is available from the Local Authority.

We are also developing webinars as virtual training sessions for SenCos and school staff on the Health Needs Topics to improve access and participation. These topics are:

- ➔ management of asthma
- ➔ allergy
- ➔ epliepsy
- ➔ eczema.

FOR ACTION

## What does this mean for governors?

This is an opportunity for School Governors to ensure that their schools have a working policy for supporting the management of children with medical conditions in school as per guidance and plans for implementation and ongoing responsibility going forward re management of the IHCPs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

# For Information

FOR INFORMATION

## A safe and responsible return to nursery or school in Tower Hamlets

### Contact for enquiries:

**Christine McInnes**

Divisional Director Education and Partnership

Email: [sharon.thomas@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.thomas@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: Governors

Many nurseries and schools will begin to open for more pupils soon. Most will not open immediately on Monday 1 June, but when they consider it is safe to do so, using a phased approach, in the following weeks. Like parents, we want to see local children back in a school so that they can catch up on their learning but only when education settings have put measures in place to ensure it is safe.

The council is supporting all of our nurseries and schools, with public health experts, to understand and manage the risk of infection and develop options for a safe and responsible return to nurseries and schools.

The decision to increase access, or reopen, is made by the headteacher and the governing body of a school — your child's school will contact you when they have made plans. If you haven't heard, you should contact them directly for information or to discuss concerns.

The council's Family Information Service is also available to support you on 020 7364 6495 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). If you have specific medical questions about sending your child to school you should contact your GP (eg someone in your house is shielding).

Read more [here](#).

FOR INFORMATION

## Special Educational Needs and Educational Psychology

### Contact for enquiries:

**John O'Shea**

Head of Special Educational Needs and Educational Psychology

Tel: 020 7364 1065

Email: [John.O'Shea@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:John.O'Shea@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: School Governors

During the period of partial school closure it has been business as usual for the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service, with members of staff being able to work from home to complete assessments and issue Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Caseworkers are still requesting advice from colleagues in health and social care and are ensuring that the most up to date advice is collected to support assessments. The SEN Panel has operated remotely and so far, since the 23rd March has assessed 80 children and young people and agreed to issue 50 new EHCPs.

The Education Psychology Service (EPS) has also been operating remotely and EP's have been available to advise and support schools as they continue to deliver education to children on site and remotely. The EPS has also developed guidance documentation to support schools, children, young people and their families who may have suffered a bereavement during this time.

Governors will be aware that from the 1st May the Secretary of State for Education introduced temporary changes to the law for some timescales, relating to the EHCP process and to the duty to ensure the provision in the EHCP. Exceptions to the assessment process and any COVID-19 related delays in Annual Reviews have to be considered on a case by case basis and a briefing paper has gone to schools.

The temporary changes to the law, which will be reviewed monthly, require that reasonable endeavours are made to deliver the provision in the EHCP and schools have responded to the challenge of the reduced numbers of staff onsite and in some cases, closure, by supporting those children with an EHCP in a variety of innovative ways. School leaders, particularly SENCOs have been leading on this process and the the risk assessments for children with EHCPs to ensure that this vulnerable group have remained safe at this time.

### What does this mean for governors?

Governors are asked to note the temporary changes to the law for children with EHCPs and the guidance around the risk assessments for children with EHCPs. These can be found here:

Guidance on Changes to EHCP legislation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-law-on-education-health-and-care-needs-assessments-and-plans-due-to-coronavirus/education-health-and-care-needs-assessments-and-plans-guidance-on-temporary-legislative-changes-relating-to-coronavirus-covid-19>

Risk assessments for Children and Young People with EHCPs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>

FOR INFORMATION

## School Admission Appeal Hearings for the Secondary Transfer and Reception Cohort 2020

### Contact for enquiries:

**Terry Bryan**

Head of Pupil Services

Tel: 020 7364 4304

Email: [terry.bryan@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:terry.bryan@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: School governors and trustees, members of local governing bodies

The government has recently published emergency legislation that will affect school admission appeal hearings scheduled to commence at the end of April. The government's social distancing requirements relating to COVID-19 obviously means that 'face to face' appeals will not be possible at this time.

Under the new legislation the Independent Appeal Panel (IAP) will be permitted to hear appeals 'online' using video conferencing, telephone conferencing or by the IAP considering the written submission (appeal form) from the parent. Parents have therefore been invited to decide which option they would prefer or alternatively they could opt to have their hearing postponed until such time as the IAP can meet them in person.

The LA is aware that the majority of parents will want to have their appeal heard, and present their case to the IAP, before the end of the summer. It has therefore been preparing for this eventuality, with the following arrangements already in place for appeals to be heard during the summer term:

1. Parents will be invited to attend a virtual hearing by video conference from a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone. Computers and laptops must have a camera and microphone. The parent can therefore attend the hearing from anywhere.
2. If the parent(s) does not have a smart phone, the appeal can take place by telephone conference.
3. Parents can opt for their appeal to be heard in their absence using the paperwork submitted.
4. Alternatively, the parent can ask for the hearing to be postponed, until after the government decides it is safe to hold face to face hearings; this could be some months away.
5. The decision as to which method will be the parent's, BUT if we do not hear from a parent, the hearing will be heard in their absence using the written submissions.

Schools representatives are still very welcome to attend the hearings online. The LA will be using [www.zoom.us](https://www.zoom.us) which has been approved by the DfE. The ID to join the appeal hearing will be shared with each school's headteacher securely.

The LA will consider returning to conventional arrangements for appeals to be heard, if the current social distancing requirements are relaxed or lifted.

FOR INFORMATION

## Parental Engagement – Advice, Information and Support for Families

### Contact for enquiries:

**Jill McGinley**

Head Parent and Family Support Service

Tel: 020 7364 4946

Email: [jill.mcginley@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:jill.mcginley@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: School Governors

### What does this mean for governors?

The Department for Education has released updated guidance on what parents and carers need to know about schools, colleges and other education settings during the coronavirus outbreak.

Topics include current government information for parents and carers on:

1. The closures of schools, childcare and other educational settings
2. Holidays
3. Early Years settings
4. Exams
5. Admissions
6. Transport
7. Free school meals
8. Vulnerable children and children of critical workers
9. Resources and support

For detailed guidance visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

The Council's Parent and Family Support Service works with schools in Tower Hamlets to ensure that schools are supported in their work with parents and carers.

We recognise at this particularly difficult time during the COVID-19 pandemic parents and carers will require additional information, practical support and resources and that the heightened stress and anxiety of the current medical emergency will put additional pressure on families and schools.

The parental engagement team, SENDIAS and family information service, are available to assist schools and provide a telephone support / advice service to families referred by schools and social care for parenting support / SEND Information Advice and support during this difficult time.

Although we are unable to deliver group activities in schools and meet with families at this time members of our team are available by phone and email.

Appointments and group activities can also be carried out using video call.

Where possible, English, Bengali, Somali and Turkish speaking practitioners are available to support your work with families.

Our services include:

- ➔ Advice, guidance and practical support for parents, carers and guardians
- ➔ Information, advice and support for parents, carers and guardians of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- ➔ Information, advice and support for young people with SEND
- ➔ Parenting advice and access to online parenting programmes and support
- ➔ Information and advice for school transition and appeals
- ➔ Childcare brokerage, particularly supporting critical key workers and vulnerable families

The parental engagement team is keen to support schools develop effective home school communication to ensure parents and carers have access to the information they need, activities include:

- ➔ Identifying key information/weblinks/updates for the school website
- ➔ School newsletter/bulletin content – to email / post
- ➔ Information for plasma/powerpoint screens
- ➔ Use of parentmail/text message.

To help parents and carers access the information they need from the school website schools can also add a link to the Local Offer, Tower Hamlets online directory of services and information for children, young people and families in Tower Hamlets.

Visit: [www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk](http://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk)

Please contact the Parent and Family Support Service for any further advice, guidance or support in this area. Email: [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

FOR INFORMATION

## Safe East, Integrated young peoples sexual health and substance misuse service

### Contact for enquiries:

**Yvonne Jones**

Service Manager

Tel: 07885 997601

Email: [yvonne.jones@compass-uk.org](mailto:yvonne.jones@compass-uk.org)

### Audience: School Governors

### What does this mean for governors?

Safe East are supporting schools by offering workshops and interactive sessions to both teachers and the young people themselves around sexual health and substance misuse. This is particularly important in the current time to support young people aged 11-19 at particular risk due to the impacts of social distancing.

Evidence has demonstrated that during adolescence a second phase of rapid brain development occurs as children experience new social relationships, emotions and start to experiment with risk taking behaviors. Young people during the transitional period (14 to 17 years in particular) are vulnerable to adverse influences and peer pressure which can exert a negative effect on choices that often continue throughout adulthood. Of the 10 key contributing factors to disease in adults, five of these begin or become entrenched during adolescence: unsafe sexual behavior, uptake of smoking, alcohol misuse, unhealthy weight and reduced physical activity. In addition we know that 8 out of 10 lifetime users of cannabis and 9 out of 10 smokers begin the habit during adolescence.

As the providers of integrated sexual health and substance misuse, Safe East support young people in Tower Hamlets aged 11-19. Interactive sessions for young people are aimed at dispelling myths and are delivered within and alongside wider health and wellbeing topics with a strong focus on promoting emotional health and wellbeing.

In addition to working within schools, schools are able to make direct referrals into the service for young people whom they might believe will benefit from the support.

For further information, please contact Yvonne Jones, Service Manager on 07885 997601 or email [yvonne.jones@compass-uk.org](mailto:yvonne.jones@compass-uk.org)

FOR INFORMATION

## Review of Primary School Places

### Contact for enquiries:

**Christine McInnes**

Divisional Director, Education and Partnerships

Tel: 020 7364 3114

Email: [christine.mcInnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:christine.mcInnes@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: School Governors

In recognising the demographic changes in the borough and the impact on our Primary Schools places, local Authority officers, headteachers, governors and independent consultants continue to work collaboratively in addressing the problems of falling rolls in the west of the borough and the demand for places in the east of the borough. This work is being achieved through implementation of the recommendations of the Primary Review.

### Progress Update

A brief background and latest update on the review of primary school places can be found below.

### What does this mean for governors?

The impact of COVID 19 Pandemic poses a challenge in coordinating meetings with schools' leadership and governors however; advanced technologies have enabled ongoing communications and allowed school organisation change processes to continue whilst adhering to the necessary guidelines.



# Primary Review Update

April 2020



## Changes in the pupil population



- The average female resident is expected to have **1.4 children** now, compared to **1.8 children** ten years ago.
- Predictions for place planning have not been realised (**child yield**).
- Primary school pupil numbers have (broadly) **grown in the East** but **fallen in the West** of the borough.
- Secondary pupil numbers **continue to rise**.
- Increasing **complexity of need**.

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# Why is the population changing?

- Rising rents and house prices: In 2017, the average house price in Tower Hamlets was £479,000 - **around 13x the average household income**
- **Welfare reforms**, such as the benefit cap, which have reduced incomes for families
- Properties which are vacant or otherwise **not used as family homes** (for example, Airbnb)
- **Brexit** – both developments and population/migration

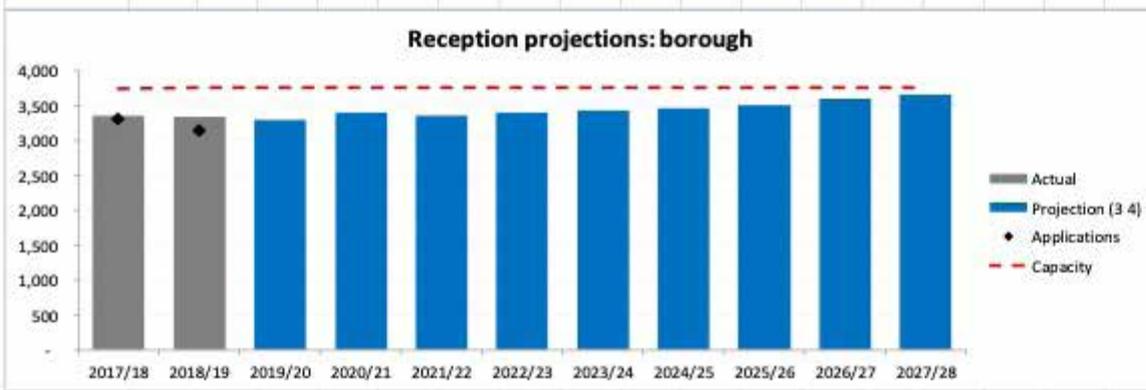
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## School roll projections for Reception

Produced July 19 using: Jan 2019 school rolls, GfA 2016-based population projection model (UPC), and Local Plan + LLDC development trajectory, 3.4 option

Borough	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Actual	3,353	3,340									
Projection (3.4)			3,299	3,403	3,364	3,398	3,436	3,469	3,512	3,606	3,658
Applications	3,305	3,136									
Capacity	3,740	3,766	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761
Variance (3.4)	Pupils	387	426	462	358	397	363	325	292	249	155
	FE	12.9	14.2	15.4	11.9	13.2	12.1	10.8	9.7	8.3	5.2
	%	10%	11%	12%	10%	11%	10%	9%	8%	7%	4%



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## Primary Review

- Primary Review Advisory Group (PRAG)
- 'Future Ambitions Report' – maintaining and enhancing educational offer and quality.
- Over 300 surplus places in the West of the borough.

"To address these challenges, we need to reduce provision initially by 6.5 forms of entry – equivalent to around 6 one form entry schools, or 3 two form entry schools. If the level of surplus provision continues to rise, there will be a need to reduce provision by up to 10FE by 2023. This will still allow a reasonable surplus for parental choice."

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## Progressing Ambitions Report



- There are no easy solutions.
- Most proposals have been led by schools based on what works for their school community.
- Interesting question of: what makes a school?
- Current proposals would see a reduction of 260 (8.5FE) reception places in the West of the borough and the addition of 160 (5FE) reception places in the East of the Borough by 2025.

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## Wapping

- Currently: 480 Reception places available.
- In January 2019: 62 (2FE) unfilled places.
- Projection: To rise to 92 (3FE) by 2027.

### Proposals:

- Proposal currently being developed for the future of Shapla Primary School for consideration later this year.
- Further consideration will need to be given on proposals for Cannon Barnett, Osmani and Thomas Buxton after 2022.
- Reduction in PAN of Canon Barnett School from 45 to 30 was approved by Cabinet in February 2020
- Expansion of Hermitage from 45 to 60 to provide specialist ASD provision in line with SEND strategy.

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## Stepney

Currently: 840 Reception places available.  
In January 2019: 110 (4FE) unfilled places  
Projection: to rise to 141 (5FE) by 2027.

### Proposals:

- Council Cabinet on 25 March 2020 agreed the amalgamation of Smithy Street and Redlands (and reduce overall number of places from 120 to 90) to take effect from 1 September 2020. The amalgamated school will be called 'Stepney Park Primary School'.
- Council Cabinet on 25 March 2020 agreed the amalgamation of Guardian Angels with St Anne's to take effect from 1 September 2020. The amalgamated school will be called 'St. Anne's and Guardian Angels Catholic Primary school'.
- Reduction in PAN of Bangabandhu from 60 to 30, from 2021, was approved by Cabinet in February 2020
- Reduction in PAN of Cayley from 90 to 60, from 2021, was approved by Cabinet in February 2020

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## Bethnal Green



- Currently: 660 Reception places available
- In January 2019: 132 (4FE) unfilled places
- Projection: Surplus to continue through to 2027.

### Proposals:

- Following the Federation of Hague and Stewart Headlam Schools on 1 January 2020. This will include a reduction to the PAN of Stewart Headlam from 60 to 30-
- Proposal currently being developed for the future of St Matthias for consideration later this year.
- Further consideration will need to be given on proposals for Elizabeth Selby Infant and Lawdale Junior Schools.

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## Bow



- Currently: 450 Reception places available.
- In January 2019: 42 (1½FE) unfilled places
- Projection: To rise to 86 (3FE) by 2027.

### Proposals:

- Reduction to the PAN of Malmesbury School from 75 to 60 from September 2021, was approved by Cabinet in February 2020
- Reduction to the PAN of Olga from 90 to 60 from September 2021, was approved by Cabinet in February 2020

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## Poplar

- Currently: 890 Reception places available in the Poplar catchment area.
- January 2019: 44 (1½FE) unfilled places;
- Projection: With anticipated growth in the pupil population, this area is expected to have a shortfall of 122 places (4FE) by 2027.

### Proposals:

- Proposal currently being developed for the increase in PAN of Mayflower School from 50 to 60
- Proposal currently being developed for the increase in PAN of Saviour's CE School from 30 to 60.
- Exploring potential for expansion of other schools.

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## Isle of Dogs

- Currently: 441 Reception places available.
- January 2019: 15 (0.5FE) unfilled places.
- Projection: With anticipated growth in the pupil population, this area is expected to have a shortfall of 156 places (6FE) by 2027.

### Proposals:

- New 2FE (60) School at Wood Wharf from September 2022
- New 2FE School at Millharbour.
- Proposal currently being developed for the future of Cubitt Town infants and Juniors Schools for consideration later this year.
- Further work to be done to look at timescales for delivery of sites.

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## Reflections

- Not uniform across the borough (or within catchment areas) – although some clear trends
- Proactive .v. reactive proposals
- An art or a science?
- Need to keep flexibility in the system
- Challenges to securing capital funding for changes and delivery of new sites. May, reluctantly, need to raise revenue through disposal of sites in areas where future pupil population growth is very unlikely.
- Sustaining and enhancing the educational offer for the borough

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FOR INFORMATION

## Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service (THAMES)

### Contact for enquiries:

**Karen Brock MBE**

Head of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service (THAMES)

Tel: 020 7364 0431

Email: [karen.brock@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:karen.brock@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: School governors and trustees, members of local governing bodies

In late March THAMES was advised by the DfE that 'You should immediately advise schools that you will not currently be providing face-to-face support but that you will be continuing to provide online and other support, and that you will be looking at the feasibility of enhancing such support'. Since then all THAMES Managers and tutors have been busy producing a range of resources for teachers and pupils. To date this is what we have done:

- ➔ Over 3000 documents have been created for schools and students. These include updated Schemes of Work, progression reports, practice plans for individual classes/pupils, audio recordings, listening lists and pre-recorded videos.
- ➔ One-to-one Music Lessons are taking place virtually for our London Mayor's Fund Scholars and our Saturday Centre pupils. More 1 to 1 lessons are being introduced each week.
- ➔ The Saturday Music Centre is currently operating as a virtual music school with 100 students 'attending' 11 instrumental ensembles.
- ➔ 43 members of the Wednesday Music Centre are engaging with the home materials provided by THAMES Tutors.
- ➔ Our THAMES YouTube Channel [Youtube.com/user/THAMESSMC](https://www.youtube.com/user/THAMESSMC) has attracted almost 700 views. Content is being uploaded nearly every day and covers work with pupils from EYFS through to KS3/4.
- ➔ Fortnightly e-bulletins are being sent to all primary and secondary schools, signposting to online performances, workshops and resources from THAMES and our partners
- ➔ Our Tower Hamlets Singing Challenge (19 June) has been launched with materials disseminated to all primary schools and to families via THAMES and other council communications
- ➔ We now have 1003 followers for THAMES on twitter ([@thames\\_music](https://twitter.com/thames_music)) engaging and supporting music and arts in Tower Hamlets
- ➔ A new website [thames.towerhamlets.gov.uk](https://thames.towerhamlets.gov.uk) has been launched

FOR INFORMATION

We are regularly communicating with schools, Headteachers and Music Leaders and remain open to any ways in which we can respond to bespoke requests. Please contact us via our usual email address [thames.admin@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:thames.admin@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or on 020 7364 0431.

FOR INFORMATION

## Finance Training Courses for Governors

### Contact for enquiries:

#### Farhad Ahmed

Training and Business Development Manager

Tel: 020 7364 4617

Email: [farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:farhad.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: Chairs and members of the Finance Committee

### What does this mean for Governors?

Financial management training is essential for school governors. This course is aimed at new governors but will also be of interest to more experienced governors who have not previously attended a finance course.

Funding and Budgeting - The link to school improvement: ensuring your financial decisions and monitoring drive school improvement.

This course explains the factors that generate school funding and the key factors involved in setting a school budget. The main aspects of financial control will also be introduced. It is particularly suitable for new Chairs of Governors, Finance Committee members and those governors who might consider joining the Finance Committee.

Topics to be covered include:

- ➔ School funding
- ➔ Building a budget – revenue and capital
- ➔ Medium term financial planning
- ➔ Financial control
- ➔ Signposts for additional help and information

### Advanced Financial Management

The link to school improvement – ensuring your financial decisions and monitoring drive school improvement.

This course is designed to provide governors with a detailed understanding of schools' funding, budgeting and financial control to enable them to provide informed support to head teachers and school financial staff.

FOR INFORMATION

Topics to be covered include:

- ➔ Funding forecast
- ➔ Budget Modelling
- ➔ Staffing Structures
- ➔ Financial Control
- ➔ Outturn Forecasting
- ➔ Benchmarking

These one-hour courses cost £95.

To book a session, please email: [governors@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:governors@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

FOR INFORMATION

## Guidance and Training on the use of Pupil Exclusion

### Contact for enquiries:

**Terry Bryan**

Head of Pupil Services

Tel: 020 7364 4304

Email: [terry.bryan@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:terry.bryan@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

### Audience: All Governors of Maintained School

The Local Authority has issued updated guidance for schools and governing bodies on pupil exclusion, which is available from: [huong.le@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:huong.le@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

The updated guidance includes advice for a governing body on how it might fulfil its duty to effectively monitor pupil exclusions and the appropriate use of alternative provision for excluded pupils. It also now includes advice on preparing for an Ofsted inspection.

The Local Authority guidance is intended to supplement and strengthen the DfE guidance 'Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral Units in England (2017)' available via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

### What does this mean for governors?

It is important that governors' who serve on Pupil Discipline Committees have prior knowledge of the statutory and local guidance on pupil exclusion and that they also attend training on exclusions. Experienced Discipline Committee members should attend periodic refresher training as the regulations and best practice guidance changes regularly and governors need to keep their knowledge up to date.

Although training is not mandatory the DfE Guidance emphasises its importance as a lack of familiarity with the Local Authority and DfE Guidance could lead to an Independent Review Panel directing a school to review its decision to permanently exclude a child and impose a significant financial penalty if the governing body fails to do so.

The Local Authority provides exclusions training as part the governors' and clerks' training programme. Dates for summer 2019 are set out below. The training is delivered in two levels:

**Level 1:** This workshop is an introduction to a governors' role in pupil exclusion. It is intended for a governor with little or no prior experience as a member of pupil discipline committee.

FOR INFORMATION

**Level 2:** Is an advanced level course, intended for chairs and vice chairs or governors who chair pupil discipline committees. Participants should have attended the Level 1 workshop, or have equivalent experience of pupil exclusion.

## Dates and Times

### Autumn 2019:

Title: Exclusion Governors Training Level 1

Date: June 2020 TBC

Title: Exclusion Governors Training Level 2

Date: June 2020 TBC

# Support

## Organisations, publications and websites which support governors in their roles

### ➔ The Governance Handbook

All school governors need to know their legal responsibilities and how these fit in with the responsibilities of the headteacher, the local authority (LA) and the Secretary of State for Education. The Governance Handbook (January 2017) provides information about the role and legal duties of governing bodies in maintained schools and academies (including free schools). The Governance Handbook can be found on the DfE website or downloaded via this link: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/788234/governance\\_handbook\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788234/governance_handbook_2019.pdf)

### ➔ A Competency Framework for Governance – January 2017

A Competency Framework for Governance - the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for effective governance in maintained schools, academies and multi-academy trusts. The framework sets out the competencies needed for effective governance. It is non-statutory guidance and should be read alongside the Governance Handbook, particularly the section explaining the key features of effective governance. The Framework can be found using the following link: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/583733/Competency\\_framework\\_for\\_governance\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/583733/Competency_framework_for_governance_.pdf)

### ➔ The National Governors' Association

is the representative body for school governors in England. [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

The NGA works for governors by:

- ➔ supporting local governor associations and governing bodies
- ➔ lobbying ministers and policy makers
- ➔ producing high quality guidance and information
- ➔ organising events and conferences.

Governors can join the NGA as individuals, as members of a governing body, or through their local governors' association.

➔ **Governors for schools** is a national charity which connects volunteers to schools with governor vacancies all across England. Governors for Schools has won awards for the way it works with volunteers, builds partnerships with employers, manages its finances, and develops its staff. Its services are FREE to local authorities, volunteers, employers and schools. [www.governorsforschools.org.uk](http://www.governorsforschools.org.uk)

➔ **Ocean Somali Community Association (OSCA)**

Concordia Centre, Railway Arches, 420-421 Burdett Road, London E3 AA

OSCA promotes governor recruitment among the Somali community in Tower Hamlets. It aims to increase the number of BME governors in schools, raises awareness and supports new governors.

Tel: 020 7987 5833 Email: [abdi@oceansomali.org.uk](mailto:abdi@oceansomali.org.uk) or [info@oceansomali.org.uk](mailto:info@oceansomali.org.uk)

[www.oceansomali.org.uk](http://www.oceansomali.org.uk)

## Tower Hamlets Governor Services Team

Name	Title
Runa Basit	Head of School Governance and Information
Suzette Nicol	Governor Support Officer
Angus Huck	Governor Support Officer
Rochelle Clarke	Governor Support Officer
Nigel Caleb	Governor Support Officer
Lorraine Feyi-Shonubi	Governor Support Officer
Salma Siddiqua	Governor Support Officer
Shamsun Nessa	Governor Support Officer
Farhad Ahmed	Traded Service and Business Development Manager
Shamina Ali	Admin Assistant

To contact Governor Services, email [governors@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:governors@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or call 020 7364 3141.

Governor Services, 5th Floor, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London E14 2BG.

For more information, go to the Tower Hamlets Governor webpages:

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/education\\_and\\_learning/schools/school\\_governors/school\\_governors.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/education_and_learning/schools/school_governors/school_governors.aspx)

	Full governing body	Curriculum (School Development, Pupil Achievement, Teaching and Learning)	Resources (including Finance, Personnel and Premises)	Pay/personnel appeals	Performance management
Spring term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Head's Report</li> <li>➔ Monitor School Development Plan</li> <li>➔ Agree SFVS to return to LA by end of February</li> <li>➔ Governor training</li> <li>➔ Receive Safeguarding report</li> <li>➔ Agree budget (or summer term)</li> <li>➔ Report on governor visits</li> <li>➔ Agree holiday dates for next year (VA schools)</li> <li>➔ Agree school prospectus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Review overall curriculum policy in light of school self review</li> <li>➔ Report on inclusion issues</li> <li>➔ Report on behaviour and bullying issues</li> <li>➔ Curriculum area reports</li> <li>➔ Receive report on impact of interventions</li> <li>➔ Review pupil attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Monitor budget</li> <li>➔ Agree virements</li> <li>➔ Review staffing structure</li> <li>➔ Plan new budget in line with new SDP</li> <li>➔ Review Service Level Agreements</li> <li>➔ Review budget surplus spending plan</li> <li>➔ Receive Health &amp; Safety and Premises updates</li> <li>➔ Review equal opportunities policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Consider staffing reductions / ending of temporary contracts in August</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Monitor Head's performance</li> </ul>

	Full governing body	Curriculum (School Development, Pupil Achievement, Teaching and Learning)	Resources (including Finance, Personnel and Premises)	Pay/personnel appeals	Performance management
Summer Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Agree budget</li> <li>➔ Agree Budget Surplus Plan (if required)</li> <li>➔ Head's Report</li> <li>➔ Monitor School Development Plan</li> <li>➔ Receive SEND Report</li> <li>➔ Review Self Evaluation Form</li> <li>➔ Monitor Governor's development plan</li> <li>➔ Agree prospectus</li> <li>➔ Report on governor visits</li> <li>➔ Agree meeting dates for next year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Report on behaviour policy</li> <li>➔ Report on inclusion issues</li> <li>➔ Report on bullying and behaviour issues</li> <li>➔ Curriculum area reports</li> <li>➔ Receive report on impact of interventions</li> <li>➔ Review pupil attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Agree budget to be recommended to the full governing body for approval.</li> <li>➔ Agree Budget Surplus Plan to be recommended to the full governing body for approval (if required)</li> <li>➔ Review 3 year budget forecast</li> <li>➔ Agree virements</li> <li>➔ Receive Health &amp; Safety and Premises updates</li> <li>➔ Review staff attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Consider issues from leadership review of teacher annual salary reviews</li> <li>➔ Consider succession planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Monitor Head's performance</li> </ul>

	Full governing body	Curriculum (School Development, Pupil Achievement, Teaching and Learning)	Resources (including Finance, Personnel and Premises)	Pay/personnel appeals	Performance management
Every Meeting	<p><b>Reports on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Racist incidents</li> <li>➔ Pupil exclusions</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Apologies for absence</li> <li>➔ Declaration of pecuniary interest</li> <li>➔ Minutes/matters arising</li> <li>➔ Reports from committees</li> <li>➔ Chair's Action</li> <li>➔ Any confidential items</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Apologies for absence</li> <li>➔ Declaration of interest</li> <li>➔ Minutes / matters arising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Apologies for absence</li> <li>➔ Declaration of interest</li> <li>➔ Minutes/matters arising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Apologies for absence</li> <li>➔ Declaration of interest</li> <li>➔ Minutes/matters arising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Apologies for absence</li> <li>➔ Declaration of interest</li> <li>➔ Minutes/matters arising</li> </ul>
As Necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Review aims/ethos of school</li> <li>➔ Re-constitution of the governing body</li> <li>➔ Governing Body Code of Practice</li> <li>➔ Receive curriculum area reports</li> <li>➔ Induction of new governors</li> <li>➔ Preparation for Ofsted inspection</li> <li>➔ Draw up freedom of information publication scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Review of Policies/cycle of dates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Audit of school funds (to be done annually)</li> <li>➔ Health and Safety Report</li> <li>➔ Review personnel policies</li> <li>➔ Review Finance Code of Practice (spring term)</li> <li>➔ Review policy on charges and remissions</li> <li>➔ Review SEF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Personnel appeals</li> <li>➔ Review SEF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Review Policy including leadership group (autumn term)</li> </ul>