

Somerset Nursery School - Governors Report to Parents for the school year 2020-21

The past year has been very difficult for many and that has been true for Somerset also. So, any report to parents must start with a heartfelt thank you to all of those who have worked so hard to provide the services that were permitted by the pandemic regulations. For much of the year that has meant providing a safe place for only those most in need and the children of key workers. Full reopening was only permitted during the summer term.



Your Governors have continued their schedule of meetings, but virtually and online, rather than in person at the school. Each of our three sub-committees have met once a term and their discussions are summarised in this report. The full Board also met on four occasions (the extra meeting a result of the discussions on federation).

Overall, we have continued to uphold the values adopted by Somerset and these are shown in the next column. We started the year with a total of ten governors and following on some appointments and resignations finished the year with nine. I should like to thank all of them for their time and efforts on behalf of the school and reiterate our need for volunteer Parent governors.

Somerset Nursery School Our Values and Ethos	
<p>Learning and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are interested, enthusiastic, engaged and supported in their learning to achieve their full potential. Facilitated by skilful, responsive adults, children feel acknowledged and recognise their achievements and develop a life-long love of learning. 	<p>Enabling Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A stimulating, vibrant, challenging, inclusive, environment where children are able to pursue their own curiosities, take risks and discover from first-hand experiences. Adults with vision and understanding enable independent learning. Children explore freely indoors and outdoors throughout each session.
<p>Unique Child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children thrive through positive and trusting relationships and a deep knowledge of the individual. Children become independent and creative learners through opportunities which recognise and support each unique character. 	<p>Positive Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representing the whole community by forming enriching partnerships with families, children, staff across our local and global community. Sharing knowledge, experience and strategies in partnership to achieve children's full potential.

Federation:

The other two nursery schools in the borough (Balham and Eastwood), after a period of working together, have now joined together in a federation. The main difference is that they will no longer maintain separate boards of governors and thus will reduce a good deal of administration. Somerset has been involved in the discussions and will, for the time being, continue to have a separate board. We will almost certainly discuss joining the federation during the coming school year. If we decide that it is a good idea we will then embark on a formal consultation with all stakeholders, including you as parents with children at the school.



Curriculum & Achievement Committee:

This committee focusses on the quality of teaching at Somerset. Helen Tovey and her team have monitored reports on the progress of children and have looked at how different groups of children achieve in all areas of the curriculum. The team have looked in depth at how the school provides for children's Communication, Language and Literacy and Personal Social and Emotional Development.

During the pandemic, the wellbeing of both children and staff is paramount and the committee focussed on how teaching and learning support children's emotional resilience and mental health and the strategies the school has in place to support staff through a time of particular anxiety and stress.

The committee reviewed the school's policy and provision for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities and for Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Children, Families & Community Committee:

This committee focusses on the relationships between the school and its local community. Sian Hill and her team have looked at the impact of younger children attending Somerset (and the resulting staff/children ratio increase). The committee also reviewed the impact of changes to the Children's Centre services. They are now managed by the Local Authority (more details available at thrivewandsworth@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk)

They have also reviewed the school's website. The work on this will be rolled out during the next school year.

Resources & Property Committee:

This committee focusses on the financials, staffing and property of the school. This year, Khushroo Dastur and his team have monitored the budget and spending more closely in light of the pandemic, to ensure continued financial well-being of the school. The committee also worked to ensure a smooth transition, for parents and teachers alike, post Louisa leaving in the new academic year and the possibility of the school joining the federation. The school premises were also a focus of the committee to ensure a continued safe environment for the children, especially during the pandemic.

Farewell:

This year's report to Parents cannot finish without paying tribute to our long serving Headteacher, Louisa Halls, who is leaving at the end of term. Since her recruitment to Somerset some decades ago (a lady never admits to the passing of time), she has worked tirelessly for both the children and parents of Somerset. She has literally held many of the jobs available in the school and has regularly covered for many of those that she has not held. It is almost inconceivable that she will not be starting the new year in September. We are sure that you will join us in wishing her the very best of outcomes in whatever roles she next chooses to provide her skills and talents.

If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact the Chair of Governors, Clive Landa at clanda1.212@lgflmail.org

