

# Federation News from the Governing Body

Spring News March 2023



Dear all,

Well that term has gone so fast and it's hard to believe that we are almost at the Easter holidays with the prospect of some warmer weather hopefully not too far away. This term has continued to have its challenges for school leaders and school staff, but for every challenge, there are a whole array of successes and achievements, and we are sure that you would want to join with us in thanking all school staff for their continued hard work and support. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of our school staff during the recent strikes. We know that our staff were striking for much more than pay rises and at the core of everything is the fight for better school funding which is something I am sure we all want.

#### **Full Board Meetings:**

Our first meeting this term was an Extraordinary FGB meeting to decide if we were to change from having two separate budgets (one for each school) to having one budget for our federation. We will receive the same amount of money but by combining the two budgets into one, the intention is to be able to use the combined pot more efficiently. As a board we were supported by and took advice from our Federation Business Manager Danielle, as well as Graham Craig from Achieving for Children. The board agreed that we would move to one single budget and this will take effect from the new financial year in April.

A second FGB followed in March where the board received progress updates from both schools as well as from the committees – see below.

#### **Federation Strategy Meetings:**

We have continued to meet each month to ensure that we are making progress with the federation priorities. There is good work happening in both schools to ensure that we will respond to and remedy the issues experienced during the year 2 to 3 transition last year, both in terms of process and communication. School leaders will ensure the year 2 and year 3 teams have sufficient opportunity for a comprehensive handover that will begin earlier than previously to ensure sufficient time for planning and provision. There will be additional communication opportunities to ensure that parents know what to expect in terms of assessment and the transition process.



Progress is also being made in terms of moving towards a single federation logo and uniform. We had a look at the fantastic logos designed and submitted by the children over the February half term and will be selecting a small number to take forward to a vote in the coming months.

We are also taking some time to review communication strategy, school marketing and the website for the federation and schools to make sure that it is providing all stakeholders with the information they need, in the right manner, but also that we are using it as well as we could to showcase to prospective parents and staff, everything that is so great about our two lovely schools.

And as mentioned above, the full board voted to move to one federation budget.

**From Guy Elliott, Chair of Finance & Premises Committee:**

Governors reviewed the school federation budget recently and as with all schools there are pressures on it and we must be vigilant and careful with our spending for the rest of this academic year. We have managed to secure funding for a new minibus and Carlisle School will benefit from a new radiator system, to be installed this coming summer break. We have made savings where we can and although the government has announced increased funding for schools, our additional costs will not be covered by this. So, lots of hard work ahead to manage the increased costs within the budget!

**From Barbara Clifford, Chair of Achievement & Families Committee:**

This term in A&F we have looked at data to see how the children are progressing across the Federation. Whereas there are some challenges, especially in writing across the age groups and we are still feeling the impact of Covid, overall the children are doing very well. It has also been brilliant to hear about the links that are further developing between subject leads across both our schools that can only benefit our children's learning. As governors, we have been into school to discuss attendance and behaviour as well as our termly meetings to monitor safeguarding at both schools.

**From Luke Thomas, Chair of Pay & Personnel Committee:**

The Pay and Personnel committee are continuing to support the headteachers to ensure there is continual development and satisfaction among all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching.

We have continued to review personnel policies for the federation and have made changes where appropriate.

Both headteachers are happy to report strong levels of development and satisfaction among the school staff. This is echoed by regular staff voice and wellbeing surveys. These have shown many positive results. For example, 93%+ of CIS & HHJS staff are proud to be members of the school.

### Goodbye & Welcome

We have sadly said goodbye to 2 governors this term, Vic Gabriele who was an associate member of the board for the last year or so, and Maggie Bassett who was a governor with us since 2018. We are very grateful for their contribution to the work of the board and wish them well. Goodbyes always mean vacancies and we are very grateful to have not only recruited 2 new parent governors Lisa Day & Helen Cunningham, but also 2 new associate members Priya Sriskantharajah and Ros Morgan – keep an eye on the website in the next few weeks to find out more about them.

### Ofsted Inspection

I know that Billy Day, my predecessor, mentioned that we are expecting an Ofsted Inspection at Hampton Hill Juniors any time now. The last inspection was in December 2011 and the school was judged to be outstanding. Since then the good work has continued and HHJS continue to provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum as well as providing a supportive, caring and nurturing environment for our children and families. However, much has changed since the last inspection, notably the framework under which schools are inspected. It is worth saying that 80% of previously rated outstanding schools once reinspected are now judged to be Good, simply because the Outstanding expectation has been significantly raised. Therefore, as a school community we should be unsurprised if this is the situation that we find ourselves in, and this would in no way reflect any dip in ambition and commitment to our children and the community, and Hampton Hill Juniors continues to be a great school where children are happy, make really good progress and achieve well.

And lastly, we hope that the Easter break gives you all a chance to rest and recover from what has been a busy term, and let's all hope for some lovely warm spring weather.

With our very best wishes,

Deb Long  
Chair of Governors  
Carlisle & Hampton Hill Federation

