Dear Parent,

As members of Highgate / Gooseacre Academy’s local committee, we wanted to take this opportunity to celebrate the school’s continued development over the last year and to give you more information about our work.

As part of the Astrea Academy Trust, the school shares a team of dedicated local committee members with Highgate / Gooseacre. You can find out more about us and our work on the school’s website.

Our key strategic responsibilities can be found in bold, along with more detail of how we have worked to meet the demands of each responsibility.

**To ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Astrea is maintained within each school.**

The LECC has continued to promote educational excellence and curriculum rigour across the year. Through engagement with school leaders and staff, Members have ensured that the Academy has recievd the right support from the Trust to maintain continuity during the Pandemic. This has included challenge around allocation of Catch-Up premium funding and the provision of devices to support remote learning. The impact of this has been the assurance that, in spite of the national circumstances, children at the Academy have continued to access high quality provision.

The committee is attended by a Trustee Board Member, who provides a good link between the LECC and wider Board. In addition, the Chair maintains good contact with the Trust central team in understanding the support and challenge provided to the Academy.

Although the majority of contact with the school has been remote as a result of the pandemic, the Committee and its members have continued to support the Academy, and Principal in persisting with school development and improvement. The Committee has scrutinised school improvement documentation and planning to assure itself that the Principal has the right blueprint for development, with the correct priorities identified.

**To hold school leaders to account for the educational performance of the schools, the inclusion of all pupils and the offer of a knowledge-rich and broadly-based curriculum.**

* Has the committee scrutinised and challenged educational performance?
* How has the committee ensured that school performance is at the heart of their discussions?
* How has the committee ensured its own strength and development (e.g. recruitment and training)
* What has the committee done to support inclusion at the school?
* How does the committee ensure that the interests of all groups of pupils are met? (e.g. SEND, EAL, Looked After Children)

The Committee receive termly information about pupil outcomes. This enables members to scrutinise and challenge performance and the reasons for it. Members questions leaders on the robustness of outcomes and performance data, and, more importantly challenge leaders on how they plan to address any deficits in performance.

Members receive information about the overall profile of educational provision at the school and ensure that they understand the main challenges and remedies that Principals and wider leaders have in place to address these.

The Committee and its members have continued to benefit from the training provision made by the Trust and the Chair has attended key seminar development provided by Trust Regional Officers, including on the process of school inspection.

The LECC is chaired by an experienced and serving Headteacher who is well placed to provide appropriate support and challenge and wider members support this process.

The Committee receives regular updates about provision for those who are disadvantaged or who have additional needs and this includes outcomes information. This is scrutinised and challenged sufficiently.

The fundamental core of discussions and process of the committee is outcomes, performance and provision for children and families and this is where all discussions begin and end.

**To work with the school’s leadership and central team to ensure that high standards of safeguarding are maintained**.

The LECC Chair acts as the link member for Safeguarding and provides both planned and ad-hoc support and challenge to Principals. This has included authorisation of safeguarding returns to the Local Authority and scrutiny of safeguarding data and outcomes. Members have completed relevant safeguarding training and the Chair of the LECC has undertaken enhanced training in child protection as a designated lead for safeguarding, alongside safer recruitment training.

The Chair has supported the Principal in ensuring review of safeguarding practices is robust and that appropriate modifications are made wherever needed.

The impact of this work is that children at the Academy are safe because systems and processes are robust.

The committee ensures scrutiny of the support and challenge for safeguarding provided by the central team.

Throughout the pandemic, the committee has ensured that children who are vulnerable have been adequately safeguarded and that the Academy has in place the right systems to assure safety and wellbeing even in periods of non-attendance.

Have all committee members undertaken safeguarding training?

The committee, through its regular dialogue with the Academy understands the challenges and remedies in the Academy around safeguarding and challenges leaders, through its meetings, on decisions made.

**To promote positive parent, community and stakeholder engagement and to drive school-to-school partnerships for improvement within the Trust.**

The Committee represents two local Academies and this fosters dissemination and sharing of good practice. Members are drawn from the stakeholder communities serving both settings. There is parent representation on the Committee and Principals regularly update members with parent views and questions.

The Chair supports Principals directly with more complex issues relating to parent questions or concerns.

The further engagement of local enterprise and the community will be a focus of the committee in the year ahead, as pandemic restrictions ease.

**To identify, understand and report to Trustees any strategic risks facing the school.**

The participation of a link Trustee at meetings means that strategic risks and challenges are not only identified but quickly communicated to the wider Board. The link Trustee has continued to provide timely and thorough response to members, and the Chair on specific questions. Moreover, the Chair ensures clear communication with Trust Officers where appropriate. There are good links between the Committee and wider Trust meaning that the setting benefits from timely resolutions where necessary.