

Annual Statement Helen Gibson and Clervaux Nursery Schools

The Governors at Helen Gibson and Clervaux Nursery schools have supported the school and kids club exceptionally well throughout the year. We have a wide range of Governors from many different backgrounds. The Governors skills are utilized well to match their strengths. We have working parties, which also take place throughout the year, which focus on standards and resources and incorporate our key principles. The Governors work closely with the school to identify priorities and develop a cohesive plan of action. They attend regular training sessions ran by both the local authority and the school itself to ensure that they are fully up to date with any changes in legislation or initiatives.

Key issue 1 that faced the Governing Board during 2023-24

Funding for nursery schools has always been an issue, however this year we have lots of unexpected costs to the schools. The Governors have been part of the monitoring of the finances and have been part of the budget setting process. They have worked with the head teacher to ensure value for money and with the Local Authority to support the reduction of the financial impact on the nursery. Due to rising levels of children with additional need and more support being needed for safety and education that all children deserve, we decided employ more staff. We are recognised in the LA area as an outstanding provider for children with SEND, meaning we have more children enrolling. Staffing issues, including covering sickness and maternity was also an issue this year.

Assessment of the impact 1 of the Governing Board on the school during 2023-24

The two Nursery Schools have a plan that will support them moving forward which will not have a negative impact on the children, families and staffing. The Governors have held the Head Teacher to account in all issues relating to finance and have worked hard to ensure that the school finances are continuously reviewed.

Key issue 2 that faced the Governing Board during 22-23

In 23-24 the amount of children arriving at both nurseries with additional rose significantly. As a result a decision was made by the Head teacher, the governing board and staff to extend the SEND provision at Clervaux Nursery to enable a nurture unit to be set up. Due to the success the LA approached the head teacher and chair of governors to ask if we could offer support to other children with high levels of additional needs in the local area. This again was a success and the LA pay for places in our unit for children with an EHCP and a diagnosis. This has also had an impact on the budget and supported us moving forward.

Assessment of the impact 2 of the Governing Board on the school during 2023-24

All children with additional needs have been fully supported. Children have made progress, safeguarded and transitions to their next setting has been flawless. This has prepared all children for their next steps in their education. Staff have a sound understanding of what to do and have relentless in their work with our children. Those children who are due to start in the unit 24-25 have had smooth transitions into the unit to ensure they and their families are fully support in the next step of their education.

Parents have been supported by Governors attending SEN coffee mornings at both schools and parents feel that the knowledge and help they have received has ensured they do not feel alone. They have been able to network with others, listen to professionals and be guided by parents, staff and governors who have first-hand experiences of having children with additional needs.

The unit has had a significant impact for wider community and LA area too by supporting families within South Tyneside.

Key issue 3 that faced the Governing Board during 2023-24

The Government awarded all working families 15 hours free childcare for their two year olds. This meant a huge rise in the request for places. The room, which had our two year olds in, was very small and did not have the floor size to take in any other children. The ratios also rose for two years olds from 1:4 to 1:5. As a result we needed to look at the school and make decisions about moving into the larger hall area. This meant changing the physical environment, adding non slip floors and evaluating hand washing facilities. The Governors supported this move.

Assessment of the impact 3 of the Governing Board on the school during 23-24

Two year olds are now settled in their new room. There are three members of staff supporting and educating fifteen children. The verandas have been adapted and the floor enables children to explore paint and messy media. Children settled quickly and made good or outstanding progress.

The governors in their role as 'critical friend' support and challenge the school, through careful monitoring of priorities for improvement. Impact is evidenced through:

- Termly reports from Head Teacher on progress and performance of the school.
- Evaluating our key principles for learning and development

- Analysis of school data / reports to monitor progress and achievement of children to ensure high standards are maintained detailed in feedback of achievements and next steps for all groups of children
- Ensuring policies and procedures are in place and adhered to, including child protection, safeguarding and safer recruitment
- Performance management of Head Teacher
- Monitoring the implementation of the School Development Priorities through virtual and face to face visits and liaison with SLT