

Annual Statement Helen Gibson Nursery School

The Governors at Helen Gibson Nursery 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 issues around Teaching and Learning, Personal Development, Behaviour and welfare and Leadership and Management. 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 2020-21

COVID 19 – Effect on Children

Children entered nursery in the September after only one visit in the summer term. Staff conducted a number of google meets and made use of telephone calls to find out about the children. The risk assessments were exceptionally tight which meant that parents were not allowed back into the nursery to settle their child. Children settled quickly thanks to the nurturing staff but noticeable differences were seen in children following the first Lockdown. Children started nursery with a lower baseline in their Prime areas of learning, in particular PSE and Communication and Language. These changes were reported to the governors and discussions commenced early on to look at how to support these children. Vulnerable children were identified early and additional / home support sought. This was difficult as most services were still only offering virtual support. Staff were quickly upskilled, support was put in and children began making rapid progress. Higher levels of unidentified SEN children entered nursery with no agencies involved.

Assessment of the impact 1 of the Governing Board on the school during 2020-21

- **All transitions were supported to Primary / Reception classes through the close links**
- **Early links were established with Outreach workers**
- **Referrals went in to support children with additional needs and those who were vulnerable**
- **All children had access to food thanks to the food bank**
- **All children were given equal access to the curriculum**
- **Children made outstanding progress from baseline to end of year**

Key issue 2 that faced the Governing Board during 2019-20

Covid 19- Effect on Staff

At the beginning of the lockdown there was much uncertainty about the virus and how safe it was for us to work with children. Staff were extremely anxious, not only about their own health, but the health of the children they worked with and their families at home. During this year a number of staff contracted Covid 19, some of which became quite poorly. The Governors listened to staff concerns and supported the head to implement and adapt a Risk assessment that supported all.

Assessment of the impact 2 of the Governing Board on the school during 2019-20

- Risk assessment discussed at length to ensure all staff were kept as safe as possible
- Those who were 28 weeks pregnant plus were able to work from home
- Referrals to Occupational Health were made
- The Deputy Non Teaching Lead devised exercise programmes to support those people who wanted to 'move more' through Google Meets and programmes sent via Whatsapp
- Staff were supported through catch ups with our Mental Health champions

Key issue 3 that faced the Governing Board during 2020-21

Covid 19- Effect on Families

The lockdowns had a huge impact on our families. Some families lost their jobs and income , some were told they must shield and therefore could not get out for food and others were key workers and there

Assessment of the impact 3 of the Governing Board on the school during 2019-20

- A food bank that had been set up prior to lockdown was utilised and food drop offs continued to support families isolating
- A Christmas gift scheme was developed by the non-teaching deputy lead and supported by the governors to ensure no child went without at Christmas. Christmas lunches were also provided by staff and Governors for families who were unable to provide for their household due to limited resources
- Hard to reach families were supported
- Families were safeguarded and relevant support sought
- Additional Early Helps were opened to ensure every family felt supported

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.
- Analysis of school data / reports to monitor progress and achievement of children to ensure high standards are maintained
- 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 visits and liaison with SLT

Throughout the last year the meetings (virtual) increased. There were often daily calls between the Head and Chair and additional sessions were arranged to allow staff to communicate with Governors around the impact of Covid 19.