



Governor impact report 2022/2023

Guildford Nursery School and Family Centre's governing body helps provide strategic direction, accountability, and an independent oversight of the management and operation of the Centre. The Governing Body also makes sure that money is well spent, the website is compliant, the quality of our services is maintained and improved, standards are raised and that the children, parents and carers using our Centre are happy, safe and make good progress in all their endeavours.

To achieve this aim, the Governing Body must continually evaluate the role it has played within the life of the Centre and its impact on Centre improvement. This report is part of that evaluation.

Centre Development Plan

Governors have worked with the Head Teacher and senior leadership team to monitor the Centre Development Plan for this school year and make sure that the priorities set have been met as far as possible.

Each of the two sub committees (Children & Learning and Resources & Staffing) have linked their monitoring visits to the plan to make sure we see the changes in action and report back effectively to the Full Governing Body. Governor visits are now recorded against each plan priority to ensure we are monitoring effectively.

Governor recruitment

Robert Cockerill stepped down from his role of associate governor in July 2023, after serving for one and half terms. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Robert for his valuable input over the years.

I am also stepping down from my role as Chair of Governors in July 2023, after completing two terms in office. It has been an absolute pleasure and a privilege to hold this position. Andy Bagwell, the current Chair of the Resources & Staffing committee, has agreed to become the new Chair of Governors and I know I leave the Centre in very capable hands. Claire Davey continues in her role as Deputy Chair of Governors.

Following a parent vote, we have also appointed a new Parent Governor, Lesley-Ann Hyde. Lesley-Ann has completed a Postgraduate Early Years Professional Status Course and Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Studies in Early Years Education. She also has experience working in a range of contexts with both disabled and non-disabled children, managed two nurseries, consulted on the opening of a forest pre-school, and run and managed SEND playschemes, so will be a very valuable addition to the team!

To ensure the governing body is fully "staffed" and prepared for future, we have also recruited two more associate governors. The first is Phyl Jackson, who retires from our York Road site this July where she was an Early Years Assistant. We are obviously delighted that Phyl will be staying on in a voluntary role, which she will begin in September 2023. The second is Lesly Hunt, who has recently retired having been Supporting Families Manager at Surrey County Council for a number of years. Lesley had a key role in the Family Centre provision and comes to us with more invaluable experience and knowledge.

For the coming school year 2023-2024, the structure of the governing body will change from a committee structure to a flat structure whereby all governors attend all meetings. It is hoped that this will increase the knowledge of all governors across all aspects of the Centre.

Governor visits

Governor visits returned to face-to-face meetings this year and each visit has focused on specific Centre Development Plan priorities, helping the Governing Body to provide improved support and challenge. Governors also made informal visits, for example, staff inset days, and other social events, such as the Froebel Festival to meet staff and parents in a more relaxed environment and show our support for a range of activities.

While the number of visits this year was lower than the previous year, those visits have been made across all three sites, increasing our presence particularly at York Road and The Spinney.

Safeguarding visits were conducted each term and in great detail to better inform the Governing Body. The NSPCC Governor Safeguarding audit was also undertaken. We are confident that it is a very high priority for all members of staff and good practice is in place. Health & safety visits have been conducted at every site. There has been an increased focus on the Family Centre.

Staff recruitment

Governors were directly involved in the recruitment of a family support worker and safer recruitment training has been taken by two governors.

Policies

There is now a rolling schedule of policies for review at appropriate times of the year, to make sure that all policies are kept up to date. Each committee has reviewed said policies, signing off most and challenging those that need further work.

Financial management

Finances continue to be challenging due to constant changes from both government and the local authority, and general under funding.

The Governing Body continues to work with the head teacher to challenge the local authority and seek further funding where possible, as well as constantly reviewing and monitoring the budget.

Governor meeting attendance

The Head Teacher and Chair of Governors meet or talk on half-termly basis to discuss governance and Centre related matters. There are four formal meetings of the Full Governing Body each year and committees also meet each term.

In the 2022-2023 school year, meetings have been conducted both virtually and face to face. Meetings are well attended, and any absence is fully explained and noted.

Impact statement

The Governing Body, Head Teacher and all members of staff are constantly striving to improve and develop Guildford Nursery School and Family Centre.

Face-to-face visits and meetings have increased our ability to monitor progress effectively and the work on safeguarding in particular has been extremely detailed. This has allowed the Governing Body to be confident that good practices are in place and that action will be taken where any weak points have been identified. Regular visits ensured that health & safety systems are in place and effective and further monitoring of emergency drills this year has led to improvements in performance and knowledge.

Visits across all three sites has increased the visibility of the governing body and helped inform governors more about all aspects of the centre. They have helped to strengthen the relationship between the governing body and staff and provided support and challenge.

The Children & Learning committee has ensured it covered key priorities for the school including safeguarding, learning, curriculum, PSED, EYPP children, SEND children. The learning walks enabled governors to see the provision in practice and had a focus on diversity and inclusion.

While funding is still an issue for nursery schools, the Governing Body remains proactive in terms of challenging the local authority and seeking to improve the financial sustainability of the Centre, as well as to raise its profile.

Sam Kubunavanua
Chair of Governors
July 2023