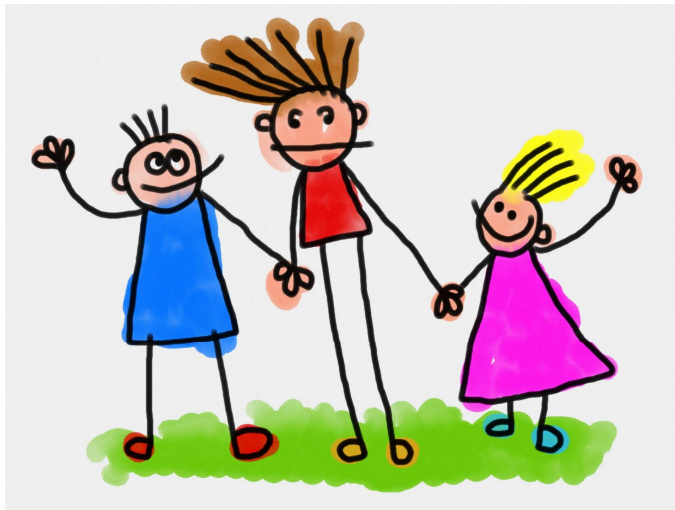




# Update from the Governing Board to Parents, Families and Carers



SCHOOL

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As the school year draws to a close, and we look forward to the summer holidays, we thought it would be helpful to tell you a little about the school Governors, our role, and what we've been up to.

The Vale Federation has a Governing Board consisting of parents, members of the local community, the Principal, and a representative of the Local Authority. As Governors, we are proud and privileged to be able to play a part in ensuring that both Booker Park and Stocklake Park schools provide your children and young persons with the opportunity to fulfil their potential in a high quality, inclusive, happy and safe environment. Seeing the children and young persons learn and develop their skills, giving their best in everything that they do, with the help and guidance of our wonderful team of committed and professional teachers and support staff, is incredibly rewarding.





# The Role of the Governing Board

The Governors are not involved in the day to day running of the schools, which is the responsibility of Bradley, Marianne, Rhonda and Steve and their teams. The Governing Board of any school has three core functions, as set out by the Government's Department of Education:

Ensuring there is a clear vision, ethos and strategic direction

Holding the Principal to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupil, and the performance management of staff

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent



In performing these core functions, we also have a responsibility to ensure that the voices of the different sets of stakeholders are heard and taken into account.

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for the aims and direction of the Federation. Bradley, as Principal, and the school leadership team is responsible for the implementation of policy, the curriculum, and the day-to-day management of the Federation and its two schools, and is accountable to the Governing Board.





# Fulfilling our Role and Responsibilities

As Governors, we fulfil our role and responsibilities in several ways, including:

Participating in twice-termly meetings of the full Governing Board.

Being members of various sub-committees, each focussing on different aspects of our responsibilities and the operation of the Federation and the performance of the two schools.

In conjunction with Bradley and the senior leadership team, setting the Federation's strategic plans and school development plans and overseeing their implementation.

Individual Governors focussing on particular topics and how they are applied and function throughout the schools, such as the curriculum, quality of learning, behaviour, health and safety, pupil and staff wellbeing, post-19 provision, finance and resources, and child protection and safeguarding.

Regularly visiting the schools to meet pupils and staff, monitor performance, progress, and compliance with policies and procedures.

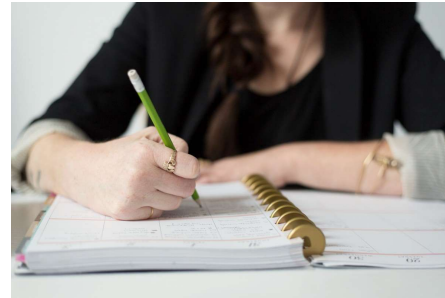


# Who We Are

Type of Governor	Number of Positions	Governors
Co-opted Governors (from the local community)	6	Becky Belardo Natalie Hearmon Margaret Nyambayo Dave Pearce (Chair of the Governing Board) Prashanta Parbhoo Jason Stone
Local Authority Governor	1	Angela Coneron
Parent Governors	2	Luke Askew Nigel Westacott
Principal	1	Bradley Taylor
Staff Governor	1	Sean Haywood



The Board are ably supported by our clerk, Emma Burley.



For some time now, there have been several vacancies for Governors. I am pleased to say that, in the last couple of months, Jason, Luke, Natalie and Prashanta have joined us following a recruitment campaign, to bring the Board up to the full complement of Governors.



# What We've Been Up To...

The 2022/23 academic year has seen many successes, as well as several challenges, in particular those arising from the staff shortages which our schools, like many others across the country, have experienced. During the year the Governing Board has done its best to fulfil its role and responsibilities, and to be a 'critical friend' to the schools' leadership team, providing both support and challenge. Several of the key matters which Governors have been involved in are set out below:

Annual review and approval of the Federation's strategic plans and school development plans, and overseeing their implementation and progress, leading to, for example, improvements in the curriculum, enhancements to the annual review process, with EHCPs being updated in a better way, significant progress in behaviour management, the introduction of a plan of activities focussing on the health and wellbeing of staff, and the implementation of improved systems.

Review and approval of the Federation's budget and financial plans, and submitting them to the Local Authority. With some 325 children, 350 members of staff and an annual budget in excess of £10million, the Federation is a very large organisation and ensuring that the schools operate successfully within budget, while responding to issues such as a three-fold increase in energy costs, is an ongoing challenge.

Overseeing the staff recruitment and retention plans and activities, with over 80 new staff recruited since September.





Challenging and supporting the senior leadership team with regard to the rota of class closures in operation at Booker Park. Having to close classes was regrettable, and was only done as a last resort, to ensure that the school was able to continue to provide a safe and secure environment, for both the children and staff, while efforts were focused on addressing the staff shortages.

Ensuring the Federation has in place a suite of policies and procedures which are operating effectively and compliantly.

Ongoing review of the child protection and safeguarding practices, processes and procedures to ensure that they are operating effectively, and the schools are providing a safe and secure environment for the children and staff.

Considering and agreeing the Federation's new senior and middle leadership team structures, and overseeing their introduction, including ensuring an effective handover from Chris to Bradley as the Federation moved to having a single Principal.



Visiting the school buildings and grounds, to ensure a healthy and safe environment is being maintained.

Reviewing the Federation's data protection processes and systems, and monitoring the effectiveness of their operation.

Strengthening the Governing Board through the delivery of a Governor Development Plan, regular training, and the recruitment of new Governors to fill vacancies.

In carrying-out these activities, and others, the Governing Board have provided help, support and constructive challenge for Bradley and his team, and have, we hope, played our part in ensuring that the schools provide your children with the opportunity to be the best they can be, in a caring, enjoyable, friendly and safe environment, enriching their lives and those of their family and friends.



# And Finally... But Importantly

On behalf of the Governing Board, I thank you as parents, carers, families and friends for all that you do to support the children and young persons and our schools, and I thank all the members of staff who do such a remarkable job in making Booker Park and Stocklake Park such wonderful places, providing your children and young persons with amazing opportunities, help and support.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter - we do hope you found it helpful and interesting. From next term, we will let you know more about the Governing Board, its members, and what we're focussing on.

Supporting the Federation and our two schools by being a Governor is an immensely rewarding and enjoyable experience. If you would like to know more about what the Governing Board does, please do let me know or speak with any of the Governors.

On behalf of the Governing Board, I wish you and your children and young persons all the very best for the summer holidays.

Yours sincerely,

David Pearce

Chair of the Governing Board, the Vale Federation

