



GOVERNORS ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

Each year, the Victoria Governing Body publishes an annual statement on the activities of the Governors and their impact on children's education. Please find below a summary for the last academic year.

Who are the Victoria Governors and what do we do?

There are currently 12 Victoria School Governors, who come from our local community, church, parent and staff bodies. We meet as a full group six times a year and we have a number of sub-committees which look at different aspects of the school in more detail (eg pupils progress and curriculum development). More information on who is responsible for what, and the types of governors we have, can be found at www.victoria.herts.sch.uk/our-school/governors

We are responsible for three 'strategic' areas:

- To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction for Victoria.
- To hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of its staff.
- To oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent.

Our vision, ethos and strategic direction remained the same

Our vision for Victoria School continues to be to provide our children with an outstanding start to their educational life, within a nurturing and inclusive Christian community. Every term this year the Governors reviewed pupil progress information with the school staff, received reports from external advisors, heard feedback from the pupils and looked at their workbooks and learning resources to assess our progress towards this overall vision. See www.victoria.herts.sch.uk/our-school/mission-aims-ethos for full details of our vision, aims and ethos.

Our educational performance remained Good

Our main objective for 2016/17 was to ensure a consistent, high quality, Good level of teaching for the children. As announced in the school newsletter in June, Governors attended the latest review meeting with the school's Improvement Partner from Hertfordshire County Council. Victoria was confirmed as a continuing Good school, with progress noted in the recent focus on writing. The leadership team was commended for their effectiveness in bringing about school improvement. The Governors would like to thank all the staff for their hard work this year to improving the educational standards and the positive outcomes for the children.

We've had senior leadership changes and challenges

This year has seen significant change within the senior leadership at Victoria, and the Governors appreciate that this has been an unsettling time for children, staff and parents and carers.

Over the last six months, we have worked closely with the existing staff, Herts County Council and the Diocese to ensure leadership continuity. We communicated these changes to parents and carers just as soon as we were able.

Earlier this year, we said farewell to Mr Dewhurst, Deputy Head and to Mrs Ashfield, our Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). We also recently confirmed that our current Headteacher, Mrs Kernohan-Neely, will not be returning to Victoria and we wish her and her family every success in the future.

This term for interim head support, the Governors welcomed Mrs Bennett. The school has really benefitted from her commitment, support and energy. We would like to thank her and Miss Nelson, who stepped in as Acting Deputy Head, for their time in these leadership roles.

With these leadership changes, the Governors were active this year in defining and recruiting a new senior leadership team for September. Next term, Mr Halls will take on the executive headship of both Victoria and Thomas Coram, our partner junior school. He will be spending his time between the two schools, while Mrs Crozier joins us as Head of School for Victoria and Miss Bradford joins as Assistant Head. Miss Nelson will continue in her role as SENCo in September.

We are now in a formal collaboration with Thomas Coram

As announced in May, the Governors agreed to enter into a formal collaboration with Thomas Coram school. In fact, Victoria and Thomas Coram staff have worked together informally for many years, from shared training, curriculum knowledge and resources, to ensuring a successful transition for the children when they move from Year 2 at Victoria to Year 3 at Thomas Coram.

Over the last year however we have worked with Thomas Coram Governors and their leadership on how we can collaborate even further for the benefit of the children across all the primary stages. We have set up a group of Governors from Thomas Coram and Victoria, and our first step was to recruit Mr Halls as Executive Head across both schools. This group is currently looking into a longer-term vision and direction for both schools.

We are in a positive financial position

The school ended the financial year (in April) with a strong, positive balance. This was achieved through strong financial management by the school, and the high demand for our wrap around care service.

Please see the school website (www.victoria.herts.sch.uk/our-school/finance) for more details of where our income comes from, and the main areas of expenditure for 2016/17. This page includes information on how specific funding provided for sports provision, and pupil premium (additional funding from the government to support vulnerable pupils) for 2016/17 was used and its impact. It also has information on how the money raised through your Voluntary contributions has been spent.

We've had strong support from our school community

We would like to thank parents and carers for their ongoing support for Victoria this year, particularly throughout the staff changes. Governors had the opportunity to talk to some parents during the parent consultation evenings this year, and we encourage anyone in our school community to complete the Ofsted Parent View survey at any time at www.victoria.herts.sch.uk/parents/parent-view.

The VSA had another very successful year, and the Governors would like to thank the outgoing Chair, Secretary and Treasurer for their leadership over the last year. The funds raised and the family entertainment organised by the VSA has been hugely appreciated and enjoyed by many.

We were also blessed this year with consistent support from members of the Diocese; and would particularly like to thank the St Peters team for their time with Victoria children either in collective worship, class visits or to help with reading.

Finally, Victoria School continued to benefit from a very engaged and committed group of Governors – all of whom voluntarily gave up a significant amount of their time this year to help the school improve. Several of us have recently enjoyed seeing the children in action during informal visits to the school – including to watch a fantastic drumming performance during Music week, looking at work displays at the school open afternoon, and witnessing the joyful celebration of memories at the Year 2 leavers assembly. We wish our Year 2 children every success in the next step of their education.

What do we see on the horizon?

We believe we now have strong leadership teams in place for both Victoria and Thomas Coram from September, led by Mr Halls. The Governors remain committed to ensuring a continued Good level of education for all our children for next year, and we will be working closely with the new and existing staff to achieve further consistency across year groups and subjects. We also remain very aware of the ongoing high probability of an Ofsted inspection, which could happen at any point.

Both Mr Halls and the Governing Bodies at Victoria and Thomas Coram strongly believe in the ongoing provision of Church of England primary school education in Berkhamsted. We want to do more to make sure our pupils have access to the best available resources, and our staff are able to deliver the best education possible. So over the coming year we will be analysing the options for both schools and discussing these with the Diocese and Hertfordshire County Council. We will put forward our proposal for discussion with staff, pupils, parents and carers and the wider community before any decision on direction is taken.

Who can I talk to if I have further questions?

If you have questions relating to your child at Victoria, please in the first instance contact the relevant class teacher. If it is not specific to your child, please contact the school office who can pass it to the leadership team.

We wish you a happy and restful Summer holidays.



Jenny Jenkins

Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Victoria School Governing Body