

8 February 2021

Your school's governance structure

The National Governance Association is operating a “Visible Governance” campaign to highlight the important role and contribution of governors in schools. This presents a good opportunity to (re)introduce you to the structure and people who volunteer to be governors for our school.

As you'll be aware, Portswood School is part of the HISP Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). As such, we benefit from being part of a group of schools who share a common outlook and aspiration for children's education. Being part of this wider group provides us with access to a broader range of skills and resources and we believe that we are stronger as part of this family. Governance is an important aspect of how we ensure that schools across the MAT continue to develop.

The Department for Education (DfE) sets out what is expected and required of governance in schools; governing boards' roles and functions and their legal duties.

The key responsibilities of governance in schools are:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Holding the head to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Engaging with pupils, staff, parents and the school community

In a MAT, the legal responsibility to the DfE sits with a body known as the “Trust Board” which makes decisions across all schools within the MAT. The members of the Trust Board are called Trustees and details of them can be found on the MAT website (<https://www.hispmat.org/governance-and-finance/>). This group of individuals gives us strong and diverse experience which benefits all schools across the MAT.

We appreciate that each school also needs appropriate local focus on its educational performance and engagement with its pupils, parent and school community. In order to give this local focus for our school, we have a body called the “Academy Committee”. In other schools these groups can also be known as “Local Governing Bodies”. The Academy Committee members are known as “Academy Governors” and are committed to ensuring that the students at Portswood have a safe learning environment and fulfil their potential.

The Academy Governors will undertake actions to ensure that Portswood School delivers a positive education performance for all pupils. We will also ensure that your voice as a pupil, parent, carer, or member of the local community is represented within the Multi Academy Trust. The Academy Governors for Portswood can be found at

<https://www.portswoodpri.org.uk/about-us/local-governing-body/>. Whilst we are all volunteers, our commitment is to deliver a professional level of governance to the school. Should you have any questions regarding our work, please contact signe.biddle@portswood.org.uk in the first instance.

Sharing your views

As part of our efforts to ensure we continue to engage with the local school community, you have received a short survey from your school. As the Portswood Academy Committee, we will use this mechanism to collect feedback from pupils, staff and parents/carers, and this will help to inform our priorities for the future. We'd really appreciate your feedback, so please do take the time to complete the survey. Thank you in advance.

Signe Biddle
Chair to Portswood Academy Committee

Andrew Parr
Chair to Trust Board – HISP MAT