

Governors' Diversity Survey Report and Action Plan

London Borough of Islington, November 2021



Governors' Diversity Survey

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Supporting appendices are available separately on request:

Appendix A – Source data from quantitative questions

Appendix B - Samples of text responses from qualitative questions

For copies of the appendices, comments or queries, please contact [Governor Services](#)

Introductions

Cate Duffy, Corporate Director People

Islington Council is committed to making Islington a fairer and more inclusive place to live, learn and work. We think it is essential that our school workforce and governing bodies are as diverse and representative of our communities as possible. This starts with understanding the current position so that we can identify areas for future focus.

The report shows that while work has progressed on governing boards to improve diversity, these boards are not as reflective of their local communities as they could be, particularly in terms of ethnicity (especially Black) and people with disabilities. It also seems there could be more male and younger governors and more members from socially disadvantaged communities.

We also asked governors about their experiences of being a governor. The responses showed us that a key motivation to being a governor was to 'give something back'/'make a difference'. Governors had found Governor Training and Induction particularly useful to support them in their roles. Time commitment was flagged up as the biggest challenge to governors.

These baseline indicators have been used to inform the action plan found at the end of the report. We look forward to working with Islington schools and governing bodies to implement the plan.

Cllr Michelline Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and their families

Tackling inequality and improving diversity are so important to me, as a councillor, school governor and resident of Islington. I believe passionately that governing boards must reflect their local communities to make sure that the important decisions that governors and trustees make reflect the needs and concerns of those communities. These decisions include agreeing budgets, appointing senior leaders, agreeing policies, reviewing exclusions and much more. Diversity on governing boards and school staff teams also provides positive role models for our children and young people. And whatever the make-up of their members, a governing board's practice also needs to be inclusive.

So I am delighted to see the publication of the Governor Diversity Survey Report and Action Plan. The council will be working with schools and governors/trustees on a range of actions - I look forward to seeing them make an impact and contribute to greater diversity and equality in Islington.

Executive summary of findings

An on-line anonymous survey of Islington governors and trustees took place in spring 2021. The main aim was to establish baseline indicators of the diversity of Islington governing boards. We also asked questions about governors' experiences with a view to improving support to them.

The 155 responses to the survey came from a range of educational institutions, but the majority represented were maintained primary schools. Responses also came from a range of type of governor/trustee – the majority were from co-opted governors, followed by parent and staff governors. Thirty eight percent had been a governor for over four years, including 16% for over eight years: therefore 62% had been a governor for fewer than four years so relatively new to the role.

Protected characteristics represented

The level of diversity seemed to vary from institution to institution. However, we need to be careful not to equate the profile of respondents to the survey with actual representation on governing boards and trusts across the whole borough. The responses give us the beginnings of an understanding of levels of diversity.

- **Gender** – 57 percent of respondents categorised themselves as female, 40% male and 3% 'prefer not to say'. The representation of females at a national level was 53%.
- **Ethnicity** – nine percent of respondents identified themselves as Black, 6.5% as Asian and 80% as White (63% were White British). To give some context, in the January 2021 Early Years and Primary census, Black children accounted for 23%, Asian children accounted for 7% and White children accounted for around 46%. In the State of Equalities in Islington 2021 Report, 12% of residents were Black, 10% Asian and 44% were White British, plus 4% White Irish. It does appear that Black communities are notably under-represented on governing boards.
- **Religion** - 51% of respondents stated they did not have a religion, while 38% self-identified as Christians. Other responses came in small numbers from Christian Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim and Hindu communities, and other categories. The level of not having a religion is consistent with other data sources.
- **Sexuality** - a significant majority – 81% - of respondents described themselves as heterosexual or straight. Twelve percent described themselves as homosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual. There is a lack of solid data in relation to this protected characteristic, but it appears that the sexualities identified by respondents were reflective of the local population.
- **Age** – 68% of respondents were aged 36 to 65 year olds. 16% were aged 66 or over, while only 13% were aged 35 or younger. Nationally, it is recognised that more younger people are needed on governing boards and it appears that this is the case in Islington.
- **Disability** – 5% of respondents stated they considered themselves to have a disability, compared to an estimate of 15% of the population in Islington, suggesting a likely under-representation on governing boards in Islington.

Engagement with diversity

- Over two thirds (69%) of respondents rated the inclusiveness of their governing boards as Good, Fair or Excellent.
- Twenty two percent gave a rating of neutral
- Ten percent felt it was poor.

Most schools and trusts represented through the survey were addressing the issue of diversity to varying degrees, but not all, and there was general acknowledgement that we have a way to go in many schools represented in the survey.

Ethnicity was the biggest issue that came up in relation to representation on the board, followed by economic disadvantage. The under-representation of males was raised, while difficulties in recruiting young people and people with disabilities were also mentioned.

Black / Disabled Governors' Forum

There were 12 responses indicating interest in setting up a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Governors' Forum.

There were very few (two) responses indicating interest in a Governors with Disabilities Forum: this may reflect the under representation of governors with disabilities on governing boards and responding to the survey.

The governor experience

Motivation to become a governor

- The majority wanted to support the local community and school and to give something back/make a difference.
- Many had an interest in education or believed in its importance to society
- Others wished to use their skills or to gain knowledge and improve skills.
- A few were motivated to improve diversity at the school.

What they most enjoyed about being a governor

- Making a positive impact
- Overcoming challenges
- Working with the school and supporting staff.
- Being a part of an important team
- Learning new skills
- Seeing children flourish and the school improve.

How they have been supported in their role, including induction

- On the whole, governors felt they had been supported well.
- The most important form of support was governor training
- Other support they valued was from:
 - the school / head teacher
 - the other governors
 - the local authority
 - other sources of support such as The Key, the National Governance Association and the Diocese and support from the chair.
- 14 respondents said they had not received an induction or much support.

Barriers and challenges they have experienced in their role

- Time commitment clearly came out as the main challenge to governors.

Other issues raised included:

- not understanding data or information
- not understanding the role of the governor
- the impact of the COVID Pandemic (virtual meetings and not being able to go in to school)
- communications issues, and
- over-full agendas.

Suggestions for other support / actions

Particularly important were:

- Governor training
- formal induction
- a buddy system/mentoring/shadowing.

Other suggestions included:

- improved recruitment of governors including addressing diversity through that
- getting to know the other governors
- more contextual information about the school to support decision making.
- extra support for governors / trustees with disabilities and for chairs.

What next?

While, as anticipated, we do not have a definitive baseline of governor diversity from the responses, nevertheless there were some clear messages and suggestions on which the LA and hopefully governing boards and schools can base further work to improve diversity on governing boards. In addition, there was very useful feedback on experiences of governance which the LA, governing boards, schools and others working with governors can reflect on.

See page 19 for the local authority's Action Plans as a result of the survey.

Background

Rationale for the survey

School governors and trustees provide support and challenge to the school leadership team to ensure the school has a clear strategic vision and ethos, that pupils reach their full potential and are prepared for the next stage in life, that staff are managed effectively and that public money is well spent. In brief, they contribute to the improvement of their school.

They make important decisions that impact on the ability of children and young people to succeed at school and beyond. These decisions relate to budget, staffing, curriculum, use of buildings, community and parental relations, pupil and staff welfare, safeguarding policies, behaviour management including exclusions and much more.

Governors are also role models for children and young people, as are the staff at the school. They are also a link to a range of local communities.

It is therefore crucial that governing boards are made up of people who reflect the make up of local communities, including people from Black, Asian and Community Ethnic communities, people with disabilities and people reflecting a range of ages, genders, faiths and religions and backgrounds. As stated in the Department for Education (DfE) publication, 'Governance handbook' (October 2020), governing boards should have, 'people with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity who... **provide sufficient diversity of perspectives to enable robust decision making**'.

The need to promote and improve diversity on governing boards gained agency in summer 2020 following the murder of George Floyd in the United States and the corresponding resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Islington Governors Steering Group had already been focusing on the need to improve diversity prior to summer 2020. Following further discussions, it was agreed that a survey of governors should be carried out to try to establish, if not a fully formed baseline of current diversity, at least a reasonably detailed snapshot of how governors perceive the diversity on their boards to be and what the council and schools can do to improve the situation. The local authority does not hold a database of all governing boards and there is no legal requirement on schools to record ethnicity and other diversities information about their governors. Therefore, a survey seemed a good way to establish at least an informed impression of diversity in Islington.

The survey also provided an opportunity to find out about governors' experiences in their role to shed light on their motivations, what they enjoy about being a governor, support they have received and further support they would like.

Aim and objectives of the survey

The overall aim is to help the local authority to identify further actions to improve diversity on governing boards, working in partnership with schools, academies and governors. This will

contribute to the local authority's [Challenging Inequalities](#) strategy launched in March 2021 – and more specifically to the Challenging Inequalities in Education Plan within that strategy.

The objectives are to:

- establish a snap shot of the representation on GBs of people from protected characteristics (in relation to the Equalities Act 2010), in particular ethnicity, disability, age, gender, religion and sexuality, and to find out for how long people have been governors
- establish to what extent governors feel that their GBs are diverse, not just in terms of membership but approach to their work as governors
- find out if there is any interest in establishing a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Governors Forum and a Governors with Disabilities Forum
- find out what motivated people to become governors and what they have most enjoyed about being a governor, to help us promote positive messages to potential governors, trustees and associate members
- get feedback on what support they have received and what further support they would like from the local authority and schools to help them be effective in their role.

Methodology

The Governors' Steering Group provided an invaluable sounding board for the development of the survey, including the questions, and for reviewing drafts of this report – our thanks to them.

Given the resurgence of the COVID pandemic in early 2021, it was agreed to carry out the survey on line and anonymously on a platform that ensured that individuals could not be identified. We published the link to the survey on 26 February on the Council's website, along with links in Governor News (weekly newsletter Islington Governor Services publishes on line), Schools Bulletin, emails to chairs and clerks and at a Governors' Briefing.

We received 155 responses by the final deadline of 29 March 2021.

In 2020, the DfE published research it had commissioned from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), '[School and Trust Governance Investigative Report](#)'. The findings of that report were based on responses from 2,751 governors, trustees, clerks and executive leaders. Where it appears useful, there are references to findings in that report to provide a national perspective.

There are also references to the [State of Equalities in Islington 2021](#) report.

The numbering of questions in the appendices is in line with the survey. In Section 4 - the Analysis of Responses - the order of responses to five of the open questions has been changed to flow more logically.

Analysis of responses

We received 155 responses to the survey. While this may not be a large statistical sample from which to draw solid conclusions about all Islington schools and governors, academies and trustees, the response rate equates to about 20% of all governors/trustees in Islington, which is very useful for future planning purposes.

Who responded

Type of school/governing board

Responses came from a wide range of types of schools and academies. The majority of responses, (60.7%), were from primary schools, including primary academies but not those in a federation, followed by secondary schools including academies (17%), maintained schools in federations (10%) and special schools including academies (6.7%). Other key categories were all through academies - 3.3% and nursery schools – 2.7%. The distribution of responses by type of school/setting compared with the distribution of governing boards is set out in Table A. The two remaining responses are not included in the table below as one was not a governor, the other was from Alternative Provision.

Table A

Type of school/setting	Number of respondents	% of respondents	Number of GBs in each category	% of GBs in each category
Federation	15	10%	4 (10 schools)	5.6%
Nursery school	4	2.7%	3	4.2%
Primary school, including free school / academies	91	60.7%	46	64.8%
Secondary school, including academies	25	16.7%	10	14.1%
All through academy – primary and secondary	5	3.3%	2	2.8%
Special school including academies/free schools and PRU and alternative provision	10	6.7%	6	8.5%
Total	150	100%	71	100%

Type of governor

Responses came from all types of governor, including head teachers and foundation governors, and from some associate members. The largest percentage of responses was from co-opted governors (43%), followed by parent governors (19%) and staff governors (8%). The local authority does not have the data to compare distribution of responses by type of governor to the distribution of types of governor across the borough.

Length of time in the role

The length of time respondents had been governors or trustees at their school varied, with the highest (28%) citing two to four years. Thirty eight percent had been a governor for over four years (including 16% for over eight years): 62% had been a governor for fewer than four years so relatively new to the role.

Protected characteristics of respondents

Gender

Fifty seven per cent of respondents categorised themselves as female, 40% as male and 3% of respondents preferred not to say.

Males appear to be slightly under-represented on Islington governing boards. Nationally, a smaller majority (53%) of governors and trustees described themselves as female in the NFER Investigative report on Governance 2020. That report also looked at the gender of chairs – this was even with 49% female, 49% male.

Ethnicity

We recognise that trying to establish which ethnicities are represented on governing boards is sensitive and highly complex, and that there are communities within communities.

We received 155 responses to this question. All but four respondents indicated how they described their ethnicity.

Nine percent of respondents identified themselves as Black, 6.5% as Asian and 80% as White (63% were White British).

We calculated the percentage of Black respondees by combining those who self-identified as: Black/Black British Caribbean; White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African and Other African.

We calculated the percentage of Asian respondees by combining those who self-identified as: Asian/Asian British – Indian; Asian/Asian British – Bangladeshi; Asian/Asian British – Pakistani; White/Asian and any other Asian.

White was calculated from a combination of White British, White Irish, White Greek/Greek Cypriot and any other White background.

Eleven respondents took up the option of giving their own description of their ethnicity.

January 2021 Census of ethnicities of pupils in Islington primaries and early years settings

To provide some context, we compared the broad headlines of the ethnicity of our respondents with the breakdown in ethnicities of pupils in the January Census 2021. Caution should be exercised in making these comparisons given the small sample size of governor survey respondents, so it is only an approximate indicator to provide some context. Also, of course, governors are not the same population group as children at our schools.

White children, including Turkish/Turkish Cypriot, Kurdish, White Other and White British, accounted for around 46% in the January census, compared to 80% White respondents in the Governors' Diversity Survey.

Black African, Black Somali, Black Caribbean and Black Other children accounted for 22.6% of children – this compares with 9% of Governor Survey respondents.

Bangladeshi and Other Asian accounted for 8% of children – so the percentage of Asian governor respondents at 6.5% appeared to be more proportionate.

To provide further context, from the **State of Equalities in Islington 2021 Report**

- Less than half (44%) of Islington residents are estimated to be "White British" in 2021, compared to 38% in Greater London.
- 4% of Islington residents are estimated to be "White Irish", compared to 2% in Greater London.
- 32% of residents were in Black Asian and other Ethnic Groups and 20% of residents were in 'Other White' in 2021, compared to 32% and 17%, respectively, in 2011. "Other White" consists of Caucasian people from Europe, America, Africa and Asia and Oceania. White Gypsy and Traveller groups were also included in the "Other White" category.

As would be expected given the multi-cultural nature of inner city areas such as Islington, there appears to be more ethnic diversity on Islington governing boards than nationally. The NFER School Governance Investigative Report 2020 showed only 3.5% of respondents identified themselves as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. Most of the survey respondents identified themselves as 'White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British' (88%).

Religion

Fifty-one percent of respondents stated they did not have a religion. About a quarter (24%) stated they were Christian Protestant, followed by 8% stating they were Christian Catholic. There were smaller numbers of responses from Christian Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim and Hindu communities, as well as Atheist, Anglican and Church of England, Methodist and Apostolic Pentecostal Christian. Overall, 38% self-identified as Christians. Nine respondents 'preferred not to say'.

The State of Equalities in Islington Report 2021 found that 51% of Islington's population reported a religious affiliation in 2018 (compared to 63% in 2013) – so broadly in line with our survey.

According to the Annual Population Survey, 2006 to 2015, ONS (2016), downloaded from London Datastore (accessed January 2018), religious affiliations in Islington were:

- Christian 43%
- Other Religion 5%
- Muslim 8%
- No religion 49%

The level of no religion was roughly comparable to our survey. While it is possible that Muslims and possibly Christians were under-represented in the respondents to the Governors' Survey, it is not possible to be sure about this due to the low sample size. Also, the information from the State of Equality report is a few years old and it is hard to break down the information in relation to other religions.

Sexuality

We received 155 responses to this question – 11 chose 'prefer not to say'.

A significant majority – 81% - of respondents described themselves as heterosexual or straight. 12% percent described themselves as homosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Based on the London average for lesbian, gay and bisexual population, there are approximately 5,742 LGB residents aged 16 and above in the borough in 2021 (3%). It is likely the actual rate is higher due some residents not disclosing their sexuality and to the fact that Islington has a relatively young population for a London borough, with younger people more likely to identify as LGB across the country as a whole.

There is a lack of solid data in relation to this protected characteristic, but it appears that the representation of sexualities described by respondents was reflective of the local population.

Age

We received 155 responses to this question – four replied, 'Prefer not to say'.

The age group with the highest number of respondents was the 36- to 45-year-olds, with 43 respondents or 28%. They were followed by: 46- to 55-year-olds – 23% and 56- to 65-year-olds – 17%. 17% were aged 66 or over.

So over two-thirds of respondents were aged 36- to 65-years old, and 85% were 36 or older.

There were 20 respondents aged 35 or younger – only 13%.

Nationally, there seems to be a greater representation of older people, with 87% of respondents aged 40 or older, and only 9% aged 18 to 39.

Disability

We had 155 responses to this question – seven chose 'prefer not to say'.

Eight (5.2%) of respondents stated they considered themselves to have a disability, 140 (90.3%) stated they did not.

According to The State of Equalities in Islington 2021 report, based on estimates of the prevalence of disability in an inner London borough in 2018/19, the estimated number of Islington residents with a disability in 2021 was 36,656 or 15% of the population.

It appears that people with disabilities are likely to be under-represented on governing boards in Islington.

Questions about experiences of being a governor

What motivated them to become governors

We had 141 responses to this question.

The majority were motivated to become a governor to support the local community and the school: the words, 'give something back' appeared frequently. Many had an interest in education or believed in its importance to society, therefore wanted to support the school.

Utilising skills was also a common reason for becoming a governor. Other reasons were to gain knowledge and improve skills, with a quite a few governors suggesting that their job had an influence on their decision to become a governor, and to improve diversity at the school.

We categorised the answers given. The respondents often referred to more than one category. The categories were as follows:

- Supporting the community/making a difference – 66 comments
- Supporting the school – 56 comments
- Belief in the importance of education or an interest in education – 36 comments
- Using my skills - 32 comments
- Linked to my job – 27 comments
- I have or have had a child in the school – 21 comments

- To learn and improve my skills – 16 comments
- I was asked to – seven comments
- To support diversity – six comments

What they most enjoy about being governors

There were 132 responses to this question.

We categorised the answers given. The respondents often referred to more than one category. The categories were as follows:

- making a positive difference – 70 comments
- working with the school/supporting staff – 65 comments
- understanding how schools and education work – 35 comments
- seeing a positive impact on children – 28 comments
- using my skills – 12 comments
- working with governors – 11 comments
- equalities input – ensuring all children supported – 11 comments
- meeting children and people – 10 comments
- challenging myself/self-development – six comments
- supporting parents – five comments

Echoing the answers to the question about motivation, the majority enjoyed making a positive impact, overcoming challenges, working with the school and supporting staff. Many enjoyed being a part of an important team and learning new skills as well as contributing. Also seeing children flourish and the school improve.

How they have been supported in their role, including induction?

On the whole, governors felt they had been supported well. The most important form of support was governor training, followed by support from the school / head teacher, the other governors, the local authority and other sources of support such as The Key, the National Governance Association and the Diocese (not specified which) and support from the chair.

We categorised the answers given. The respondents often referred to more than one category. The categories were as follows:

- Governor training – 66 comments
- Support from school / head teacher – 27 comments
- Support from the governing board – 23 comments
- Support from organisations such as The Key, National Governance Association (NGA), Diocese – 17 comments
- Support from the London Borough of Islington – 16 comments
- Support from the chair – 15 comments
- LBI Governors' Briefing – 12 comments
- Support from the clerk to governors – 4 comments.

14 respondents said they had not received an induction or much support.

Barriers and challenges they have experienced in their role

Time commitment clearly came out as the main challenge to governors (42% of the 66 responses).

The NFER School and Trust Governance Investigative Report 2020 stated that,

'On average, respondents estimated that they spent 17 hours per term preparing for meetings, 16 hours attending meetings, and 23 hours undertaking all other activities related to their governance role. This varied considerably by role and board type, with chairs of MAT trust boards spending considerably more than other types of chairs and governors/trustees.'

The average estimated equates to about four and a half hours per term-time week. It can be more or less, depending on many factors including how efficient and effective the board is, the context of the school and the roles that a governor takes on, eg chair of a committee and/or link governor.

There were 15 comments in relation to not understanding data or information and six in relation to not understanding the role of the governor - that may relate to not having had an effective induction or not accessing good quality training or support.

Within 'Other' comments, nine related to the COVID Pandemic, in particular around holding meetings on video conferencing platforms and not being able to get in to school physically.

There were also a few comments around poor communications or misunderstanding between parents and staff and the governing board, over-full agendas, not being supported enough by the chair and the governing board being ineffectual.

Of concern is that one governor stated that their disabilities had not been recognised.

Their suggestions for other support / actions

There were 42 responses to this question. Governor training, formal induction and a buddy system/mentoring/shadowing appeared to be particularly important.

We categorised the answers given. The respondents often referred to more than one category. The categories were as follows:

- Governor training – 31 comments. Several respondents asked for training to help interpret data.
- Formal induction/written pack – 24 comments. Several respondents referred to acronyms and one to the pack being available before attending full induction training.
- Buddy system/ mentoring/shadowing - 15 comments. Two respondents felt this should be available to people thinking about being governors.
- More context/information/access to school – seven comments

- More diversity/better recruitment – five comments
- Getting to know other governors – five comments
- Information by audio/video – two comments
- Better clerking – one comment
- Listening to parents – one comment

The issue of extra support for governors / trustees with disabilities needs to be considered.

How diverse they feel their governing board to be

We received 155 responses to this question. Over two thirds (69%) of respondents rated the inclusiveness of their governing boards as Good, Fair or Excellent. Twenty-two percent rated their governing board as neutral, while 10% felt it was poor.

We received 17 further comments on this. The general impression from these was that, while in a few cases GBs were diverse, in most cases the membership was not as representative of their local community as it should be. Nevertheless, respondents recognised that significant efforts were being made to address this and Equalities practice was effective.

Ethnicity was the biggest issue that came up in relation to representation on the board, followed by economic disadvantage, with disadvantaged families not having a voice on the board. The under-representation of men was raised, while difficulties in recruiting young people and people with disabilities were also mentioned. Reasons given for these difficulties included time commitment, volume of paperwork and incompatibility of evening meetings with family life.

In a small minority of cases, it appeared that diversity was not being addressed as much as it could, with Equalities not being raised at meetings.

Two responses to this question raised wider issues and are addressed in the analysis of the question, Any other comments? – see below – page 16 and 28.

Black / Disabled Governors' Forum?

We received 36 responses to the questions relating to this.

Twelve respondents would be interested in joining a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Governors' Forum. Therefore, we will discuss at the Governors Steering Group how we can take forward the establishment of a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Governors' Forum.

As only two respondents expressed an interest in joining a Governors with Disabilities Forum, we will not progress this at this time. The Governors' Equality Action plan will need to address how to encourage more representation of governors with disabilities onto governing boards and other support for governors with disabilities.

Any other comments

One related to giving people from a range of backgrounds the confidence to volunteer.

Another felt that the role of governors should be made clear to all to manage expectations given some parents misunderstand the role and expect governors to get involved in operational matters.

Three were positive comments of praise to the LBI and one recommended being a governor in Islington.

In addition, there were two responses to earlier questions that raised broader issues – evening meetings being incompatible with family life, and the need for governors nominated or appointed from agencies outside the school to be more committed to the school and involved in the work of the governing board (see page 28).

What happens next - Action Plan for Improving Diversity

Objective	Actions	Time	Lead officer	Comments
Recruit more governors reflective of local communities, including people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (Black especially), more younger people, more disabled people, more men and more people from disadvantaged backgrounds	Develop a Communications Plan to support the objective to recruit more governors reflective of local communities. The plan will identify appropriate communication and engagement measures to reach key audiences, including partnership working, events and outreach. A wider recruitment push will be delivered in January 2022.	Nov 2021 to Feb 2022	JW with Lee Farrow (Communication Team)	Discuss further with Steering Group. Link in to Bright Start/Parent Champions/Fairer Together
Investigate setting up a Black Governors' Forum	First consult to double check there is sufficient appetite. Working group with black governors to develop the forum if there is enough demand. Black governors to lead, with support of LA.	By February 2022 By April 2022 Forum established Summer 2022	JW JW to set up with black governor to chair	Equalities Reference Group to be involved
Review progress	LA to repeat survey every two years and share results at Governors'	Spring/summer 2023	JW	

Objective	Actions	Time	Lead officer	Comments
	Briefing/in Governor News/Schools Bulletin			
Support governing boards/schools/trusts to be more inclusive	Produce and disseminate slides summarising outcome of survey and LA Action Plan for GBs to consider during autumn 2021 and spring 2022 term, possibly along with equalities audit. Share these with headteachers too.	Slides produced by 20 October (Gobs Briefing). Shared from November.	Jane Wright (JW) – Manager for Schools and Early Childhood Governance. Clerks	School Improvement Service to support
	Develop and disseminate a governors' equalities audit.	Nov 2021	School Improvement Service (SIS) / JW	Steering Group to discuss
	Develop role description for Equalities Link Governor	Nov 2021	SIS to lead	JW and Steering group supporting
	Suggest Equalities as standing item on FGB agendas/GBs to think about their working practices to ensure they are not creating barriers for some groups including timing of meetings / encourage appointment of Equalities Link Governor	Summer 2021 onwards	JW and clerks	Also on GovernorHub
	Seek out and share case studies of inclusive practice on GBs, including of induction and mentoring.	Oct 2021 onwards – ongoing	AD/SIS	Equalities Reference Group to be involved

Objective	Actions	Time	Lead officer	Comments
Ensure equalities is given sufficient weight in regular governor training	JW to check with governor trainers – New Governors’ Induction, Chairs and Safeguarding for Governors	Autumn 2021 and ongoing	SIS + JW	
Plan more Equalities Training as part of Governor Training Programme	SIS to plan a session to clarify the role of GBs in relation to Equalities across all their responsibilities. Unconscious Bias training programmed for every term in 2021-22.	Spring / Summer 2022	SIS + JW	

Other Governor Support Actions – for schools, trusts and GBs to consider as well as the LA

Objective	Actions	Time	Lead officer	Comments
Ensure governors receive a good induction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA to review information about governors on its website LA to review Induction Pack Checklist – schools to update their induction packs LA / schools to provide acronym glossary Schools to consider shadowing/buddying/mentoring of potential/new governors – could set up swapping scheme with another school? 	By December 2021 Ditto Ditto Spring 2022	JW JW JW/schools Schools	
Regular financial management training	LA has set up first three-part course for the autumn. Aiming to run termly in 2021/22.	Ongoing	Debbie Stevenson and Sabrina Bryan	
Curriculum training – help with interpreting non-finance data	LA to discuss.	November 2021	SIS	
Opportunities for governors to get to know each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA aiming to hold one Governors Briefing virtually, one face-to-face 	Autumn 21	JW	

Objective	Actions	Time	Lead officer	Comments
	<p>each term from autumn 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing format of training • Reviewing format of governor meetings in light of COVID situation/developments. 	Autumn 21 and onwards	<p>JW</p> <p>Schools</p>	
Time commitment issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA to liaise with local employers – reminder that they should give reasonable time off (does not have to be paid) to employees for governance duties. • Encourage chairs to delegate to vice-chairs and other governors (eg link governors) • Review head’s report to ensure it is only including information that governors need for their strategic role. 	<p>Nov/Dec 2021</p> <p>Spring 2022</p> <p>Summer 2022</p>	<p>JW with support from Fairer Together</p> <p>JW – with chairs to help</p> <p>SIS</p>	<p>Case studies/Governors Briefing</p>