



Holmer Green Senior School

Annual Governors' Report 2021-22





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Message from the Chair of Governors

This year has been a period of transition as the pandemic has receded and life has started returning to normal. The pandemic made life difficult for everyone associated with the school and I would like to thank the students, their parents and all the staff of the school for supporting the education of our students during these very difficult times.

The past year has also been a time of physical change for the school as the building work to increase the capacity of the school has been taking place. In the main, this work has now been completed and the school community have the benefit of new facilities, providing an enhanced environment for their studies. We have a larger sports hall, with the previous hall having been transitioned into an airy, light dining hall, with an increased capacity and served by a much-improved kitchen. We have new classrooms and laboratories and a larger space for the Sixth Form.

This year also sees the return to traditional examinations for the first time in two years and a further return to normality within the school. This change is being well supported by the excellent teaching staff of the school.

The Governing Body has continued to work closely with the Headteacher and his staff to ensure that the academic achievements of the school continued, and I am pleased to say that after months of meeting on-line Governors are now once again able to meet face to face for our meetings.

If you have any questions for me or for any other Governor, you can contact us via the school (clerktogovernors@holmer.org.uk)

Tony Green

Chairman of Governors





Message from the Headteacher

At Holmer Green Senior School we are always striving to improve our educational provision, but even more so this year as we look to capitalise on some of the changes coming out of our lockdown practices. Our Governing Body is an integral part of this journey being a critical friend, providing an alternative perspective, encouraging and getting us to think in new ways for benefit of all our students. Our purpose is to support students to become the best possible versions of themselves in every way. The values that guide us are: Be Kind, Work Hard, Have Passion, Pursue Excellence and Curiosity. This academic year has been a singular one in supporting the catch up of students' learning, getting our students ready for the first set of external examinations in two years and re-dressing the balance between virtual experiences and face-to-face experiences through trips and fixtures that bring the curriculum to life.

With both challenge and support from Governors, we have been able to:

- support our students in a myriad of ways, which are exemplified in this report, including: safeguarding; progress of SEND and Pupil Premium students; The Bridge Support; STEAM Scholarships; Curriculum refinements
- support our staff to develop professionally investing in the NPQ qualifications and secondments
- further improve our facilities and educational course offer

This report is aimed at giving readers a light insight into the improvements we have made as a community this academic year, the impact of which is jointly attributable to our Governing Body as part of their role in our school improvement journey.

Message from the Head Students

Over the past two years we have collectively agreed that Sixth Form has been a memorable experience. Sixth Form started off completely differently to how we ever thought, but we wouldn't change it. The support that has been provided to help us with the gaps in our education due to the pandemic has been incredibly helpful. Despite the challenges that we have faced, we were still given the chance to have in person assemblies informing us about the different post-Sixth Form options, and talks from individuals such as the Mayor of Wycombe. We are also grateful for the opportunities that we have had to give back to the community by having our successful collection for the one can trust and our bake sale for Comic relief. Special thanks goes to all the Sixth Form staff who have encouraged and supported us throughout our Sixth Form experience.

Message from Year 11 Students

"I have really enjoyed my time at HGSS and I am ready to start my exams, it wasn't the easiest with all the lockdowns, but I am excited for my next steps."

"I really like Year 11 because I knew that I would always have someone there to help me when I needed it"



Thoughts and Advice from Year Sevens

What has been the best part of Year 7?

"The best part of Year 7 is being able to meet lots of new people and make more friends"

"I enjoyed meeting all of my teachers"

"The best part for me is PE"

"I like the opportunities to succeed at HGSS"

"I like meeting new people and becoming more independent"

What would be your advice for the Year 6 students coming to HGSS?

"If you are not in a class with your friends, don't worry, you will make more"

"Be Confident."

"Respect the rules, they help make school easier"

"If you get lost, don't worry about it, people will help you find your way"

"Don't worry, enjoy it"

"Try your best in every subjects, look for the positives, these will help you in later life"

Are students keen to stay with us?



KS4 Progression

A number of students have signed up for Sixth Form, many students have commented that they want to stay due to the positive relationships they have fostered with their teachers.

"I want to stay here because the teachers take care of me and they are nice. I have also seen that the grades in Sixth Form are excellent"

"The school is friendly and the teachers are really good at what they do!"

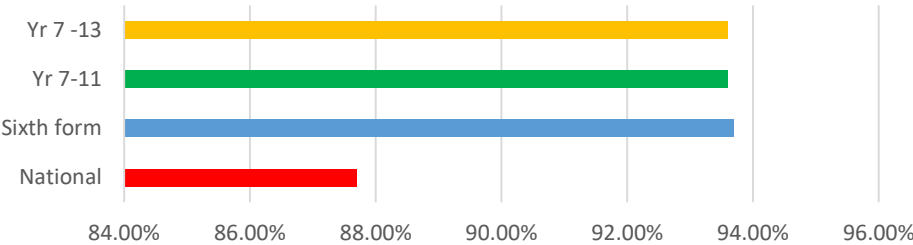
"I don't feel like I need to go anywhere else, I already know I like it here and I can succeed at HGSS. I have worked towards an end point in Year 11 and want to continue for the last two years"



Are we effectively preparing our students to meet the high aspirations they have of themselves?

Attendance

This year we have maintained our high expectations of students' attendance to school. Through daily monitoring of their attendance, high parental engagement and a positive school environment we have maintained an attendance above national average at every term in this academic year.



Teaching and Learning

This year we have enhanced our shared understanding of excellent teaching and learning by embedding the HGSS Teaching and Learning Framework. The framework is linked to our school ethos of 'Work Hard, Be Kind and Have Passion'. The framework provides a focus for our staff development programmes and a framework for quality assurance of lessons. The feedback from learning walks is now shared more broadly and this has helped us to identify staff with excellent practice to share and identify individual growth areas for teachers. We are embedding our reflective and developmental culture with regular 'practice clinics' and peer coaching partnerships to share excellent ideas and incrementally improve our teaching practice.

Curriculum

In the Autumn Term we reviewed and amended our curriculum to offer a broader depth of study in Key Stage 3. Year 9 will now provide the opportunity to choose subject specialisms rather than a GCSE and more time to study the highly regarded EBACC subjects including a modern foreign language. GCSE courses will now begin in Year 10.

Reading continues to be at the heart of our curriculum and students have enjoyed shared reading sessions with their tutors twice a week in Years 7-10. We have ambitious plans to develop our students love of reading across the curriculum and are excited about the positive impact of these plans !



Are our students achieving academically?

We are an inclusive school, and we focus on supporting every student to achieve their best.

Student attainment and progress data is reviewed regularly and discussed with the Leadership Team to ensure high expectations and identify solutions to barriers to achievement. This year student academic achievement has been supported with small group interventions, mentoring and extracurricular support.

This year we have improved the information we provide about assessments through regular assessment content guides with links to revision and support. Students and parents can access work being set and deadlines for completion online. This information has allowed students to develop their skills as independent learners and to plan for success.



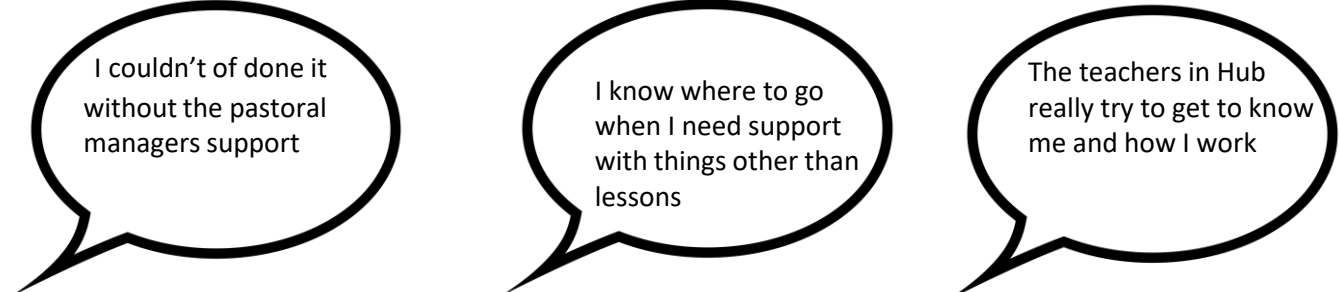
KS5

Destinations

67% of our students are applying to University through UCAS. A number of students have secured very prestigious apprenticeships including: a Degree Apprenticeship in Tax & Auditing with Deloitte, a Level 4 Apprenticeship in Network Engineering at Jump Trading and an Apprenticeship in IT Recruitment at Involved Solutions.

Recruitment

Now in its second year, we have received a competitive range of applications for our STEAM Scholarship programme. Current Scholars have benefitted by having their textbooks and resources paid for, they have also participated in various internships (either in person or online), have been introduced to career related mentors and have had assistance in organising essential and relevant work experience in their desired sector. In addition to our STEAM Scholarships we have also introduced a new Visual Arts Scholarship to support our artists and creative students. This year we have received 165 applications for the Sixth Form. We have also received a further increase in the number of external students applying. All of these students will be invited to our Induction days in the summer term.



I couldn't do it without the pastoral managers support

I know where to go when I need support with things other than lessons

The teachers in Hub really try to get to know me and how I work

Are we supporting our students Mental Health and Wellbeing?

Nationally, the mental health and wellbeing of young people has been of key importance. At HGSS we have maintained our high levels of support for all our students.

Counselling and Support Services

We still have the support of two in-school counsellors, as well as external agencies such as MHST (Mental Health Services Team), Aspire Outreach and YOS (Youth Offending Services) Mentoring program. We have also had female empowerment groups that have been run successfully by Wycombe Youth Action, these are a new addition to our pastoral support programme.

MIND Mentors

A select group of Sixth Form students have been trained by the charity MIND as MIND mentors. We were hugely over-subscribed by Year 12s who were hopeful of being a MIND mentor, which was really positive and shows how students wish to support each other. Those who have received this support have found talking about their mental health and well-being, to someone of a similar age, hugely helpful in finding perspective.

HUB

Our Pastoral Team has continued to support students. Students access regular drop-in support to help them during difficult times in their lives. As our pastoral team continues to evolve to meet the changing needs of students, we have been imaginative with the support services we offer, both for students and their parents/carers.

SUSU

'Stand Up, Speak Up' is the schools anti-bullying committee. This group is formed from different year groups in the school. They are in place to build resilience, offer comforting conversations and to build relationships with the students in need of support. They do this through group activities, school projects and supporting with Year 6 Transition.

The Bridge

The Bridge has been a vital provision for students facing barriers to accessing mainstream education. We have worked with over 35 students this academic year, each with varying needs. We aim to provide a calm, positive and safe space so that each student is able to engage with learning at a pace appropriate for them. The flexibility of The Bridge allows us to offer individualised support such as reduced timetables, Teams lessons for those unable to access the school site, one-to-one and small group teaching, accompanying students to lessons, home visits and alternative activities.

Sixth Form Enrichment

This year students have participated in a wide range of activities including dance, Future-skills, motor-vehicle maintenance, yoga, football, cooking on a budget and have taken online courses (MOOCs) to boost their CVs, make themselves more knowledgeable and demonstrate their passion and interest for their chosen pathways when applying for competitive courses and jobs.



Do we enrich our students cultural capital? (LBO/ASH)

School Speakers

At HGSS we have been fortunate enough to host a number of guest speakers this year, with a particular focus on careers that students may wish to go in to. We also had talks from further education providers.

Tutor time

We have had a structured tutor time, that begins with a line up each day. This calm start to our school day allows for us to have strong standards of uniform and equipment as well as being able to safeguard our students by checking on how they are each day. Form time has enabled intervention to take place, quizzes, reading groups and the reintroduction of whole year group assemblies.

Trips

A wide variety of trips have taken place this year, which is hugely exciting after the pause on them due to the pandemic. We have taken students on Duke of Edinburgh (over 160 have participated) and others on a venture award trip in year 7. There have been trips to the theatre which has really helped reengage students in performing arts and helped develop a passion for the theatre. There was also a trip to the Bucks Skills show for the whole of year 10 which was an incredibly valuable experience for them.

Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Duke of Edinburgh has continued to grow from strength to strength. 90 students have taken part in the Bronze award, 35 in the Silver award and 20 in the Gold award. Over 1222 hours have been logged for volunteering with a social value of £5645.

Student leadership

We have a number of leadership opportunities for students within the school. At KS4 all students have had the opportunity to become Senior prefects, Lead prefects and Prefects in year 10 as well as opportunities to join the Student Council.

I enjoy being in SUSU
it allows me to be a
good influence on
other students

I really liked seeing
other jobs and being
able to talk to other
people about it

The Bucks skills show
really helped me see
career opportunities
I had not considered



How are we improving our school environment?

This has been an exceptionally busy year for site improvements at HGSS.

Works for our Expansion Plan, a £10 million investment financed by Buckinghamshire Council, commenced in November 2021 and is now complete. The school has managed effectively with the disruption of these works and is benefitting from the following facilities:

- New 4 Court Sports Hall with changing rooms
- English and Maths Teaching block of 17 classrooms
- New 400 seat Dining Hall and Kitchen
- Fitness Suite with designated changing rooms
- Second Sixth Form Study area with kitchenette
- Staff Room
- New combined hub for our SEN and Pastoral teams
- Three new Science Labs and Prep Room
- Music Suite with three Practice Rooms and a Recording Studio
- Fourth Modern Foreign Languages classroom
- Dance Studio to enhance our excellent Performing Arts facility

In addition, we have created a new alternative provision called 'The Bridge' which benefits from a quiet location away from the busier areas of the school. We are also now in planning for our Staff and Sixth Form Coffee Lounge which will offer a café style food and drink menu and a space to meet and study during the day.

Further to these improvements, we were again successful with a bid to the DfE for Capital work which has allowed for the complete re-roofing of what is now the new Dining Room, amounting to £181,000. We have also successfully secured a bid to re-roof the Art Block – a project costing over £200,000.

These new facilities will truly equip the school with some outstanding amenities for the next decade.



Are we building a sustainable school model?

Senior Leader testimony

"This year, I have been working on an SLT secondment, implementing a coaching programme for the staff at HGSS. It has been a fantastic opportunity to gain experience on the Senior Leadership Team and develop my leadership skills on a whole school project". Mrs Towers, Associate Assistant Headteacher & Head of English.

Middle Leaders testimony

"Instructional Coaching at HGSS has helped to support and develop teachers by identifying strengths and areas for development in teachers practices in a supportive and bespoke forum. The coaching programme shows that the school is committed to supporting staff in their pedagogy and development through different areas of expertise. Staff have bought into the programme and it has been well organised to achieve positive outcomes for all those involved in the programme." Ms Kirkpatrick, Senior Instructional Coach & Head of Religious Studies.

ECT testimony

"I spent at least an hour a week with my very knowledgeable mentor who has helped me to improve in all areas of teaching, help me to reflect and show me good resources and alternative ways to teach top and bottom sets so that I have options to use when teaching. The department and the wider school have also made themselves available for support, which has made me feel confident and part of a big team which has made this ECT year much easier and more enjoyable. The school and department have also provided additional CPD, which helps even more. I am enjoying my time in school and am looking forward to a long career in teaching." Mr Louca, Maths Teacher, ECT.

"I have had a brilliant first year as an ECT. I have had a lot of support from my Mentor and my department as a whole, we regularly get together to discuss ideas and collaborate on lesson plans and strategies which has been amazing. In addition, I have also had the opportunity to branch out and contribute to the wider school this year through assisting running a whole staff CPD session to being the lead on teaching EFL to our new Ukrainian students. The opportunities I have been given to take on extra responsibilities as well as to contribute within my own subject has made me feel incredibly valued and trusted as a member of HGSS." Miss Tempest, MFL Teacher, ECT

ITT testimony

"During my teacher training placement at Holmer Green Senior School I have had weekly meetings with mentor to discuss the week so far and objectives to set for the following. I have had the opportunity to be a part of CPD sessions run every week, whereby we focus upon one pedagogical aspect of teaching. This has afforded opportunities to try out new methods, while at both my main placement school, Holmer Green, and my second placement school. Both my mentor and ITT coordinator have been invaluable with their time, feedback, and support throughout the year. I have had weekly meetings with my ITT coordinator to discuss our teaching that week, our Astra Professional Studies session and what we plan to implement for the following week." Ms Day-Haynes, Art ITT Trainee

Teacher training

In 2021-22 we supported the induction of three main placement trainee teachers and a further four second placement trainees. One of these colleagues is taking up a position in the Maths department, whilst all others have been recruited to other schools.

Outreach (Art; secondments; challenge partners)

We have undertaken a series of Art teaching and learning outreach sessions for schools in Buckinghamshire and beyond. Our Leadership Team have also contributed to the development of other schools through the Challenge Partners Network by visiting other schools, providing guidance for progression and excellence, supporting other schools with leadership support, and Buckinghamshire Council to further build an inclusive SEND culture.

Staff recruitment and retention

We appreciate the value of a consistent staffing team and we have taken action to ensure that we retain our excellent staff. These actions include integrated marking and moderation into directed time, peer coaching, targeted CPD programmes and a regular staff forum for enhanced communication with the Headteacher. Our staff retention rates this year are strong and we have been successful in recruiting across the curriculum to support our ongoing school expansion.



Are we supporting parents and the wider community?

Parents' Association

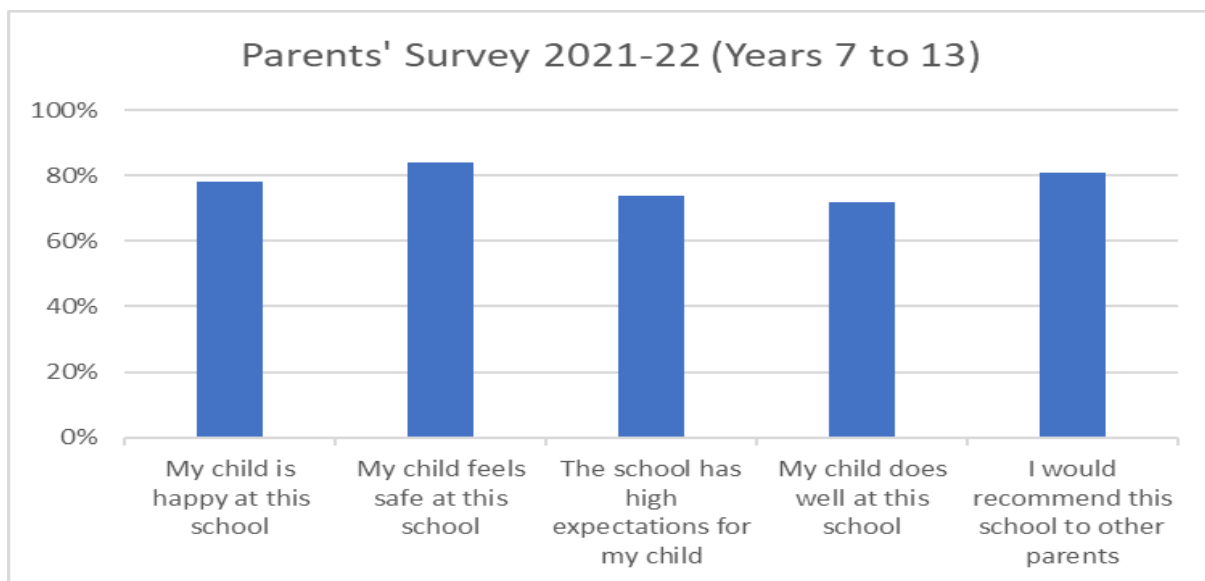
It has been great to see on site events returning to the school calendar.

- Quiz Night for Parents – the return of this previously very popular annual event was held on Friday 1 April. There was an excellent turn out and great efforts made in the table decoration competition. One table went even further by dressing to match their table and even creating a matching desert.
- Raffles were held in the Autumn and Spring terms, and one is further planned for the Summer Term. This seems a popular way for parents to support the school and enjoy the chance of winning some excellent prizes.
- Lucky Numbers has been popular again as have our other armchair funding events.

The Parents' Association have donated £16,000 this year towards our new Fitness Suite equipment for which the school is very grateful.

Thank you to all parents for their support and we hope you can further support the school by attending the Comedy Night planned for Friday 8 July. All monies raised from this event will go towards supporting the continued improvements on site.

Parents' Voice





What are our priorities for 2022-23?

The following priorities are written with the expectation that our society will continue to open up post-pandemic and that our energies can be focused on catching up any lost learning and building the self-confidence of students to make them the best possible versions of themselves in every way.

1. Continue to develop our site and facilities so that students have access to a curriculum and facilities that benefits their learning journey.
2. Make effective use of every learning minute through small group/1:1 tutoring where needed; staff development and the use of routines.
3. Ensuring that all students become more confident speakers through our Oracy programme so that they are able to ultimately thrive in the work environment.
4. Further increasing the number of students taking up the study of a Modern Foreign Language to make them more competitive in a global market.
5. Improving the curriculum experience of students to re-capture any lost learning, post pandemic.
6. Ensure all students have a consistent, basic extra-curricular experience to improve their employability.
7. Further improving the consistency of student learning experience in lessons so that in particular our high prior attaining students, SEND students and vulnerable students make rapid progress.
8. Develop our use of digital technology and 1:1 devices so that students are stretched and supported in their learning.
9. Continuing to invest in the strategic development of all our staff so that their areas excel as a result of their leadership.
10. Ensure we continue to drive the 'Equalities' agenda so that we are a truly inclusive school and all who learn and work within our organisation are treated equally.
11. Ensure our STEAM scholars are well prepared for and secure the destinations in their chosen fields.
12. Students have quality destinations, both at post 16 and post 18, through top apprenticeships, Oxbridge or Russell group universities as a result of a quality educational experience and solid careers support they receive.
13. Further improving engagement with parents of students with SEND needs.
14. Supporting our most vulnerable learners with access to 'The Bridge' provision.