Clerks’ Briefing Paper

Spring Term 2015
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• **Attendance:** Please confirm by email that you are able to attend this meeting. If you are unable to attend, please telephone your apologies as soon as possible to the clerk to governors. Confirmations and apologies to *Mrs AN Example on 01234 567890, email@address*.

• **Preparation:** Governors are reminded to prepare for this meeting by reading the Headteacher’s report, committee minutes and all documentation circulated with this agenda. *Come to the meeting prepared with your questions!*

• **Declarations:** Governors and associate members are reminded that if they have a personal or business interest in any of the agenda items, then it must be declared at the meeting before the agenda item they must withdraw for that part of the agenda.

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<td>Apologies and the governing body’s <strong>acceptance or rejection for all absences.</strong></td>
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<td>Election of Chairman and/or Vice Chairman <em>(where required)</em>.</td>
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<td>Governing body approval of the minutes of the last meeting.</td>
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<td>Matters arising from the minutes <em>(if any)</em>.</td>
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<td>005/2015</td>
<td>Report on membership of the governing body to include any vacancies, elections, appointments and forthcoming expiration of any terms of office. Discuss DfE governing body re-constitution. Complete before end of summer term 2015. Consider any implications.</td>
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| 006/2015 | Reporting on delegated functions, review of pupil data and recommendations to the full governing body:  
  ▪ The Chairman’s report *(including any urgent actions undertaken)*  
  ▪ Committee, link governor and working group reports  
  ▪ The Headteacher’s Report  
  ▪ Data review of attendance, achievement, exclusions, racist and bullying incidents |
| 007/2015 | Update on budget position, including consideration of impact of funding settlement 15/16 |
| 008/2015 | **Key Issues: Spring Term**  
  ▪ Completion and approval of 3 year budget plans for submission to the LA  
  ▪ Completion and approval of annual SFVS proforma for submission to the LA.  
  ▪ Discussion and approval of Service Level Agreement purchase for 2015/16.  
  ▪ Consider the implications in terms of the school’s policy and practice of the articles featured in the spring term newsletter. |
| 012/2015 | Review and update School Development Plan ensuring it links to budget priorities. |
| 013/2015 | Review and/or update of the school’s self-evaluation document |
| 014/2015 | School policies to be reviewed and updated this term. |
| 015/2015 | Correspondence, information and literature received. |
| 016/2015 | Planning and reporting back on governors visits to school and training. |
| 017/2015 | Any items for discussion deemed ‘Confidential’.' |

The following is a list of documents circulated with this agenda ......
Department for Education – Consultations

Revisions to working together to safeguard children

The three proposed changes being consulted on are:
• the referral of allegations against those who work with children;
• notifiable incidents involving the care of a child; and
• the definition of serious harm for the purposes of serious case reviews.

The DfE are proposing to amend Working Together to state that referrals relating to both concerns about a child and allegations against those who work with children should be dealt with in a coordinated manner, via a single point of contact. The rationale behind the change is to simplify referral routes by creating a single entry point. There has been a suggestion that the local authority designated officer (LADO) role causes confusion amongst some professionals about what to refer and to whom. The DfE believe it is for the local authority, with its partners, to determine how it organises its internal systems to investigate allegations against a person and harm to a child. The expected impact of this change will be to reduce the risk that allegations against those who work with children are managed in isolation from any action necessary to address welfare concerns relating to the child or children concerned. The DfE are not proposing that the LADO role be disbanded, but rather that it links more closely to the front door of children’s social care. The existing LADO role could be retained or divided between a team of officers, beyond the single point of contact. It is also proposed that such an officer or officers should be qualified social workers in order that they have the necessary training and expertise to be able to fulfil this role effectively.

Closes: 3 February 2015


Consultation on school governance regulations (Local authority maintained schools)

The Department for Education is carrying out a relatively short consultation on changes to some sets of regulations and some provisions in existing regulations. Changes to sets of regulations are largely technical to bring regulations about shadow governing bodies and transition from Interim Executive Boards in line with the 2012 Constitution Regulations. These will be of particular interest to local authorities and clerks to governors.

The other changes proposed are:

• to require governing bodies to publish the names and categories of all governors on their websites
• for governing bodies to be required to publish their register of interests
• to amend regulations so as to give governing bodies power to determine the length of term for governors at the time of appointment between 1-4 years (e.g. it would be possible for different co-opted governors on the governing body to have different terms of office)
a technical change to make allowances for associate members to sit on panels created under the school staffing regulations – currently the regulations specifically refer to governors and, of course, associate members are not governors.

The consultation document can be found on the NGA website. If have any comments on the proposals please send them to Gillian Allcroft by Monday 2 February 2015.

**Department for Education – News**

**Governors handbook – Revised January 2015**

The DfE have updated the Governors Handbook. Conflicts of Interests remain the hot topic for ALL schools and now the DfE urge ALL schools to post a list of Governor interests on the school website.

This advice is for governing bodies in maintained schools, academies and free schools.

The changes include:

- updated section on admissions to reflect the new Admissions Code
- an expanded section on conflicts of interest and conflict of loyalty
- a reference to the roadmap for reconstitution
- more information on induction training and ensuring continuous development of governors
- a reference to the Framework for Governance
- a reference to NGA’s Chair’s Handbook
- new content on the governance structures of academies
- a reorganised section on teachers and support staff

The ‘Statutory policies for schools’ page outlines the policies and other documents school governing bodies are legally required to hold.

Governing bodies, or proprietors of academies and independent schools are required to hold each of these policies and other documents, as outlined, however:

- the drafting of school policies can be delegated to any member of school staff;
- there is no requirement for all policies to be reviewed annually; and
- not all policies need to be signed off by the full governing body.

This document also covers how often each policy must be reviewed and shows the level of approval required, where this is prescribed in regulations.

The January 2015 revisions can be found in annex A of the handbook.

School food in England

This advice from DfE is for governing bodies of:

- all local authority maintained schools
- pupil referral units
- academies that opened prior to 2010
- academies and free schools with agreed funding from June 2014
- non-maintained special schools

This advice outlines the requirements to provide food to registered pupils. It also includes information on the School Food Plan, the provision of milk and the free fruit and vegetables scheme.

Governing boards should check with their senior leadership team that the new standards are being implemented in their school. Even if your academy is not automatically covered by the standards, the governing board can insist that food providing in school meets the standards.

A summary of the standards and a practical guide are available from the School Food Plan website.


DfE launches £3.5 million ‘character education grant’

Applications for the Department’s scheme to fund the development of projects in character education opened on Monday January 12 2015. Character education is the development of character traits such as resilience, motivation and confidence, which can underpin a child’s success in education and also prepare them for the challenges of later life.

All schools, colleges and not-for-profit organisations are able to apply for funding. They must provide evidence of the success of the character education that they provide. Details of the criteria that the DfE are looking for can be found on their website. The application form and further information about the applications process can be found here. Applications must be submitted by 6th of February, with the expectation that grants will be awarded to successful organisations by the end of March. The grants will have a value of between £50,000 and £750,000.

New guidance for exclusions

The Department for Education has revised statutory exclusions guidance. While there has been no legislative change, the update provides more explicit guidance on the role of governors. The new guidance takes effect from 5 January 2015. The new guidance provides greater clarity in defining school governors’ role in exclusions and explaining the processes that they should follow. Key changes include the separation of the steps that governors must take in preparing for a review and what they must consider during the review itself. There is also more information about governing bodies’ options when directing or recommending to review their decision by an independent
review panel. It also outlines the process that occurs where there is an accusation of discrimination directed towards the panel.

As well as explaining the statutory requirements, the guidance highlights areas of good practice, encouraging schools to establish a strategy for reintegrating pupils who have been on a fixed-period exclusion into the school.

As this is statutory guidance, governors must have regard to it in dealing with exclusions. If you have a professional clerk then s/he will be able to advise you of what is required should your governing board have to deal with an exclusion.


**Advice on promoting British values in schools published**

The Department of Education has published advice on promoting British values as part of SMSC (social, moral, spiritual and cultural education) with the aim to ensure that young people leave schools prepared for life in modern Britain. As this is an important issue for governors.

The advice aimed at both independent and state maintained schools has been issued to help schools understand their responsibilities in this area. The values which were first set out by the government in the ‘Prevent’ strategy in 2011 are: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The DfE has also produced departmental advice for independent schools on meeting the new requirements for Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural education set out in the Independent School Standards. This applies to academies and independent schools.

As a result of an amendment to the Education Regulations 2012, brought in on 29 September 2014, Trustees need to be aware that their schools must now “actively promote” British values. In addition, all schools should have a clear strategy for embedding these values and show how their work with pupils has been effective in doing so. Included in the advice are examples of the actions schools can take. The guidance reminds schools that meeting requirements for collective worship, establishing a strong school ethos supported by effective relationships throughout the school, and providing relevant activities beyond the classroom are all ways of ensuring pupils’ SMSC development.

Ofsted and the independent inspectorates also take the work of schools in this area into account during inspections.

The full advice from the Department for Education for academies and maintained schools:

New National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers

The Secretary of State for Education, Nicky Morgan, launched new National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers on 19 January. The non-statutory guidance is designed to help governing boards, headteachers and aspiring headteachers by:

- shaping headteachers’ own practice and professional development, within and beyond the school
- informing the appraisal of headteacher
- supporting the recruitment and appointment of headteachers
- providing a framework for training middle and senior leaders, aspiring to headship.

The departmental guidance is intended to: “inspire public confidence in headteachers, raise aspirations, secure high academic standards in the nation’s schools, and empower the teaching profession.”

The new Standards replace the 2004 National Standards for Headteachers document.

Download a copy of the guidance: http://www.nga.org.uk/getattachment/12c56ccb-da34-456a-b94b-09d5090c4946/National_Standards_of_Excellence_for_Headteachers.pdf.aspx

Spring term 2015 updated information to help headteachers, principals and governor’s plan for the academic year ahead

Timelines of forthcoming mandatory legal requirements to be implemented to help headteachers, principals and governor’s plan for the forthcoming academic year and beyond.

Schools in receipt of the primary PE and sport premium must publish information online about their use of the funding. Schools must publish the amount of grant received, how they spent it (or will spend it) and the impact on pupils’ PE (physical education) and sport participation and attainment. Schools should also consider how the funding is helping to ensure pupils develop healthy lifestyles.

Other useful dates are included in separate information timelines.

Link to both maintained and academy school timelines: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mandatory-and-useful-timelines-information-for-schools
Myths and facts for schools

This document addresses some common misconceptions about the activities schools are required to undertake. It seeks to tackle both recurring myths and new myths on changes happening during the 2014 to 2015 academic year.


National College

Chairs Leadership course

Unit 1 Wednesday 11th March 2015 09:30 – 15:30
Unit 2 Tuesday 5th May 2015 09:30 – 15:30
Unit 3 Thursday 2nd July 2015 09:30 – 15:30

Venue:
The John Locke Academy, Bader Way, Uxbridge UB10 OFW
Course code: 14T/10045

Bookings:
Online: www.babcock-education.co.uk/4Scpd
Search by course code: 14T/10045
Email: course.bookings@babcockinternational.com
Call: 0800 073 4444 ext. 835008

New publication into the effectiveness of National Leaders of Governance

The National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) has published a report of a survey into the benefits and effectiveness of National Leaders of Governance (NLGs). The data was analysed by BMG research.

NLGs are experienced chairs of governors who support chairs in other schools. The initiative began in 2012 and is managed by the NCTL.

The study was based on feedback from NLGs on 267 deployments and a small sample of feedback from 79 chairs or headteachers who had been supported by an NLG.

Key findings:

- The most common purpose of deployment was to provide advice/support/mentoring to a chair (43%), followed by reviewing/developing governance (25%), or to address low Ofsted judgements (20%)
- 85% of chairs/headteachers felt that the NLG support met their needs
Common areas of impact highlighted by NLGs were: greater confidence, increased awareness of roles and responsibilities, the school performance or Ofsted rating, and better challenge to the headteacher/senior leadership team (SLT)

Obstacles identified by NLGs included lack of awareness or understanding of role, reluctance to change, poor communication, and differences with the head/SLT

Issues identified by schools were the importance of NLGs being matched to schools on the basis of their experience or knowledge. Read the full report:


Please call governor support should require a NLG to work with your governing body.

National Governors Association

Updated APPG Twenty Questions for the governing board

The second edition of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Governance and Leadership (Twenty key questions for the governing board to ask itself) is now available.

These questions have been incorporated into a new guide to strategic planning for school governors and trustees, the Framework for School Governance published by NGA and the Wellcome Trust.

BBC

TV documentary examines life for pupils after exclusion

Jess is a screaming whirlwind of anger, frustration and aggression. Her arms fly. Her hair flies. “Let go of me! Let go of me!” she yells. “Permanently exclude me! I don’t care!”

Jess is one of the students featured in Excluded: kicked out of school, a three-part documentary that begins on Tuesday 20 January, on BBC3 at 9.00pm. It is a fly-on-the-wall observation of a year inside Bridge AP Academy, an alternative-provision school in London for pupils who have been excluded from mainstream education.

Ofsted

The January 2015 handbook now forms the single key resource for the inspection of schools under section 5, except for the additional detailed guidance on safeguarding provided in Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies. The following extract needs to be noted by governing bodies:

It is the school’s responsibility to ensure that all the staff they employ in specified early or later years childcare have had the appropriate checks. This includes ensuring that staff working in early and later years settings are suitable to do so. The DfE issued new advice for schools in October 2014, in relation to the ‘disqualification by association’ of teachers and other school staff working
in early or later years provision, or those who are directly concerned with the management of such provision. A person is automatically disqualified if they live in the same household as another person who is disqualified or in a household where a disqualified person is employed. The categories of staff in nursery, primary or secondary school settings covered by regulations include staff who:

- work in the early years provision (including teaching staff and support staff working in school nursery and reception classes)
- work in later years provision for children who have not reached the age of eight, including before-school settings such as breakfast clubs and after-school provision
- are directly concerned with the management of such early or later years provision.

A disqualified person may apply to Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector for a waiver of disqualification for most grounds of disqualification. Ofsted has published a factsheet setting out how to make a waiver application, which is available from the Ofsted website.

Inspectors are not expected to make enquiries as to whether anybody on a school’s staff is disqualified. However, inspectors should ask what steps the school is taking to ensure that it knows that no existing or new staff working in the early or later years, or concerned with the management of such provision, are disqualified. Inspectors should ascertain what action the school has taken in light of any relevant disqualification known to the school.

To knowingly employ a disqualified person constitutes an offence. Should an inspector become aware that a member of the school staff is or may be disqualified, the matter must be considered when making the judgement on leadership and management.

Extract from the section on governors keys responsibilities:

Inspectors should consider whether governors:

- carry out their statutory duties, such as safeguarding, and understand the boundaries of their role as governors
- ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics) and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain
- ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, including long-term planning (for example, succession)
- contribute to the school’s self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching, and reviewing the impact of their own work
- understand and take sufficient account of pupil data, particularly their understanding and use of the school data dashboard
- assure themselves of the rigour of the assessment process
- are aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups
- provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils’ achievement and pupils’ behaviour and safety,
including by using the data dashboard, other progress data, examination outcomes and test results; or whether they hinder school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns or developing their own skills

- use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
- ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- are providing support for an effective headteacher
- monitor performance management systems and understand how the school makes decisions about teachers’ salary progression, including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- engage with key stakeholders
- are transparent and accountable, including in terms of recruitment of staff, governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers.

Download a copy of the handbook: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook

**Ofsted reported to be piloting “double inspections”**

Ofsted has announced that it will pilot “double inspections” of schools, in which a school would receive visits from two separate inspectors on the same day, who would then cross-check their judgements to ensure reliability.

An Ofsted spokeswoman said: “To test the reliability of the new short inspections, we conducted consultative trials in schools in the autumn term. Feedback was positive and we will carry out pilots to test the shorter inspections across a range of schools in the spring term. Reliability of the short inspection methodology will be tested during the pilots by two [HMIs] independently inspecting the same school on the same day and comparing the judgements.”

**Help us help you**

**A New Year reminder**

Although August 31st may seem a long way off, all maintained schools need to reconstitute their instrument of government. Any queries, please give us a call.

Please could you let Melanie have your updated governing body membership and their terms of office.
London Borough of Hillingdon

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

From 26th January 2015, Janice Altenor will be seconded to the role of Service Manager for Children’s Social work teams. This is an interim arrangement for 4 months in the first instance.

There is a recruitment process being undertaken to backfill the LADO position. The local authority will inform schools once the interim appointment has been made.

Andrea Nixon will continue to provide advice and support in her role as the Designated Child Protection Lead for Education, and will be available to respond to any LADO queries during the transition period.

Hillingdon Governors Termly Meeting

26 February 2015, Starts at 6.30pm in committee room 5 at the Civic Centre.

Contact the Governor Support Service

Ron Fowler Governor Support Manager
Melanie Wright Governor Programme Manager

General helpline 01895 717321
Governor Support Manager / out of hours support 07881 238127
Email us at: Office@Governor.Support
Notes