

# Governors' Update

## Autumn Term 1 2022

School Governor Service, Education and Learning, Department of Children's Services, Margaret McMillan Tower, Prince's Way, Bradford BD1 1NN

[Tel: 01274 439400](tel:01274439400) [e-mail: school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk)

### In Memory of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

As the funeral of Her Majesty draws nearer the School Governor Service Team wishes to express their sorrow for her loss. This is a difficult time for many, including governors, school staff and pupils and the team hopes that everything that is done by your schools to mark this occasion and to support your communities helps all to deal with their sadness and to remember with fondness her contribution throughout our lives.

### Information on the Update

This is the first update for the Autumn Term 2022. It has been produced to remind governors of specific areas on which governors will need to have a focus as soon as possible in their meetings.

### Reminder -Termly Briefing for Governors

The autumn term briefing will be held virtually on 11 October from 6.30pm -7.45pm. These sessions always look at topics of current interest for governors and gives the opportunity for governors to ask questions and clarify any concerns.

If you wish to attend a briefing then please use the [Skills4Bradford](https://www.skills4bradford.gov.uk) website to book a place or email [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk) . Attendance is free to any governor who is part of the Chairs and Governors Development Group or whose school subscribes to advice and guidance. It costs £35 for other governors.

### Training

The Governor Training Programme for the whole of the Autumn Term 2022 is now available. A copy of the brochure giving details of the courses will be available shortly or you can look on the [Skills4Bradford](https://www.skills4bradford.gov.uk) website to find more details.

Please email [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk) if you have any ideas for courses you would like to see provided or if you would like further information on the Level 6 Course.

### Some highlights for this term include: -

A new set of sessions for the **Transcend Level 6 Award in Effective School Governance 4.30-pm – 6.30pm**, starts on 28 September (This is the first of 7 sessions over the academic year). Governors can use this course to inform their practice and, if they wish, can also submit work based on their governance role over the year which leads to the Level 6 qualification.

**Academies Overview – 4.30-6.30, 29 September**

Increasing numbers of governors are now part of the academy system and this course gives information on the requirements on them that are specific to academy governance.

**Effective Financial Governance – 5.30pm -7.30pm, 4 October**

In the current economic situation, it is important that all governors understand their role in agreeing budgets and monitoring spending. This course will ensure that this will be the case.

**Exclusions – 4.30pm – 6.30pm, 6 October**

Governors have an important role to play when it becomes necessary to exclude a pupil or when suspensions of a particular pupil climb above a certain level in one term. Governors performing this role need to understand their responsibilities and should be aware that their decision could be overturned on appeal if it is not performed in accordance with the statutory guidance.

**Head Teacher's Performance Management – 4.30pm - 6.30pm, 13 October**

Effective performance management of the headteacher is a very important part of the governor role. This session, led by one of the Education Advisors, looks in detail at this duty.

Then two sessions for Chairs

**Chairing the Board Part 1 – 5.00pm – 7.30pm, 19 October (Part 2 on 30 November)**

This course looks at how to be an effective chair. It will be of interest to all those new to the role or those who wish to be reminded of their duties.

In addition there is a **Face to Face session – Heads and Chairs working together 9.30am – 1.15pm (for Heads and Chairs to attend together), 9 November**

During this session there will be opportunities for Heads and Chairs to consider different aspects of the way in which they will work together for the benefit of their school while retaining the different priorities of their roles. It will be helpful for any schools with a new headteacher or chair as it will consider the expectations for each role. There will be time during the session for individual discussions.

**Early Years – 4.30pm – 6.30pm, 14 November**

Recent events have impacted on within Early Years settings at the same time that new systems have been introduced. This training will explain those systems and the requirements for governor planning and monitoring.

## Updates from the Department for Education (DfE)

**Changes to Statutory Policies****Guidance on what schools must publish online**

Updated guidance has been released for both maintained schools and academies, this guidance came into effect on 5 September. It states that secondary settings need to publish their exam results for 2021-22 but that primary schools do not need to publish their KS2 results for 2021-22 and do need to keep the 2018-19 results on their website.

**Understanding Your Data: A Guide for school governors and academy trustees**

An updated version of this guidance has been issued on 1 September explaining the areas that should be focussed on by governors and the areas that should be questioned. This document looks at all the varieties of data that governors need to monitor, not just pupil progress data, and is a useful document for governors when looking at results, the curriculum, spending and estate management. It includes numerous links to useful documents on each topic.

## School Uniform

Governors should already have considered the need to make uniform affordable for families in order to be compliant with the statutory guidance by September 2022. All schools have to be fully compliant with the guidance by summer 2023 unless they are still tied into a contract with a uniform supplier. It is the duty of governing boards to ensure that schools are considering the requirements when preparing their uniform policy.

## Updates from the Local Authority

### Urgent Information re Finances

The School Funding Team has issued an update on their BSO page explaining that, for 2023/4, the government has reduced the amount to be given to schools which will now be very much lower than schools were forecasting.

‘we wish to immediately highlight the following for mainstream primary and secondary schools that are currently funded on either the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) or on the DfE's Minimum Levels of Funding per pupil (MFLs). Schools will be able to identify this from their S251 Budget Statements. Most maintained schools that are currently funded on the MFG will be estimating that the MFG will continue at 1.5% in 2023/24 i.e. 2022/23 formula funding per pupil overall will increase by 1.5% in 2023/24. The DfE has confirmed however, that the maximum % that the MFG can be set at in 2023/24 is 0.5% i.e. 2022/23 formula funding per pupil overall, for schools that are on the MFG, will increase by a maximum 0.5%, not by 1.5%, in 2023/24. Similarly, most maintained schools that are currently funded on the MFLs (currently £4,265 primary and £5,525 secondary) will be estimating that their funding per pupil will increase by 2.0% in 2023/24. The DfE has confirmed however, that the MFLs, excluding the transfer of the Supplementary Grant, are increasing only by 0.5% in 2023/24 i.e. 2022/23 formula funding per pupil for schools that are on the MFLs will increase by 0.5% overall, not by 2.0%, in 2023/24. This tightening by the DfE of the MFG and the MFLs will have budget implications for maintained schools, which schools should now immediately begin to consider as they review their 3 year budget forecasts. Please contact School Funding Team if you wish to discuss this further.’

Teachers pay awards- SFT advice ‘We strongly recommend that all maintained schools, alongside their quarter 2 budget monitoring reports, present to their governing boards in October an updated 3 year budget forecast, which includes the new costs of the pay awards. It is likely that schools will need to revisit their budget forecasts and spending plans’

Further Updates for staff are posted on the website. Considering the impact of proposed pay awards and the increased cost of services this represents an additional concern for schools.

## Updates from Ofsted

### The Importance of Reading

On 5 September Amanda Spielman wrote about her concerns for children struggling to read when they start secondary school. This year's SATS tests showed that nearly 175,000 pupils did not meet the expected standard in reading.

‘That means around a quarter of all Year 7s still have a reading age of below 11.

This really matters. Children who cannot read well find it difficult to keep up in secondary school.

Reading is an essential part of almost every subject. How can children learn history or geography if they can't get to grips with textbooks or worksheets? How can they do well in another language when they haven't fully grasped their own?

We know that children who struggle can quickly switch off in lessons. That can lead to disruptive behaviour that affects their classmates too. And children who don't read well at the start of secondary school are far less likely to do well at English and maths GCSEs.

The repercussions for weak readers continue after they leave school. Everyday tasks like understanding household bills, reading instructions on medicines, or completing job applications are much harder for them.

That's why we put so much emphasis on reading when we inspect schools. And it's why I want to draw attention to children in secondary school: the Year 7s and Year 8s whose disrupted education means they are still catching up on skills they should have learnt at primary school.

Many of these children still have gaps in the phonic knowledge that is the foundation of fluent reading. Phonics teaching is well-established in primary schools but is not necessarily expected of secondary school teachers. These children need extra teaching so they can read accurately and fluently, and must be taught in a way that doesn't patronise them or knock their confidence.

We need to pay attention to older children in primary school too, so they don't start behind next year. Parents can play their part, by reading to and hearing their children read out loud throughout primary school – not just when they're little. Parents can pick up if their children are pronouncing words correctly, and can ask questions about what they've just read, to check they understood the story. It's great when children read for pleasure, but they will only really enjoy reading by themselves when it stops being a laborious effort.

At the start of a new school year, there are always debates about the future of education. But let's not forget the basics. Children need to be able to read so that they don't get left behind. “

### **Afterword**

The School Governor Service team are available to support governing boards of all types with website checks, policy checks, bespoke training for your governing board or Trust and additional support to assist you in ensuring that the work you do to support schools is as effective as possible. The team are happy to deliver bespoke sessions either virtually or face to face at a time to suit your governing board. Please get in touch to discuss any support you would wish to arrange, using the School Governor Service email address [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk)

A further update will be issued around the half term break and will contain details of any changes of which governors need to be aware.