

# Governors' Monthly Update

## June 2019

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Welcome to the tenth edition of the **Governors' Monthly Update** which is the final one for this academic year. The next edition will be sent out towards the end of August to ensure it contains all the relevant information for the beginning of the autumn term.

### School News

Congratulations to all at Barkerend Primary Leadership Academy for their outstanding Ofsted judgement.

### Request for updates

The School Governor Service (SGS) are still hearing that governors are not receiving training information and these updates directly. Unfortunately, if your school is not currently a subscriber to any of our services then we may not receive changes to governor information such as amendments to email addresses. If you have not received this document directly please email your details to [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk) and the team will update our records. If you have any concerns about Data Protection please be assured that all information is kept securely in accordance with legislation. The team will provide the Council's privacy notice on request.

### Governor Service Courses in June and July

#### **Effective Financial Governance - On Wednesday 12 June, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

- Strategic management of schools is dependent on effective financial planning. This course will
- Explain the role of governors who serve on a finance committee (or its equivalent).
  - Consider the governor's role setting the annual budget, agreeing financial priorities,
  - medium term financial planning, monitoring expenditure against the budget,
  - variations to spending plans including virements, financial systems and procedures including delegation of authority and benchmarking

## **Construction Project Training Workshop - On Thursday 13 June, 6.00-8.30pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

Education Client Services would like to invite you to a **free** Construction Project Training Workshop. Building projects are risky, expensive and potentially dangerous. Unusually, you can be found personally liable and at risk of fines/prison sentences.

The workshop will provide information on:

- Health & Safety Law, Planning and Building Control
- Expectations of the HSE (Health & Safety Executive)
- Who is Accountable/Liable for Accidents/Incidents
- Construction Project Procurement and Financing
- How to Plan, Manage and Control Construction Projects

The aim of the workshop is to:

- Make you aware of the risks and issues associated with construction projects
  - Make you aware of your school's financial, legal and H&S obligations
  - Protect you, your staff, students and site visitors
  - Help you avoid taking unnecessary risks
  - Help you to avoid making expensive mistakes
  - Sign posting you to the right experts and professionals
  - Consider how building projects can improve educational outcomes
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## **Good Governance: The Characteristics of an Effective Governor, on Monday 17 June 1.00 – 3.00pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

Although all Governors are different there are certain practices and systems that are used by governors who are very effective in their role. This course will assist governors by explaining ways in which they can improve their practice for the benefit of their governing board.

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## **Cyber Bullying: Awareness Raising and Online Protection, On Tuesday 18 June 6.00-8.00pm at Shipley Police Station**

West Yorkshire Police are offering this specifically designed workshop to improve the awareness of e-safety for governors. As the sessions are updated to reflect the current risks and issues Governors will learn more about the latest ways in which on-line social media is being misused and how children can both be drawn into this misuse and put at risk by other users. This will enable them to look at the systems and policies used by their schools with greater knowledge and understanding.

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## **Preparing for the Chair (Part 1)**

### **On Thursday 20 June 4.30-6.30pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

An Effective Chair is responsible for leading the work of the Governing Board including maintaining a focus on the strategic direction of the school.

**Session 1:** The Role of the Chair in Leading the Governing Body in meetings and building an effective team.

**Session 2:** Developing the Governing Body and Effective Practice in order to drive School Improvement.

**Session 3:** A Shared Vision; Succession Planning; Strategic decision making and Reflection

**These sessions can be booked individually or as a single package. Sessions 2 and 3 are in the autumn term – please see the training programme for more details.**

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### **Monitoring Vulnerable Cohorts**

**On Tuesday 25 June, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

Governors have a specific responsibility to ensure that the provision, progress and support for the vulnerable groups within their school enable those children to make the best possible progress.

The aim is to ensure that each child makes the progress that a child with their capacity would make if they did not fall into a vulnerable group.

In order to achieve this, schools need to ensure that the provision is targeted to meet the needs of those children and that the interventions put in place are effective.

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### **Managing Grants and Funds**

**On Wednesday 26 June, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

As a result of the recent increases in costs many schools are now looking to raise additional funding

This session will assist governors in:-

- considering ways to generate income,
  - looking at funding applications and
  - effectively monitoring the use of any funds raised.
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### **Headteacher Performance Management**

**On Thursday 27 June, 6.00-8.00pm at Eastwood Community Primary**

**OR**

**Tuesday 2 July, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

The Effective Performance Management of the Headteacher is one of the most important roles for Governors in ensuring the proper management of the school and the outcomes for the children.

Appraisal for other staff should be linked to this process and the rigorous process followed should enable governors to ensure that they are performing their role of holding the Headteacher to account

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### **Chairs' Updates and Network Meeting**

**On Wednesday 3 July, 6.30-8.30pm at Eastwood Community Primary**

**OR**

**On Monday 8 July, 6.30-8.30pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

These sessions have been extended to 2 hours to give Chairs and/or Vice Chairs the opportunity to meet together to discuss topics of interest to governing boards which either have arisen or are going to arise over the next term. Governors are encouraged to request particular topics are raised for discussion. These sessions will aim to share good practice in leading Governing Boards.

They will continue to include updates but may also have an overarching theme. The aim is to enable Chairs to consider together items which may have an impact on their schools.

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### **Introduction to Governance on Friday 5 July, 9.30am-3.00pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

This course aims to give you, as a newly appointed governor/trustee (including headteachers, staff governors and associate members), the level of knowledge of governance that you need to effectively support your school in raising standards. . It provides:

- An overview of school governance, your role as a governor, the responsibilities and expectations placed on you, and the way in which you should work with the headteacher and school leadership team
  - Knowledge and understanding of governors' responsibilities
  - A briefing on national and local educational issues and their impact on governing boards
  - Processes to assist you in using your new skills and knowledge for the benefit of pupils.
  - An opportunity to meet and exchange views with other recently appointed governors, with discussion and group work in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.
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### **Safeguarding**

**On Friday 5 July, 10am-12noon at Margaret McMillan Tower**

This course will enable governors to be aware of their role in monitoring the effectiveness of schools in keeping children safe from harm and will take account of the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

The discussion and information provided will assist governors in understanding the different areas of concern and ensure that these are addressed effectively by the systems and practices of their school and will explain the remit of the Named Governor.

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### **Improving Governance: Governing in Challenging Circumstances**

**On Tuesday 9 July, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

Most schools have periods when their circumstances become more challenging, whether from a change in results, cohort or staffing or because of the impact of major works. This course looks at the ways in which these challenges can be effectively managed and the role of the Governing Board throughout the process.

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### **Data: Understanding and Monitoring Progress Data**

**On Wednesday 10 July, 12.30-2.30pm at**

**Margaret McMillan Tower**

Governors are responsible for:-

**'Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils'** *Governance Handbook*

In order to do this effectively governors need to be able to understand the data on pupil performance provided by the school and to access the data available from other sources about their school and others, both locally and nationally.

This course will:-

- Show governors where to access information about their school and what this data means
  - Explain the ways in which data is presented
  - Give governors guidance on accessing national outcomes for comparison
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### **New Ofsted Framework**

**On Thursday 11 July, 4.30-6.30pm at Eastwood Community Primary**

Governors have a specific responsibility to ensure that the provision, progress and support for the vulnerable groups within their school enable those children to make the best possible progress.

The aim is to ensure that each child makes the progress that a child with their capacity would make if they did not fall into a vulnerable group.

In order to achieve this, schools need to ensure that the provision is targeted to meet the needs of those children and that the interventions put in place are effective. It will also include information on preparing for Ofsted.

## Social Mobility Report

The Social Mobility Commission has published a report, available [here](#), revealing that the school attainment and income gap between those that are well-off and those that are not has remained stagnant for the last four years.

Looking specifically at education, the report demonstrates how the gap between those from disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged backgrounds widens as pupils go through school. In summary, the report outlines that:

- by the age of five, 26% of pupils from a non-disadvantaged background, compared to 43% of pupils from a disadvantaged background, do not achieve “a good level of development”
- by the end of year one, there is a 14 percentage point phonics gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils
- by the end of year six, only 46% of disadvantaged pupils reach the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to 68% of non-disadvantaged pupils
- at A-level, only 16% of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSMs) achieve two or more A-levels compared to 39% of their peers

The report made a number of recommendations to government to address the disparities between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, including extending provision for free childcare and introducing pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils in further education.

**Those governing are reminded that understanding the needs and requirements of disadvantaged pupils is key for effective governance and that monitoring the provision for disadvantaged pupils is critical.**

## Timpson Review Findings

The Department for Education has agreed in principle to the 30 recommendations of the Timpson Review of School Exclusion. The full report, available [here](#) is based on extensive consultation with parents, schools and LAs and highlights the pupil and school characteristics which are associated with greater risk of exclusion.

- 78% of pupils who are permanently excluded have special educational needs of disabilities (SEND), are classified as in need, or are eligible to receive free school meals;
- 11% of permanently excluded pupils have all of these characteristics.

Also identified are four fundamental drivers of policies and practices around exclusions in schools, including:

- differences in leadership, standards of behaviour and culture in schools
- lack of consistency around the management of poor behaviour
- few incentives for schools to take responsibility for pupils at risk of being excluded
- a lack of safeguards to “protect children against informal exclusion and ... off-rolling”

The review bolsters understanding of current practice, underlining the considerable variation in how effectively exclusions are used. It concluded that action is required to ensure that permanent exclusions are used appropriately.

## PE and Sports Premium Funding

The Department for Education has confirmed that funding for the PE and Sports Premium will continue for the academic year 2019/20.

The funding will remain at the same level of £320 million but the allocations have yet to be announced. It can be used to fund sporting or PE activities beyond what the school already offers, and is meant to allow schools to put in place sustainable improvements to their PE and sport provision. Governors need to look at ways in which these improvements can be embedded within the school's provision to ensure that the impact of the funding is continued, even if the funding were to stop.

## School Break Times

New research by the Institute of Education at University College London has identified that primary school pupils in England now receive, on average, 45 minutes less break time per week than pupils in 1995. Furthermore, the research also identified that secondary school pupils have over an hour less break time than pupils in 1995.

Drawing upon data from over 1,000 schools spanning nearly 25 years, the researchers also found that school break and lunch time have become more important in terms of face-to-face socialisation, with children now less likely to socialise with their peers outside of school compared to two decades ago.

According to the Department for Education, in maintained schools "the length of each session, break and the school day is determined by the school's governing body". As such, governors should consult with their headteacher, ensuring that there is an appropriate balance between break times and learning, and that pupils get adequate time to socialise with their peers, eat their lunch and engage in physical activity. Academy trusts should consult their funding agreement for details on who determines the length of break times.

## New Scheme for Summer Holiday Clubs

The Department for Education have announced a scheme, more details [here](#), which will provide free meals and activities (such as sports, play sessions and cooking classes) for around 50,000 of the most disadvantaged children. For some of the activities, such as healthy cooking classes, parents will also be welcome to participate. The funding for this scheme will be spread between 11 co-ordinators across England, including local authorities and national charities. The DfE hope that this will improve the government's knowledge of how children eligible for free school meals (FSMs) can be best supported during the school holidays.

In Bradford the co-ordinator awarded the funding is 'Transforming Lives for Good' their website is <https://www.tlg.org.uk/about-us> if schools wish to consider accessing their support.

## Education Endowment Fund Report on Managing Behaviour

This [report](#), published on 7 June, makes 6 recommendations on the improvement of behaviour in schools

It gives practical examples of programmes and approaches to support leaders in making better informed decisions based on the best available evidence.

Governors are recommended to consider the recommendations when looking at any behaviour issues in school. It could also be helpful to question the evidence available for the quality of approaches used within their school.

## Child Poverty Action Group Study into the Costs of Education

The [Child Poverty Action Group](#) has published the results of a small-scale, local study into the costs of education in Oxford secondary schools, focusing on year seven pupils. The report is based on surveys of parents and concluded that “the idea of a free education... is far from the reality” with parents facing significant costs, and many struggling to meet them.

Particular costs included:

- School uniform, with over 25% of respondents spending over £100 per year.
- Shoes, with over one third of respondents (36%) spending more than £50 per year.
- PE kit, with 72% of respondents spending between £25 and £75.
- School meals, with ten of the survey's 62 respondents who did not qualify for free school meals reporting that they found it difficult to meet these costs.
- Transport costs amounting to over £130 per term for some parents.
- School trips, with nearly half of respondents (39%) stating that they struggled to afford them.
- An array of extras which were recommended for particular subjects, such as revision books, maths equipment and cooking ingredients.

The report concluded that many parents were making sacrifices to ensure that their children did not miss out on opportunities. Many parents missed out on statutory support due to their incomes, but still found it difficult to meet all of the costs associated with their children's education. The report therefore suggested that “eligibility criteria are inadequate and lack... universality or flexibility.” Finally, the report highlighted that parents lack information about available support, and argued that “an underlying reason for these costs is that schools are seriously underfunded.”

The report made a series of recommendation. It argued for automatic registration of eligible pupils for free school meals, and therefore the pupil premium, for an increase in school funding per pupil in real terms, and for the protection of pupil premium funding.

## Sixth Form Funding Hit and Reduction in Numbers of 6<sup>th</sup> Forms

[A study by the Education Policy Institute](#) (EPI) has found that funding for 16-19 provisions has dropped at twice the rate as overall school budgets. Between 2010/2011 and 2018/19, real term funding per student in sixth form and further education institutions dropped from £5,900 per head, to £4,960 per head. This equates to a 16% cut. Strikingly, the drop in funding for school sixth forms is even worse

than the further education sector, with a 26% drop per fulltime student compared to 18%.

This has had a negative impact on the number of hours students are taught, notably in academic subjects. There has been a large decline in AS level provision and teaching hours of level 3 subjects (A level or equivalent) have seen a 21% decline. However, the EPI has noted that 16-19 provisions have been subject to long term financial pressures. 30 years ago, 16-19 funding was significantly higher than secondary funding, but it is now lower.

After a freedom of information request to 88 LAs Tes has learned that “more than 70 school sixth forms have shut over the past three years or are set to be closed amid major funding pressures”. Breaking this down, 47 schools have already closed their sixth form over a three-year period and a further 25 are currently in consultation over closure.

One of the major reasons for this trend is the funding constraints currently facing sixth-forms. While all school budgets are constrained, in 2017/18 16-19 providers attracted, on average, 15% less funding than secondary schools per pupil.

## Safeguarding Week

This year **Safeguarding Week** is being held **Monday 24 to Friday 28 June 2019**.

Bradford Safeguarding Week is an annual week of **free learning opportunities** coordinated by the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board in collaboration with Adults Services, Domestic Abuse Partnership, Health and our other multi-agency partners.

The key purpose of the week is to provide a range of free learning and development opportunities for staff and volunteers working in the sectors of safeguarding children, adults and domestic abuse.

This year, they have gone paperless and all the events are being advertised on a dedicated website. To view an event, click on 'more details' next to the event title and then scroll down to the bottom of page, further details will appear underneath along with how to book and any course flyers attached. This is a live web page so new events are being added frequently so do keep checking back but we are now at the stage where the bulk of events are now listed.

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/adult-social-care/adult-abuse/safeguarding-week-events/>

Governors who are Safeguarding Links may wish to attend some of the events or to check if their schools are making the most of this opportunity.

## Afterword

If you have a topic for the Governor Network and Forum, for the Chairs' Update or for the training programme then please email [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk) and the service will endeavour to assist.

**Governor Training Programme** – can be seen on Bradford Schools Online and has been emailed to all governors for whom we hold an email address.

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