

Note Pad

A regular news sheet for
Governors of Schools
throughout the Bradford District

To achieve school improvement through the effective governance of schools

August 2013



Governors' Annual Conference 2014

The 2014 Governors' Annual Conference will take place on Monday 28 April at Future House.

We are pleased to announce that our Guest Speaker will be Professor Chris James. Chris James is the Professor of Educational Leadership and Management at the University of Bath. During his career he has worked with a range of public, private and not-for-profit organisations including numerous local authorities and schools.

Professor James has published six books and completed four research projects on school governance in England, including a study of the role of the school governing body chair. Chris is the Vice Chair of the Governing Body of Ralph Allen School in Bath, which his children attended. Recently, Professor James has given evidence to the House of Commons Education Select Committee inquiry into school governance.

If you would like to book your place early then please e-mail school.governor@bradford.gov.uk or phone (01274) 385629. Further detailed information will be available in the next edition of Notepad.

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Governor Area Briefings 2013/2014

The following dates have been agreed for the Governor Area Briefings which will take place in the academic year 2013-2014:

Bradford Area Briefing –
6.00pm at Future House

Monday 11 November 2013
Monday 17 March 2014
Monday 16 June 2014

Keighley Area Briefing –
6.00pm at Victoria Primary School

Wednesday 13 November 2013
Wednesday 19 March 2014
Tuesday 17 June 2014

An Agenda and Briefing Notes will be sent to all area briefing representatives a couple of weeks before each briefing. We ask that governors please book a place beforehand so that we have an idea of numbers.

Contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629 or e-mail school.governor@bradford.gov.uk



Amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday

Absence during term-time as a result of term-time holidays interrupts continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of individual children. Bradford Children's Service aims to minimise the amount of time lost to term-time holidays through a policy which actively discourages parents from arranging family holidays during term time and supports schools to authorise absence for such holidays only in exceptional circumstances. Families do not have a right to take their children out of school for the purposes of family holidays or trips abroad.

Between September 2012 and Easter 2013 over 42,000 days of education were lost due to families taking holiday in term time, with or without the school's permission.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 allowed headteachers to grant

leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Bradford Children's Services Holiday in Term Time Policy, Holiday Request Form and the local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices can be found on Bradford Schools Online at <https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/CMSPage.aspx?mid=370>

We recommend that governing bodies update their Attendance Policy to include the new regulation information so that parents are very clear about authorised and non-authorised absences during term time.

Help us refresh the Education Improvement Strategy 2012-2015



The Education Improvement Strategy was launched in June last year and is currently being reviewed and updated.

As a governor we welcome your views and you are invited to attend a workshop on **Thursday 12 September, from 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm at Future House, Conference Room D, Bolling Road, Bradford BD4 7EB.**

School governance is central to school improvement so the focus of the workshop will be to review the strategic priorities and discuss the vital role that governing bodies play in supporting the priorities to drive school and pupil performance. The workshop will look at:

- **Whether the strategy is still fit for purpose and are our priorities (below) still relevant?**
 - Language for Learning
 - Leadership for Learning
 - Powerful Learning
 - Early Learning
 - Reading Strategy
 - Closing the Gap
- The effectiveness and impact of governing bodies in supporting our strategic priorities and raising education standards.
- How empowered governing bodies can provide strong strategic leadership and hold school leaders to account.

To reserve your place on the workshop please call 01274 431020, or email EducationServicesReviewPMO@bradford.gov.uk

The meeting will start at 6:30pm and light refreshments will be available from 6:00pm.

To ensure that we make best use of the time available it would be most helpful if you could read and consider the strategy in advance of the workshop. **This can be found on Bradford Schools Online under Communications/ Education Improvement Strategy 2012-2015.**

16-19 Bursary Fund – Important changes to student eligibility, allocations and student claims



There are two important changes to the 16-19 Bursary Fund for the 2013/14 academic year, and each school's policy on the Bursary Fund needs to be amended to take account of them.

Eligibility

From April 2013 some young people will be affected by the following benefit changes:

- Universal credit will replace income support and employment support allowance.
- Personal independence payments will replace disability living allowance.

Students in the following situations will be eligible for a vulnerable student bursary:

- Young people who receive a universal credit payment in their own name;
- Young people who are disabled and receive employment support allowance and a personal independence payment in their own name.
- Students in the care of the local authority will continue to be eligible for the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Allocations and claims for vulnerable groups In 2013/14 schools will receive a budget for Discretionary Bursaries only. The funding for vulnerable students will be held by the Learner Support Service.

To access this money, schools must complete a Funding Claim form on behalf of their students. The completed form should be submitted to the Learner Support Service who will issue payment. This new application process comes in for the 2013/14 academic year. More information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund is available from the Department for Education (DfE), and Bradford Schools Online websites.

Are you fulfilling your statutory duty regarding Looked After Children (LAC)?

The statutory guidance is clear in what it expects schools to do to support Looked After Children (LAC). Outcomes for Bradford children in care are the best they have been, but in many areas of attainment still lag well behind their peers – we could do much better.

School governors are key in making sure their school and in particular the designated teacher is fulfilling their statutory duty.

- Does your governing body ensure that the designated teacher undergoes appropriate training?
- Does the governing body receive at least one report annually on the looked after children in your school?
- Does the governing body act on any issues highlighted in the report?
- Do you know how many LAC are in your school?
- Do you know their levels of progress, attendance and any exclusions?
- Are all the Personal Education Plans (PEPs) up to date, and is there any process or planning issues arising?
- If any of the children have SEN are their needs being met?
- How is the pupil premium being spent?
- Is the designated teacher sufficiently trained to help colleagues in school?
- Does your school work with the local authority and in particular the virtual school head for looked after children?
- Do school policies impact positively or negatively in supporting this disadvantaged group?

Further information and guidance on how schools and governors can support looked after children can be found at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare/education/a00208595/school-support> and Bradford Schools Online at <https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/CMSPage.aspx?mid=1996>

Home to School and College Travel Policy

Following a review and formal consultation undertaken from 12 November 2012 to 25 January 2013, the Council has decided to change its Home to School and College Travel Policy.

The new policy will be available on the Council's website from September 2013 but will not come into effect until September 2014. This will allow parents to choose a school or college for their child using the criteria that will be applied for travel assistance from September 2014.

It is important that Governing Bodies are familiar with the new policy. Look out for details on Bradford Schools Online.

Children starting school for the first time or transferring to a new school or college, where transport may traditionally have been provided free of charge may find that they will not qualify or may be charged. Families with children that already receive assistance with travel to their school will not lose their entitlement unless their circumstances change.

Please be aware that the appeals process within the new policy document will be used from September 2013.

Home to School Transport Costs Update

The charging of additional costs of home to school transport incurred where a school changes its school day or takes holidays outside the agreed holiday schedule.

An item was presented to the Schools Forum on 10th July, which informed the Forum of the Local Authority's intention, from 1st September 2013, to charge to individual school budgets the additional costs, which may be incurred when a school changes its school day or takes holidays outside the agreed holiday schedule.

The full paper presented to the Schools Forum, can be viewed on the Bradford Council minutes website, available through www.bradford.gov.uk

Additional charges already incurred for changes previously made will continue to be met by the Council. However, the affordability from the school's budget of possible additional costs of transport is a factor, which schools must consider before any future decisions are taken around timetabling and holiday dates.

If you have any queries on this matter, please contact Paul Hart, by email on paul.hart@bradford.gov.uk or telephone: 01274 385988

Family Learning

Why should your school get involved?

Family Learning describes a whole range of activities and programmes where the parents, grandparents, carers along with their children are involved in learning. All courses are designed to improve skills and increase confidence and enable parents to better support their children. If it is appropriate parents can gain accreditation in Functional English and/or maths.

There is a team of experienced and qualified tutors who deliver Family Learning courses on your school's behalf. All tutors are CRB checked and have regular observations using Ofsted criteria.

The benefits of family learning are far reaching:

- It helps schools and parents/carers to work more closely together
- It encourages parents to gain confidence in their own ability to learn.
- Parents improve their English, maths and/or Financial Literacy
- It can act as a key factor in raising the achievement levels of children.
- It aims to improve motivation, build self-esteem and help both children and adults to become effective learners.
- It provides opportunities for parents to help their children, and in this way it enhances and enriches family life.
- It promotes lifelong learning.
- It raises aspirations

Using the Family Learning prospectus your school can apply for courses which meet the needs of your parents. A tutor will discuss your specific requirements and adapt course content as appropriate to ensure the course does meet your learners' needs and your expectations. You will provide the venue, the learners and a point of contact; we will provide the tutor and pay for resources and a crèche, if required.

Learners who have not attained a Level 2 in either English or maths are welcome on our courses. The ideal size of class is 9 adults (children can and do stay for the entire session or they can join for part of it) however in special cases class sizes can be as low as 5 adults.

The timings of the courses are flexible to meet your learners' needs and can run over a day, a week, twilight or a number of hours per week. We are flexible with time and content of sessions but we are all about:

- Increasing the skills of mothers, fathers and/or carers
- Helping parents to support their children's learning

Contact us on 01274 378409
or email: familylearning@bradford.gov.uk

The prospectus is available electronically on the Family Learning page on Bradford Schools Online: <http://bso.bradford.gov.uk/content/family-learning-team>

Model School Pay Policy 2013/2014

Following the successful school briefing sessions run by the Bradford Council PACT (Partnership, Administration & Consultancy Team) HR Team earlier this term on the proposed changes to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document, they are pleased to announce that they have now reached an agreement with Trade Union colleagues on the model School Pay Policy for the academic year 2013/2014.

This policy will be sent to all schools that purchase their HR Advisory Support through a service level agreement with the team. If any schools would like to discuss any aspect of this policy, they should contact their named HR Business Partner, who will be happy to discuss this with you. The Team can be contacted on 01274 385999.

Outdoor Learning

The specialist day and residential facilities at Nell Bank, for children and young people with disabilities have been heavily booked at weekends by families as a residential or day base and for shared fun with other families.

These experiences have been enhanced by the provision of the unique Tree House adventure which is totally accessible to wheelchairs. The Nell Bank Trust facility was opened during the annual Family Fun Day where the first 400 visitors enjoyed elevated views of the bluebell wood and the famous Ilkley Moor.

Look out for further information on outdoor learning in the next issue of Inside Out which will be published soon and will be available on Bradford Schools Online <https://bso.bradford.gov.uk>

Ofsted boss praises Bradford's Secondary School Partnership

Ofsted chief Sir Michael Wilshaw has praised Bradford for being a model of good practice for secondary school improvement.

At the annual conference of the Assistant Directors of Children's Services, Sir Michael, Chief Inspector of Schools, was outlining how best to raise standards and said:

"The best authorities confront the crucial issues of standards head-on. They don't adopt a narrowly ideological position on schools outside their formal control. They see it as their duty to make sure that all schools are part of the same family delivering high-quality provision for all children. They're working with the grain of greater autonomy for both maintained schools and academies.

Secondary schools in some authorities – Bradford is one example – have created their own school improvement organisation. That has been done with the blessing of the local authority, drawing on the expertise of inspectors to establish their peer review system."

Sir Michael was referring to the 'Bradford Partnership', a limited company, set up by secondary headteachers in July 2011 to support their desire to improve the quality of all Bradford secondary schools. The Partnership's main aim is for all Bradford Secondary schools to be at least 'good' in Ofsted terms.

The Partnership has developed a rigorous system of performance review based on the Ofsted Framework, and provides challenge to member schools regardless of governance to help them focus on key areas for improvement. It also provides effective school-to-school support and delivers school-led professional development which is designed by and for practitioners. It works in partnership with the Local Authority to drive up standards across the District.

Public Forum for Education (PFE)

Wednesday 18 September 2013 from 4.30pm – 6.30pm (buffet from 4.00pm), Banqueting Hall, City Hall, Bradford BD1 1HY

You are warmly invited to attend this open debate on the topic of "Born in Bradford".

Born in Bradford is one of the biggest and most important medical research studies undertaken in the UK. Speakers will include Professor John Wright, Director of Research - Head of Born in Bradford, who will discuss how the study impacts on many areas of Education including:-

- Raising Awareness, understanding and engagement - what role can you play?
- How does this wonderful programme impact on you and your child?
- Children's behaviour disorders
- Mental Health issues
- The impact on Reading
- Long term tracking from birth to adulthood
- Exhibition of photographs

Give your views on the research studies and the findings and help BiB staff find creative ways of working in partnership with parents to ensure people know about the findings. Most importantly we want to hear from you. We would particularly like governors, parents and young people to attend.

The PFE holds "big conversations" throughout the year on topical issues in education. With an independent chair Margaret Platts MBE, the Forum enables everyone with an interest to contribute their views.

Please confirm your attendance either by email Public.Forum.for.Education@bradford.gov.uk or telephone Heidi Hardy on (01274) 432337.

Term Times for Parents and Carers e-newsletter ready to share!

The Education Communications Team is delighted to announce the second edition of Term Times for Parents and Carers e-newsletter is ready to share with the parents and carers of pupils at your school.

Term Times for Parents and Carers celebrates good news, success and achievements from schools across the Bradford

district and provides links to useful information. Term Times for Parents and Carers will be published three times a year. We want it to be inclusive and represent the wonderful things happening in schools and education.

You will find the e-newsletter on the Bradford Council's website and we would like you to share it

with all your parents and carers via your own school website and school newsletter:

http://www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/education_and_skills/schools/termtimes

Please send any feedback and future stories to: FHCommunications@bradford.gov.uk

Work Experience



Xperience are the central Work Experience Organisers for Bradford secondary schools and work in partnership with schools to find suitable, safe and appropriate placements for young people at employers' premises. The team is nationally recognised and was awarded the National Quality Standard for Work Experience in November 2010.

We have a team of experienced officers that work closely with employers via the Xperience database to meet the high demand of placements required. This year the team sourced 10,686 placements for schools. The success of a placement relies upon an effective partnership between the employer, the work experience organiser, school, parents and the student.

Any student from Year 10 upwards can participate in work experience to gain some hands on experience in the world of work and carry out a range of tasks which are suitable and appropriate for their age range. Work experience allows students to develop their skills, put theoretical learning into practice and provide them with opportunity to find out about specific sectors and qualification requirements.

Post 16 students participating in work placements often need evidence to support vocational learning and will build up links with local employers in preparation for their future. Some universities stipulate work placements as an essential entry requirement onto courses such as medicine and veterinary.

Xperience team also organise:

- Student Work Experience preparation sessions
- Health and Safety sessions
- Employability Workshops
- Employer Panel of Experts sessions
- Careers Taster Events (Primary Years 5 & 6)
- Training, support and advice for Work Experience Co-ordinators in schools
- Work Experience Co-ordinator Termly Network Meetings

For further details contact Catherine Halliwell on 01274 385834 or e-mail: xperience@bradford.gov.uk

New 'tech levels' announced

As part of the government's ongoing response to the Wolf Report into vocational qualifications, Matthew Hancock (Minister of State for Skills) announced on 4 July, two new categories of vocational qualification: Tech levels and applied general qualifications. Only these qualifications will be counted from 2016 in the 16-19 performance tables, for young people taking courses from September 2014.

Tech levels

- will lead to a recognised occupation (such as accounting, hospitality, engineering etc.)
- must have public support from professional bodies or five employers representing the breadth of the sector
- will also need to be a sufficient size, i.e. equivalent to an A Level
- will count towards the Technical Baccalaureate

Applied general qualifications

- do not lead to a specific occupation and must be supported by at least three universities
- must be at least the equivalent size to an AS Level

From 2018 the qualifications will also need to demonstrate good take-up, external assessment, a grading system, and a good record of getting students into work or university to remain in the tables. The full press release can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-tech-levels-to-raise-the-quality-of-vocational-qualifications>

RHS Campaign for School Gardening

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is the UK's foremost gardening charity, helping and inspiring millions of people to garden.

The RHS Campaign for School Gardening offers training, support and advice to help schools enjoy gardening and to grow throughout the year. The website offers free downloadable resources, lesson plans, case studies and details of the practical gardening workshops which run throughout the UK.

Go online to find out about school gardening competitions and events in this area. As a registered school, you can benefit from fantastic free rewards of seeds, tools and equipment.

Register your school free at www.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening to receive a free starter pack containing practical items to help you get growing. RHS can be contact direct at schoolgardening@rhs.org.uk

The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013

The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 will come into force on 1 September 2013. The new regulations replace three sets of existing regulations: the Procedures Regulations, the Terms of Reference Regulations and the Allowances Regulations.

The new regulations introduce 3 core functions on which governing bodies should focus:

- (a) ensuring that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined;
- (b) ensuring that the head teacher performs his or her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school; and
- (c) ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

The regulations also place a new obligation on governing bodies to have regard to advice from the clerk to the governing body as to the nature of the governing body's functions.

The main changes from the previous regulations include the provision that the proceedings of a governing body are not invalidated by any person not having received written notice of the meeting or a copy of the agenda for the meeting.

In addition, regulation provides for the governing body to approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including but not limited to by telephone or video conference. A number of restrictions on a governing body delegating its functions have also been removed.

Further detailed guidance will be available as soon as possible and will be sent to all Clerks to Governors as well as being included in the Autumn Term Briefings Notes. The full regulations can be found at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/1624/pdfs/ukxi_20131624_en.pdf



More Affordable Childcare plans published

The Department for Education published 'More Affordable Childcare' on 16 July, which sets out the government's plans to help working parents access the childcare they need when they need it.

- Helping schools to offer affordable after school and holiday care, either alone or working with private and voluntary providers, giving them the flexibility to provide childcare beyond term time and the school day
- Enabling nurseries to expand by reducing red tape and removing planning restrictions, removing after-school learning requirements for children of reception age who are already being taught during the school day.
- Nurseries and childminders will not need to complete paperwork such as 'learning journeys', meaning more time with children

and there will be a single set of safety requirements for all children, with separate learning requirements for those not at school, in place of the current 3 separate sets of requirements

- Ensuring that childminders and nurseries that are good or outstanding can automatically receive government funding for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds without having to get it from the local authority
- Supporting parents to access more informal care, increasing the amount of time that a child can be looked after informally by friends and neighbours from 2 to 3 hours per day

Full details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/more-affordable-childcare>

The wording in this publication can be made available in other formats such as large print and Braille. Please call 01274 385629.

City of Bradford MDC

www.bradford.gov.uk