

Note Pad

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

To achieve school improvement through the effective governance of schools

February 2014



The Annual School Governor Conference

Monday 28 April 2014, 9.00am – 4.00pm, Future House, Bolling Road, Bradford, BD7 7EB

‘Strategic Direction, Robust Governance, Effective Challenge’

“School governors provide the strategic leadership and accountability that are so important in determining the success of our schools” Alex Cunningham MP, House of Commons Education Select Committee, December 2013.

Governing bodies are responsible for the strategic direction of schools and academies. The leadership potential for governance is immense given that there are approximately as many people directly involved in school governance as there are teachers in schools.

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The aims of the conference are to enable governors to:

- refresh and focus their thinking
- reflect on current practice
- identify their key responsibilities
- identify core inspection judgments and how to evidence them
- work with one another to exchange ideas and share good practice

Why is the annual governor conference relevant?

To ensure your governing body has strategic direction and provides effective challenge to school leaders.

Is your governing body strategic, robust and effective?

The conference will help you evaluate your governing body's readiness to meet the challenges of greater accountability.

Keynote addresses and workshops – what can I expect?

- Ways to successfully balance challenge and support
- Clarifying inspection judgments and how to evidence them
- Developing practical governor recruitment strategies
- Getting the best from your clerk
- Strengthen performance management processes
- Improve understanding and use of data
- Develop effective partnerships

What else can I expect on the day?

- High-quality up to date content
- Engaging presenters
- Opportunities to network and share best practice

**Book your place now!
It's free!**

Ofsted to carry out No Notice Behaviour Inspections in response to concerns of parents

The Chief Inspector of Ofsted has announced the start of a rolling programme of unannounced visits to schools where standards of behaviour are giving cause for concern.

Sir Michael Wilshaw has vowed to tackle what he calls 'a culture of casual acceptance' of low-level disruption and poor attitudes to learning which he believes is holding back too many of England's schools.

Ofsted's Annual Report published in December 2013 showed that 700,000 pupils were attending schools where behaviour needed to improve. Sir Michael said polling of parents regularly

showed that good discipline and behaviour in the classroom was their number one concern – but the issue was often much further down the priority list of schools themselves.

The behaviour inspections got underway in January 2014. Schools are being selected for the one-day unannounced visits on the basis of parental concerns as well as evidence gathered from previous inspections.

During the visits, inspectors will look at a wide range of evidence to reach a judgement on the standards of behaviour in the school. This will include assessing the culture of the school and

how pupils interact with each other and with staff. Inspectors will observe pupils' behaviour in the classroom, between lessons, during breaks, at lunchtime and after school. They will also speak directly to teachers and pupils to see how incidents of poor behaviour are addressed.

The behaviour inspection reports will be published on the Ofsted website and made available to parents. If Ofsted finds that a school is effectively tackling poor behaviour, this will be made clear in the inspection findings. Where there is evidence that behaviour remains a problem, this may result in a full inspection being brought forward.

FFT Governor Dashboard e-learning materials now available

The e-learning module consists of guidance and a number of set activities designed to ensure that the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) Governor Dashboard can be used effectively by governors when working with their schools.

The FFT has also produced a video which explains how the FFT Governor Dashboard can be used by Governors to support school improvement. Teachers and senior leaders who wish to make use of data in their school would also find this module of interest.

The Governor Dashboard e-learning module can be accessed at <http://elearning.fft.org.uk/> where Governors can create an account and download a

certificate confirming their completion of the module.

The FFT Governor Dashboard video can be viewed on the National Governors Association website at <http://www.nga.org.uk/Can-we-help/FFT-Governor-Dashboard.aspx>

Further information on the Governor Dashboard can be found in the associated section of the FFT website <http://www.fft.org.uk/fft-live/governor-dashboard.aspx> where along with links to this new material, sample Governor Dashboards, Quick Start Guides, NGA Knowing Your School documents and the slides used in the official FFT Governor Dashboard training events are available.

Schools Linking Network Conference

A VISION FOR LEARNING - Creating a Highly Cohesive Learning Community in your School
26 March 2014, Bradford City Football Ground, 10am-3.30pm (free parking).

The Sharing of Research • Classroom Practice • Strategic Guidance for School Leaders • Analysis of Ofsted and SMSC Development • How to Evaluate the Impact of SMSC • Linking Case Studies Links to the New Curriculum

Contributions from: Schools Linking Network, RSA, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Culham St Gabriel's, Ofsted.

The conference is being funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and is therefore free to attend.

To reserve a place, contact SLN on info@schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk or call 01274 385470

DfE consultation on changes to governance regulations

The government has announced a consultation on changes to some of the governance regulations and advice for local authority (LA) maintained schools. The Department for Education (DfE) is proposing to make all LA maintained school governing bodies reconstitute under the 2012 Regulations by September 2015.

In addition, the DfE is proposing that all non-elected governors (e.g LA/Foundation) must in future be appointed on the basis that they have, in the opinion of the appointing body, 'the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.' Currently this is only the case for co-opted governors.

As was highlighted by the House of Commons Education Select Committee report, currently when there are too many governors in a particular category, the 'last in first out' or juniority principle, applies. The consultation proposes to remove this to give the governing body (or the body responsible for appointing, in the case of foundation governors) the responsibility for resolving any surplus.

The government also proposes to amend the Federations Regulations to bring them into line with the proposed provisions above for the Constitution Regulations, and to amend an anomaly relating to staff governor ratios.

None of these proposals will apply to academies. Closing date for responses is Friday 14 March 2014. You can view all of the consultation documents, and draft Regulations and advice, on the DfE website at <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/>

PTA-UK

Gold Star Awards

PTA-UK has launched its prestigious national awards for Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). There are five categories in which PTAs can be nominated:

- Fundraising success
- Changing the life of the school
- Parent partnership
- Community links
- New PTA of the year



Celebrating the Tour de France Yorkshire Grand Départ with Music, Art, Dance and Cycling

The Music & Arts Service, together with the Department of Sport, have teamed up to organise a major music, art, dance and cycling extravaganza in celebration of the Tour de France Yorkshire Grand Départ.

Spread over 26 and 27 June 2014 at City Park, pupils from all age groups across the District will be invited to take part by performing music on stage and joining in "kinectrics" to generate the electricity to power the event on specially adapted pedal generators, thus allowing greater inclusion of disabled pupils.

The 4000 strong audience on each day will be led in a Mega Sing as well as being able to participate in a mass dance routine and in the creation of artwork inspired by a Yorkshire 'Welcome to Bradford'.

The day will be hosted by TV presenter Dave Payne, who also hosted events for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

PTA-UK is also looking for outstanding volunteers to be nominated as Volunteer of the Year. If you think your PTA has done a fabulous job please do consider nominating it – as well as the recognition an award brings, there are also cash prizes.

For further information please contact <http://www.pta.org.uk/>

New Ofsted subsidiary guidance and DfE report on inspections



Ofsted has updated its Subsidiary Guidance (supporting the inspection of maintained schools and academies) for inspectors for 2014. In particular, continuing its focus on pupil premium spending, inspectors may now recommend a review of pupil premium spending even where leadership and management is viewed to be 'good.'

The main points for Governance in the January 2014 edition are as follows:

Inspectors will increasingly encounter different models of governance, such as those associated with federated arrangements, free schools and academy chains.

Inspectors must evaluate the extent to which governors both challenge and support the school and hold senior staff, including the headteacher, to account for the achievement of the pupils. Governors are not expected to be routinely involved in the day-to-day activity of the school. Governors are not expected to undertake lesson observations, unless the school has clear protocols for visits so their purposes are understood by school staff and governors alike. However, they hold important strategic responsibilities for the development and improvement of the school.

Inspectors should meet with as many governors during an inspection as is possible, and should determine how well governing bodies evaluate the performance of the school, particularly in terms of: pupil progress; the leadership of teaching; the management of staff; and the difference made by initiatives such as the pupil premium, the Year 7 catch-up premium, or the new primary school sport funding.

Inspectors should consider whether governors:

- carry out their statutory duties
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including the quality of teaching

- ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- understand and take sufficient account of pupil data, particularly their understanding and use of the school data dashboard
- are aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups
- are challenging and supporting leadership in equal measure
- are providing support for an effective headteacher, or whether they are hindering school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns
- are transparent and accountable, including in terms of governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers
- understand how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression
- performance manage the headteacher rigorously
- are failing to perform well and contributing to weaknesses in leadership and management.

Inspectors should also satisfy themselves that the governing body is ensuring that the school's finances are properly managed, and investigate governors' role in deciding how the school is using the pupil premium, the Year 7 catch-up premium, or the new primary school sport funding.

The full Ofsted Subsidiary Guidance can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/subsidiary-guidance-supporting-inspection-of-maintained-schools-and-academies>

Spring Term Governor Area Briefings

The Spring Term 2014 Governor Area Briefings will take place as follows:

Monday 17 March 2014,
6pm at Future House, Bolling Road, Bradford 4
Or

Wednesday 19 March 2014,
6pm at Strong Close Nursery School, Keighley
(please note change of venue)

An Agenda and Briefing Notes will be sent to all area briefing representatives in March.

If you would like to attend please contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629 or e-mail school.governor@bradford.gov.uk

Speaker's School Council Awards



Open to every school or college in the UK
The fourth annual Speaker's School Council Awards are open to every infant, primary and secondary school in the UK. A winning school council will be awarded in each of four age categories:

- Infant age (4-7)
- Junior age (7-11)
- Secondary age (11-16)
- Young adults (16-19)

Tell us how you've made a difference
Whatever your project or achievement, we want to hear about it. Project size doesn't matter. It could be anything from increasing the number of recycling bins in your school to selling chocolate to raise money for your student council budget. What matters, is has your school council's efforts led to a positive change.

Win recognition for your school council
Every school council that enters will receive a prestigious certificate from the Speaker of the House of Commons. Runners up will be presented with a commemorative plaque for their school and winners will be invited to the Houses of Parliament to accept the winner's trophy from the Speaker of the House of Commons himself.

Further information can be found at <https://www.speakersschoolcouncil.org/about>

Governor Training

There are still places available on the following governor training courses:

Raising Standards for Ethnic Minority Groups –
Tuesday 4 March, 6.30pm at Future House

Safeguarding in Mosques and Madrassas –
Tuesday 11 March, 6.30pm at Future House

Promoting Equality, Diversity & Community Cohesion –
Monday 24 March, 6.30pm at Future House

Managing Staff Capability –
Tuesday 25 March, 6.30pm at Future House

Policy Planning and Review –
Tuesday 1 April, 6.30pm at Future House

If you would like to book a place on one of these or any other of the courses in the Spring Term Prospectus please e-mail school.governor@bradford.gov.uk or phone (01274) 385629.

Subscriptions for services available to schools

The 'Directory of Services' website has now gone live with all you need to know about the services that are available for schools and governing bodies to purchase.

Please go to <http://www.directoryofchildrensservices.org.uk/education-and-school-improvement-services?page=2> for further information.

Please ensure your governing body discusses the options that are available including subscription to the School Governor Service 'Governing Schools' package and the Clerking Service. If you would like any further information on these please ring us on (01274) 385629 or e-mail school.governor@bradford.gov.uk

Reducing Red Tape for PTAs

The Government has announced its intention to make a number of changes to entertainment licensing in England and Wales. Importantly, the exemption that applies to schools has been written to include PTA events. This will mean PTAs will no longer need an event licence to hold, for example a PTA Disco, a fundraising film night or a pantomime performance. It is anticipated that the changes will come into force as early as April 2014.

£150 million a year will help to secure the Olympic and Paralympic legacy by supporting sports in primary schools.

Prime Minister David Cameron has announced his commitment to keeping the £150 million a year Primary PE and Sport Premium until 2015.

The dedicated fund, which was announced in March 2013 and began the following September, goes directly to primary school head teachers so that they can decide how best to use it to provide sporting activities for pupils.

A typical primary school with 250 primary aged pupils this year received £9,250, the equivalent of around 2 days a week of a primary teacher or a coach's time – enough to make sure every pupil in the school can do sport with a specialist.

Outdoor space

In addition to extending the premium, the Prime Minister also confirmed that from January, primary schools across England will be able to apply for a share of an £18 million fund to improve outdoor spaces for PE and sporting activities.

The Lottery-funded scheme will be run by Sport England and will prioritise schools with limited outside space and a strong commitment to PE and sport. The schools are expected to receive an average of £30,000 each to help them vastly improve their sports provision. The funding will make sure they have better equipment and facilities - eg turning a concrete playground into a quality space for PE and sporting activities.



Universal free school meals Q&A for headteachers

As you will know, from September 2014 all KS1 (Reception, Yr1, and Yr2) pupils at state funded schools will be entitled to a free school lunch. The School Food Plan has produced a Q&A for head teachers about the introduction of universal free school meals – much of this will be of interest to governors. This can be found at <http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/qa-for-head-teachers/>

Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions - Consultation

The new statutory guidance for supporting pupils at school with medical conditions has been developed in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including members of the Health Conditions in Schools Alliance, school leaders, academy organisations, unions, young people with medical conditions and their parents, and with Department of Health officials.

The document provides a mix of statutory guidance and non-statutory advice based on good practice for supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. There is a short introduction followed by a section on the role of the governing body. Information is provided on developing school policies for supporting pupils with medical conditions and what these should contain. The final section provides further sources of information.

The new guidance takes account of the government's commitment to minimise central prescription and bureaucracy and reflects the aim of allowing schools greater freedom to determine their own arrangements according to local circumstances. The new statutory guidance for supporting pupils at school with medical conditions in England is to be subject to a six week consultation period. This will

help to ensure that the guidance is published in the summer term in good time to support the new duty which is due to come into force in September 2014.

The closing date for responses is Friday 14 March 2014. The consultation document can be viewed and downloaded from the DfE website at <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/>



Updated Behaviour Guidelines sent to Schools

Litter picking in the playground, removing graffiti and cleaning the dining hall are all sanctions teachers should consider to clamp down on bad behaviour, Education Secretary Michael Gove has said.

There has been significant progress since 2010 on improving behaviour, with persistent absence and exclusions for abuse and assault both down significantly. However, with 700,000 pupils still in schools where behaviour is not good enough, there is much still to do.

Updated government guidelines were sent to all schools in England this week, making clear that tough but proportionate punishments, ranging from writing lines to asking pupils to report at the school gates early in the morning, are just as crucial to an effective education as praising and rewarding good behaviour.

While the previous guidelines made clear the legal backing for setting punishments, they stopped short of outlining potential sanctions - leaving many heads and teachers unclear of the action they could take,

particularly with regard to misplaced health and safety fears or concern about litigation. Almost 1 in 3 secondary teachers - tens of thousands of teachers in hundreds of schools across the country - don't feel confident using the powers they have to discipline pupils.

Potential punishments listed in the guidance now include:

- school-based community service - such as picking up litter or weeding school grounds, tidying a classroom, helping clear up the dining hall after meal times, or removing graffiti
- writing lines or an essay
- loss of privileges - for instance the loss of a prized responsibility or not being able to participate in a non-uniform day
- being 'on report' for early morning and other scheduled times

The updated government guidelines can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>

Join the Giant March for Road Safety

At 10am on Wed 11 June 2014 thousands of kids will march for road safety, raising awareness of the dangers of traffic, the benefits of walking and asking drivers to make communities safer by slowing down around schools and homes.

Register for a FREE pack including Banners and Stickers:

Online: www.giantwalkingbus.org

Phone: 01484 550061

E-mail: walkingbus@brake.org.uk



Why get involved?

- Run creative, educational activities on the day and in the run-up, helping the children understand the dangers of traffic and benefits of walking. It's a great way to meet safety, citizenship and healthy living goals.
- Promote life-saving messages to parents and the community, campaign for safer roads, and call on drivers to slow down to protect children - as part of Brake's GO 20 campaign.
- Raise funds for Brake's work to improve road safety and care for families devastated by road crashes.
- Register NOW and we can give you advice and information, and a FREE resource pack. We can also help you get publicity for your event.

**Road
Safety
Week** 

PTA-UK Membership

As a national charity the PTA-UK exists to support all forms of home-school associations. Your PTA, if not in membership, will benefit greatly from the practical support and resources PTA-UK offers, which includes PTA insurance for all PTA events (terms and conditions apply). Membership starts at just £60 per year depending on the size of the school and there is a special offer for PTAs just starting up.

Ask your PTA if they are in membership and encourage them to contact PTA-UK for information. Three out of four PTAs depend on them for up-to-date support and guidance knowing that unrivalled access to a range of benefits is just a click or phone call away. Visit www.pta.org.uk for information on joining or starting at PTA or contact Melissa Standeven, Regional Advisor for Yorkshire and the Humber 01924 862 612 or email: melissa.standeven.pta.org.uk

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