



# Governors' Monthly Update

## October 2019

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Welcome to the October edition of the Monthly Update

### School News

**Congratulations to Brackenhill Primary, St Walburga's and St Cuthbert and the First Martyrs' for the retention of their Good judgements.**

### Governor Forum and Network

The Governor Forum and Network to be held on Tuesday 15 October at Keighley will not now be going ahead. The decision not to hold this session has been made as a result of the very low attendance levels at previous sessions and the lack of bookings for this session. All governors are encouraged to attend the session on **Monday 14 October at Margaret McMillan Tower from 6.30-8.30pm.**

**If you are intending to come please inform us** by using the Skills4Bradford website or emailing [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk) as this enables us to ensure that enough documents are prepared for the session without wasting too many by having to estimate the need.

These are free sessions and the aim is that they allow governors to raise questions for discussion and identify topics for future meetings so that they are useful for all.

**The Agenda is being finalised and will be circulated on Monday 7 October.**

### SGS Governor Training – Book using the Skills4Bradford Website

A reminder about our new system. There will be a short demonstration at the Forum on 14 October

Open the website at:- [www.skills4bradford.co.uk](http://www.skills4bradford.co.uk).

As a first time user click on the 'login' at the right hand corner of the home screen, enter your user name (the email you use as a governor) and click 'forgotten password'. You will be sent a password. Once you receive your password enter it and you will be prompted to enter a new

one of your choosing. Enter site and book training and services from the Local Authority and School Governor Service. If your email is not recognised please contact or you have any queries please contact [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk) .

Signed into the website you can see the progress of your application(s) and can remind yourself of what you have booked booked/requested.

Please do take a look at the other areas of the website as it hosts many other services provided by the Local Authority that are used by schools and Governors may use it to purchase other School Governance Services. Your requests will be put forward through the system and you will receive an automated confirmation.

## SGS Governor Training – October 2019

All Governors should have received a direct email copy of the Training Programme for the Autumn Term. If you have not received one then please contact [School.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:School.governor@bradford.gov.uk) as this means that the School Governor Service (SGS) does not have up to date details for you. Schools are charged £55 for a 2-3 hour course and £150 for a longer or full day course unless the course is listed as free.

Courses available during October and early November include:

### **Headteacher's Performance Management**

**Tuesday 8 October 2019, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

One of the most important tasks for governors is to ensure that the headteacher's performance management is effective and linked to the school improvement needs of the school. This session has been updated to ensure it reflects the latest requirements and the changing educational landscape and is led by an officer from the School Standards and Performance team.

### **FREE Session**

#### **Governor Forum and Network**

**Monday 14 October, 6.30-8.30pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

An opportunity for governors to receive updates and discuss topics of interest to their schools.

### **FREE Session**

#### **Construction Project Training Workshop**

**Thursday 17 October 6.00-8.30pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

Education Client Services would like to invite you to this free 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

**Communications & Marketing****Monday 21 October, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

Governors have legal duties to comply with regarding their communications with their parents, wider community and in publication of certain information. How can doing this effectively have a positive impact on school?

This course will look at ways in which governors can support the development and monitoring of effective methods of communication and marketing, including the use of the school website.

**MONITORING: Vulnerable Groups & Pupil Premium****Thursday 24 October, 6.15-8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower**

This session will investigate what we mean by vulnerable groups and the role governors' play in supporting them to achieve their potential. It will address the governors' role in monitoring and providing for these pupils and also working with the grants and funds available in school for vulnerable children.

**Heads & Chairs Ensuring Effective Practice****Friday 25 October, 09:30 - 13:15 at Margaret McMillan Tower**

Chair and Headteacher attend this course - working together to achieve effective communication, collaboration and constructive governance. This course offers both Chairs and Heads time together to reflect and build in order to ensure effective practice.

**Children Looked After and the Virtual School****Monday 4 November, 6.15 – 8.15pm at Margaret McMillan Tower – Please note the change of date**

Children who are looked after are one of the most vulnerable groups within schools, often having the worst educational outcomes and this makes the quality of their education a priority for governors.

The session, delivered by a leader from the virtual school, explains the governors' role in monitoring the performance of looked after children and the school's provision for them, the remit of the virtual school and the support that it offers.

**SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)****Thursday 7 November, 6.30 – 8.30pm at Shipley Library**

All governors need to have an understanding of SEND to ensure that they can effectively monitor the progress and achievement of SEND children in their school and the impact of spending. This course aims to give governors the information that they need to undertake these tasks. It will also explore the role of Named Governor.

## Ofsted Updates

**Format of Ofsted Reports changes**

Ofsted Reports are now couched in language suitable for parents to access which has reduced both the formality and the complexity of the language used. They still contain information, in more formal language, to inform schools what is needed for improvement and also give details of the way the inspection was conducted. This gives details of the deep dives made by inspectors into

specific topics and subject areas. Evidence to date shows a concentration on areas outside English and Maths unless it is clear that schools have improvements to make in those areas. Governors are reminded that a poor judgement on the Quality of Education will mean a poor overall judgement.

### **HMCI commentary: managing behaviour research**

Amanda Spielman has summarised the findings of the updated behaviour research carried out by Ofsted.

'Compared with 'Below the radar', we can report some positive developments in the current study. We found that teachers and leaders understand the importance of consistency in the implementation of behaviour policies. Most schools in our study favoured whole-school behaviour management approaches in which a set of consistent routines are put into practice and rigorously and consistently applied.

Staff, particularly in secondary schools, emphasised the value of teaching desired behaviours and making them routine. This is especially the case for those behaviours that are repeated regularly throughout the school day and that ensure:

- the safe movement of pupils around the school
- the smooth running of lessons
- the minimum loss of learning time to low-level disruption

When pupils and staff have a shared understanding of the expectations for these common behaviours, and both staff and pupils follow established routines, overall consistency is easier to achieve.

'The report also noted the need to ensure that the ethos of the school embedded the behaviour expectations and reminded readers of the areas that will be considered by inspectors.

These 3 types of behaviours are reflected in the behaviour and attitudes judgement in the EIF. In judging behaviour and attitudes, **the main question we aim to answer for parents is: 'can my child learn here?'**

In the framework, we state that to be judged good the following standards need to be reached:

- Pupils' attitudes to their education are positive. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively and do so, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.
- Pupils have high attendance, come to school on time and are punctual to lessons. When this is not the case, the school takes appropriate, swift and effective action.
- Leaders, staff and pupils create a positive environment in which bullying is not tolerated. If bullying, aggression, discrimination and derogatory language occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively and are not allowed to spread.

These statements clearly relate to the 3 types of behaviour schools identified as important, which provides some reassurance that we are assessing the right things.'

See the full speech [here](#)

## Government and Department for Education Updates

### Report on SEND from the National Audit Office

#### Key findings

The support system

The number of pupils identified as having the greatest needs has risen since 2014, increasing the demand for support. Between 2014 and 2019:

- The number of pupils with EHC plans rose by 16.8% from 231,900 to 270,800. The increase partly reflects growth in the total pupil population. The proportion of pupils with EHC plans remained stable between 2014 and 2018 at between 2.8% and 2.9%, but rose to 3.1% in 2019
- The number of pupils identified as needing additional support for SEND, but who do not have an EHC plan, dropped considerably, from 1,255,600 to 1,041,500 (17.1%). The Department considers that this decrease is likely to reflect changes in how pupils with SEND are identified and recorded, rather than changes in the underlying population. The implication is that pupils who would previously have been classed as requiring extra support may now not be classed in the same way.

#### **The Department does not know the impact of the support provided for pupils with SEND.**

The government's vision for children with SEND is that they achieve well at school and live happy and fulfilled lives. The Department collects and publishes data on pupils' academic attainment and progress at school, which show that pupils with SEND have consistently made less progress than other pupils with the same starting points. The data also covers what young people with SEND go on to do after school.

However, the Department has not specified, in measurable terms, the outcomes it wants to achieve from its support for pupils with SEND. In December 2018, it launched the first phase of a long-term programme of research and analysis with the aim of collecting better information about the impact of support at school and how outcomes for pupils with SEND could be improved.

#### **The Department has increased school funding, particularly for high needs, but funding has not kept pace with the rise in the number of pupils.**

Between 2013-14 and 2017-18, the Department increased high-needs block funding by £349 million (7.2%) in real terms. This rise was larger than the 2.3% real-terms increase in schools block funding for mainstream schools, meaning that the Department has shifted the balance of funding towards high needs. However, because of a 10.0% rise in the number of pupils in special schools and those with EHC plans in mainstream schools, high-needs funding per pupil fell by 2.6% in real terms, from £19,600 to £19,100. Per-pupil funding in the schools block also reduced over the same period, despite a £754 million real-terms increase in total funding.

Pupils with SEND accounted for nearly half of all permanent and fixed term exclusions in schools. Furthermore, in an ongoing review of LA education, health and care services, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have identified "significant areas of weakness" in the provision provided to SEND pupils in half of the local authorities they inspected as of July 2019.

The government has announced an intention to raise special needs funding by £700 million. It is nonetheless still important that, as the NAO recommends, the Department for Education (DfE) "acts urgently to secure the improvements in quality and sustainability".

A link to the summary report can be found [here](#)

## **New review launches to improve support for children with additional needs**

The DfE (not surprisingly) has now announced a review on support for children with additional needs.

'The new review will look at the how the system has evolved since (2014), how it can be made to work best for all families and ensure quality of provision is the same across the country.

Recognising the importance of joined-up support, it will also explore the role of health care in SEND in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Care.'

Responding to the announcement, Steve Edmonds, NGA's director of advice and guidance, said: "Governing Boards have both a legal and moral duty to improve provision and outcomes for children and young people who have SEND. However, as our annual survey demonstrates, an increasing number of governing boards are concerned that their schools do not have the resources to meet the needs of their most vulnerable pupils. The additional funding announced by the Government is welcome but is unlikely to remove all the pressures placed on school and local authority budgets. This needs to be recognised as does the reality that providing the best possible support for pupils with SEND requires more than just money. NGA welcomes any work towards building a more coherent and sustainable system for providing support but this system must be adequately resourced".

Read the full announcement [here](#)

## **DfE update 2019/20 schools financial value standard (SFVS) checklist**

The Department for Education (DfE) has added minor clarifications to its [2019/20 schools financial value standard \(SFVS\) checklist](#).

Maintained schools must submit the SVFS annually to their local authority (LA). It is designed to help schools and governing boards meet "basic standards for good financial health and resource management". The updated checklist offers governors and trustees a series of questions to answer regarding the financial skills, structure and accountability on their board. Use of the checklist is helpful for governors in ensuring their effective monitoring of the school's budget.

This guidance is specifically relevant for maintained schools but could also be useful for academy trusts.

## **Minimum per-pupil funding rises from next year**

The minimum pupil funding levels for 2020/21 have been confirmed by the government.

In the primary phase, schools will receive £3500 to £3750 per pupil and in the secondary phase schools will receive £4800 to £5000 per pupil.

Gavin Williamson, secretary of state for education, has pledged to make use of the new national minimum per-pupil funding levels compulsory for local authorities (LAs).

LAs, through their schools forums, can still implement their own funding formula for the 2020/21 financial year, but they are now required to ensure that they meet the national minimum per-pupil funding levels for this period.

The Department for Education (DfE) has published its consultation seeking views on how local authorities should implement the National Funding Formula's (NFF) mandatory minimum per-pupil funding levels in local funding formulae.

The requirement is a significant step towards the NFF, which the secretary of state says the government intends to implement as a 'hard' requirement as soon as possible. However, as this will require new legislation, the implementation date still remains uncertain.

## Statutory Policies for Schools

An updated list for both maintained schools and academies is now available from the DfE and can be accessed [here](#)

## Governance Guidance for Maintained School Governors

Guidance from across the DfE website has now been linked under topics so that maintained school governors can more easily access it. Please find the link [here](#)

## Understanding your Data: A Guide for Maintained School Governors and Academy Trustees

Governors need to be aware that this document is not just about educational data but contains guidance on the use of all varieties of data, including financial data, that are available for governors. The guide is available [here](#)

## School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document published

The final version of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document 2019 (STPCD) was published on 20 September. It applies to teachers employed in local authority-maintained schools and to teachers in academies who were employed under the STPCD at the point where their employment transferred to the academy trust (unless they have since renegotiated). Pay recommendations based on the new STPCD must be backdated to 1 September 2019. The STPCD includes a 2.75% uplift to the minimum and maximum of all pay ranges and allowances. This means that the top and bottom end of each teacher pay scale will increase by the relevant amount, therefore the highest and lowest salary in each band will get an automatic rise. **However, it does not mean every teacher in England automatically gets a 2.75% pay rise because it is still up to governing boards to determine, in line with their adopted pay policy, what they pay their teachers.**

**Governing Boards will need to discuss this as soon as possible to consider the financial implications and the approach that will be taken. Further information will be available at the Forum on Monday 14 October (see above)**

## Recommendations for Governing Boards on Examination Malpractice

On Monday 9 September, the report of the Independent Commission on Examination Malpractice was released. NGA was a member of the commission and sat alongside a wide range of other education experts, representing higher education, further education, secondary schools, school governing boards and examination/assessment organisations.

The commission has issued a range of suggestions to deter malpractice, including banning watches to stop cheating.

The commission also recommended that the governing board should gain assurances that the examinations officer and head of centre have the status, authority knowledge, skills and integrity to ensure that examinations are being "run in accordance with national requirements". Those

governing also need to ensure that instances of malpractice are properly investigated using the appropriate channels.

A full list of recommendations, including questions for governing boards, can be found on page 38 of [the report](#).

## Children's Society 'Good Childhood' Report

**This year's edition of The Good Childhood Report contains:**

- An overview of the latest statistics and trends in children's self-reported subjectivewell-being, including variations by gender.
- An exploratory analysis of potential child centred measures of disadvantage and their relationship with well-being.
- A new analysis of the associations between two aspects of household income (income poverty and financial strain) and different measures of children's well-being.
- Children's thoughts about their futures, including their priorities and worries, and how they relate to well-being.

The Summary Report can be found [here](#)

## Huge Rise in Numbers of Children linked to 'County Lines'

"County lines" gangs operate by recruiting vulnerable children from large cities across the UK and using them to possess and distribute drugs across peripheral towns.

Based on assessments from local authority (LA) social services, and reported in [the Telegraph](#), the number of young people deemed vulnerable to such gangs has more than doubled over the past three years, from 3,680 reported cases in 2014/15 to 8,650 in 2017/18.

The increase has been linked to cuts to LA services. [Government data, obtained by the Labour party](#), has shown that councils have made £2.4 million in cuts to children's substance abuse services to cope with reductions in their funding. The analysis has also found that 82% of councils have shrunk their public health budget this year, with some LAs cutting by as much as 13%.

The news has been followed by a [report from the All Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) for runaway and missing children](#) which includes claims that LAs have facilitated "county lines" operations by sending children to accommodation outside their locality. If young people are being exploited by county lines gangs in one location, moving them to a different area allows those groups to extend their reach. Two thirds of children in care are now living away from their original area, up 46% from seven years ago.

Ofsted inspectors are scrutinising whether schools have been educating pupils sufficiently about county lines operations as part of the wider obligations to inform them on safeguarding issues, so it is essential that governing boards are fulfilling this duty.

## Afterword

The next edition of the update will be sent out during the first week of November. If you did not receive this directly then your email address is not on the system, which also means that you will not be able to book training. Please contact [school.governor@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governor@bradford.gov.uk) to remedy this.