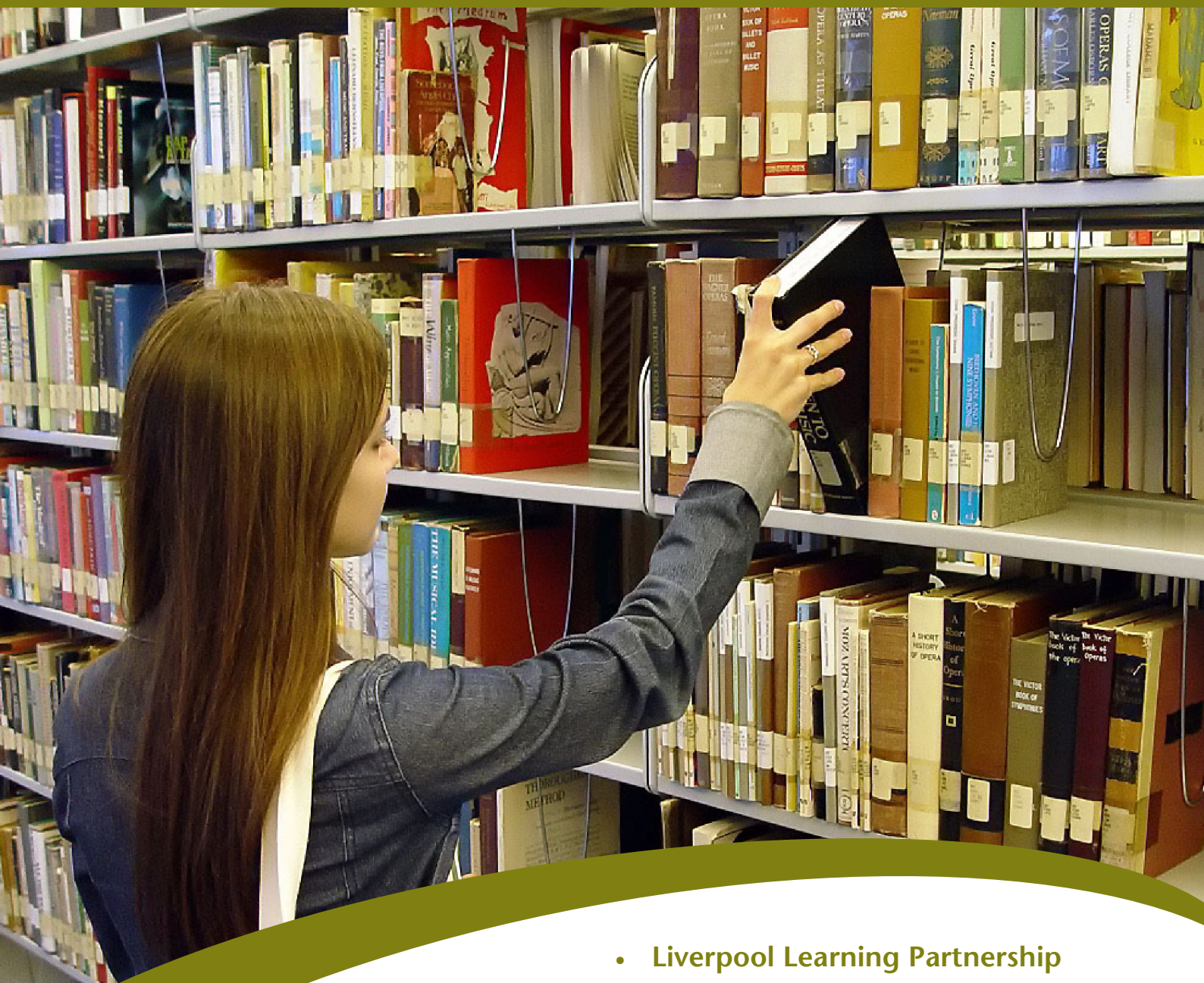


Governors' News

A Termly Newsletter for Liverpool Governors



Liverpool
City Council



- Liverpool Learning Partnership
- Governance Roles and Procedures
- Ofsted Annual Report
- Parenting Orders and Penalty Notices
- Liverpool Governors' Forum
- Summer Term Training Programme

Issue 74 Summer 2014



LLP: Benefits of Membership

The first discussions on the creation of the Liverpool Learning took place in November 2011. In order to set up the Partnership a mandate was sought from

LLP's work. LLP wishes to support the work of Governing bodies by seeking volunteers from the teaching workforce in Liverpool to fill governor vacancies. Whilst contributing to school governance this will also be a valuable opportunity for career development for school leaders and teachers.

Liverpool learning organisations during school year 2011/12. Virtually all learning organisations gave their full support to the establishment and development of the Partnership. This allowed for the formalisation of the LLP Executive Board, the registration of the Partnership as a company limited by guarantee and the adoption of Articles of Association which stand as the LLP constitution.

The relationship between the Liverpool Education Service and Liverpool learning organisations has been greatly enhanced by the creation of the Liverpool Learning Partnership. A range of officers at all levels of seniority work directly with the Partnership in the development of educational policy for the city. The LLP's two strategic groups provide vehicles for officers to seek verification for policy documents. The Director of Children's Services is a member of the LLP Executive Board. The Partnership's Chief Executive Officers meet with the Director on a regular basis to liaise on the future of provision in the city.

In order to allow learning organisations to declare their wishes to become full members of the Partnership the Memorandum of Understanding was published. The Memorandum invited school governing bodies to sign up to the LLP. By the beginning of the school year 2013/14 158 schools had signed the Memorandum. This translated into 94% of all Liverpool schools, which is approximately 65,000 learners.

The Partnership enjoys the declared support of both the Liverpool Archdiocese and Diocese.

Influence

In July 2013 the Mayor of Liverpool's Education Commission published its final report on the future of educational provision in the city. The first recommendation of the report stated that the Liverpool Learning Partnership would be the main agency for the design of an educational vision for the City of Liverpool.

The Partnership is also exerting influence on a national basis. LLP submitted evidence on partnership working within Local Authorities to the House of Commons Education Committee. A significant number of LAs from across the country have asked for information about the Liverpool model of partnership. LLP has directly assisted the Birmingham LA in the setting up of its own Learning Partnership. Representatives of LLP have held meetings with the former Shadow Minister for Education.

This statement clearly reflected the fact that the educational landscape had changed beyond recognition in Liverpool, as well as nationally, with educational practitioners being well placed to set the agenda for education in the city. The LLP provides a vehicle for practitioners to come together to pool their collective experience and expertise.

Learning Organisations that are members of LLP can therefore feel assured that they can bring to bear a high degree of influence on educational policy within the City of Liverpool and beyond.

Financial benefits

The present budget held by the Liverpool Learning Partnership, on behalf of learning organisations, is now over one million pounds.

The influence of the LLP is dependent on a range of circumstances. Firstly the Partnership leans heavily on the past successes of the Liverpool Head teacher Managerial Associations. The Liverpool Association of Secondary Head teachers (LASH), the Liverpool Primary Head teachers' Association (LPHA) and the Association of Special School Head teachers (ALSSH) stand together in their support of, and co-operation with, LLP. This unity is unprecedented in Liverpool and allows the LLP to represent the views of Head teachers across all the phases and sectors in the city with credibility and authority. Head teachers are well represented on the Partnership's Executive Board, Strategic groups and Task groups so that the influence of the city's educational leaders is now brought to bear on the design of a declared vision for the city.

The membership contributions paid to the Partnership by the learning organisations on the basis of £3 per learner. So far, Liverpool schools have committed £182,654 in membership payments. This amount has grown as discussions with Private, Voluntary and Independent providers of Early Years' education has led to the Local Authority committing money from an underspend of funding for two year old provision to cover LLP membership for these organisations. Discussions are ongoing with local Higher Education Institutions about their becoming members of the Partnership.

The Partnership also has a strong, positive relationship with school governors in the city. The Liverpool Governors' Forum plays a strong role in the work of the Partnership with governors represented at all levels of the

The funding that LLP receives from memberships will be used solely on priorities which have been identified by schools. For example Head teachers have been strong in their views that a Pupil Tracking system should be established in Liverpool. The Partnership, working in close

collaboration with Local Authority officers, has moved quickly to devise such a system. If a Pupil Tracking system had had to be built up from scratch it may have cost near to a million pounds. However it has been possible to utilise the Capita Prime systems already in use in Liverpool. Partnership working between LLP, the LA, Capita and the Liverpool Families' programme has secured the Tracking system for near £120,000. This is thanks to a generous discount from Capita and a significant contribution from the Families' programme.

The schools involved in the pilot of the system have been very impressed by what they have seen so far of the system. Based on legal advice from council officers an Information Sharing Agreement has been drawn up which will now allow the system to be shared with all partner schools.

The Pupil Tracking system will be provided to all LLP schools at no additional cost to those schools. This will be possible once schools have signed a formal agreement on access which will be sent to Head teachers in the near future. The system will ensure that the safeguarding and well-being of the learners in those schools will be greatly enhanced.

The second priority that has been implemented is the Liverpool Learning Partnership "Liverpool – City of Readers" initiative. The Partnership has recently moved to appoint Dr Jane Davis, the founder of the Reader Organisation, as Managing Director to lead the Reading initiative. Mary Hind-Portley from the School Improvement Service has been appointed as Deputy Managing Director. The three Head teacher Managerial Associations have been invited to each designate a Director to represent their phase. It is likely that a budget of near to £150 000 will be made available by the Partnership for the Reading initiative. Part of this funding has already been used to provide membership of the National Literacy Trust for all LLP learning organisations.

The intention of the City of Readers initiative is to fulfil the ambition highlighted in the Mayor's Education Committee report that Liverpool should become the foremost reading city in the country. The Mayor has pledged his support to the Year of Reading by providing an additional £75 000 to be used by LLP on modern technologies and city-wide programmes. The Mayor has also designated Councillor Lana Orr to work with the Partnership as councillor with special responsibility for Reading. Councillor Orr will also serve as a Director for the initiative.

However the membership funding received by LLP from school makes up only approximately a fifth of the Partnership's budget.

The Liverpool Schools' Forum has granted a total of £200 000 for the setting up and running of LLP. This money is

used for the administration and management of the Partnership. In this way the Executive Board has been able to make available the services of two Chief Executive Officers to help run the Partnership and work directly with schools and learning organisations.

The Director of Children's services also has taken the decision to allow the Partnership to determine the use of three blocks of money:

A sum of £280 000 was de-delegated by Primary Head teachers in Liverpool. This money is used by LLP to provide support for schools that are, or could be, vulnerable. In the region of £150 000 has already been committed. Of this £53 000 has been directed to innovative school support strategies, through LLP working with an individual school and a local Learning Network. Some £97 000 has been provided for individual schools with specific needs. The use of this funding is largely determined by a joint LLP/LA protocol and regular monitoring meetings are held to monitor and assess the use of the funding.

The Partnership has been asked by the Director to make use of £200 000 which was money clawed back from excessive school balances. Following consultation with Head teacher managerial associations £65 000 of this money has been set aside to ensure that the International Festival for Business, being held in Liverpool, has a very strong educational emphasis and presence in schools. Part of this funding has been used to recruit a schools' co-ordinator. It is envisaged that most of the balance of the funding will be used for 1:1 head teacher support.

The third sum allocated for the determination of the Partnership is a LA underspend of £16 000. After consultation with the LA, the Partnership has decided this money will be used to support an independent review of the primary SEN consortia and the secondary Team Around the School.

To conclude, whilst learning organisations have contributed around £200,000 or so to LLP they could receive the value of over a million pounds by having become members of the Partnership. Thus the £3 per learner contributed could secure an average of £16.52 per learner through all the funding secured by the Liverpool Learning Partnership for its member learning organisations. This provides evidence to school leaders and governors that the Liverpool Learning Partnership provides value for money and will bring a wide range of educational benefits. Such benefits will be the subject of regular reports to member organisations and of external assessment.

Tony McKee

Phil Daniels

Joint Chief Executives, LLP

LLP has its own pages on EDnet where minutes of meetings of the Executive Board and the two Strategic Groups are posted, along with policies and strategy documents

DfE Advice on Roles and Procedures

The Department of Education issued non-statutory advice for school leaders and governors of maintained schools and PRUs on 13 January. This advice was produced to help recipients understand their 'obligations and duties' in relation to the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations introduced last year. Alongside the Governors' Handbook, which was updated also in January, the advice reflects the DfE's change in thinking on the role and purpose of governance.

The advice includes the following key points:

- The *Board of Governors* should operate at a strategic level, leaving the headteacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to it for the operational day-to-day running of the school.
- The Board should avoid being consumed with issues of secondary importance, and focus strongly on three core functions:
 - setting the vision and strategic direction of school;
 - holding the headteacher to account for its educational performance; and
 - ensuring financial resources are well spent.
- Governors need a robust process and framework for setting priorities, creating accountability and monitoring progress.
- It is good practice for the Board to review its own performance regularly and publish an annual statement to explain how it has fulfilled its responsibilities.
- Boards should develop and maintain a scheme of delegation to define explicitly at which level each of its functions will be exercised. It is crucial that the Board as a whole retains oversight of the core functions.
- The chair has a vital role in keeping the Board focused on its core functions, and in ensuring it operates effectively, including through the active contribution of all its members.
- Boards can choose to elect more than one Chair or Vice-Chair
- High quality professional clerking is crucial to the effective functioning of the Board.
- Members of the Board and its committees must be present in a meeting to vote, but a 'virtual' presence is permitted.

Board of Governors

The term Board of Governors is gradually replacing that of governing body. This is not merely a matter of semantics: the DfE is highlighting that the governing body is the non-executive leadership of the school, operating in a similar way to a Board of Directors of a company or a Board of Trustees of a charity.

Relationship between the Head and the Board

The regulations make clear that the headteacher is responsible for the educational performance of the school and for its internal organisation, management and control, which includes the performance management of staff. The Board's role is to hold the headteacher to account. The Advice attempts to illustrate this further by stating: *Having advised the Board, the headteacher must comply with any reasonable direction given by it.*

The guidance also makes the point that governors should not just rely on the headteacher to provide them with information. They must go through the data themselves (the advice is to do this at least annually) and use school visits to verify information.

Accountability

The Advice states that it is good practice for the Board to publish an annual governance statement (as academy trusts are required to do through the Accounts Direction) to explain how it has fulfilled its responsibilities, particularly in relation to its core functions, including:

- the governance arrangements that are in place, including the remit of any committees;
- the attendance record of individual governors at board and committee meetings; and
- an assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the board and any committees with details of any particular challenges that have arisen.

Self evaluation

The Advice recommends that Boards review their own performance regularly in light of their core functions, the inspection criteria and other helpful frameworks such as the 20 Key Questions published by the All Parliamentary Group on Education Governance and Leadership. Self evaluation provides reassurance that you are functioning as you should be or highlights shortcomings which can then be dealt with. Following a Section 5 Ofsted inspection where a school is judged to require improvement inspectors will often recommend that an external review of governance is conducted. Many schools are now choosing to undertake an external review in advance of an Ofsted inspection*.

Delegation

The Advice states that Boards should develop and maintain a scheme of delegation to define explicitly at which level each of its functions will be exercised: by the full Board, by a committee or by a named individual. This enables all involved to understand the division of responsibilities. Liverpool schools have continued this practice since it became a requirement of the Financial Management Standard in Schools. The National Governors' Association has produced an updated version of the Delegation Planner which can be downloaded from



A Board of Governors meeting, soon

the Governing Body pages of EDnet. Each individual or committee to which functions have been delegated should have a terms of reference that records their remit and decision making powers. These should be reviewed at least annually.

Role of Chair/Vice Chair

The Advice states that it is possible to appoint more than one person to share the role of Chair, or similarly the role of Vice Chair, if the board believes this is necessary and in the best interests of the school. The board would need to ensure that any role-sharing arrangement does not lead to a loss of clarity in its leadership. Succession planning arrangements should be in place so that any change in the Chair does not impede the board's effectiveness.

When appointing the Chair the emphasis should be on skills and not willingness to stand for election. The Advice states that if a Board decides that none of its existing members have the appropriate skills to serve as its Chair nothing in the regulations prevents it from recruiting a highly skilled Chair from outside its current membership. (NB The successful candidate would need to be appointed to a vacancy on the Board prior to being elected as Chair in accordance with the regulations.)

Role of the Clerk

The Advice reiterates that High quality professional clerking is crucial to the effective functioning of the Board. Clerking is not only about good organisation and administration, but also, and more importantly, about helping the board understand its role, functions and legal duties.

Virtual governance

The requirement for a governor to be present at the meeting in order to vote means that proxy voting or voting in advance of a meeting is not permitted. The Advice states that it is important that governors are present to hear and engage in the debate before casting their vote. However, the regulations allow Boards to make arrangements for their governors to have a 'virtual' presence at meetings, including committee meetings, by making use of telephone or video conferencing therefore enabling them to participate in discussion and decision making remotely.

Before making use of this new provision Boards must resolve how to go about it, taking into account such issues as whether the 'virtual' governor(s) would count towards the quorum, and, if so, what would happen if the technology failed?

The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 Departmental advice for school leaders and governing bodies of maintained schools and management committees of PRUs in England and the *Governors' Handbook* can both be downloaded from the DfE website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-governance-regulations-2013

* For more information on an external review of governance contact Dave Cadwallader: 233 3911 or dave.cadwallader@liverpool.gov.uk

Ofsted Annual Report

Ofsted published its second annual report in December. Launching the report, Sir Michael Wilshaw, HM Chief Inspector, commented that schools and colleges across the country were performing better than they were a year ago and the challenge for the nation was to build on these improvements and accelerate progress so that England's education system can match the best in the developed world.

The executive summary of the report is reproduced below.

1. Children in England now have the best chance they have ever had of attending a good school. Despite changes to inspection, more schools and academies inspected in 2012/13 were judged good or outstanding than in the previous year.

2. Greater accountability and more focused inspection have contributed to improvement in many of our weaker schools. Schools are responding positively to the important challenge of providing a good education for all. Over 90% of schools judged as requires improvement are making satisfactory progress in remedying weaknesses.

3. However, England's schools are not yet among the best in the world. There remain three key barriers to raising standards further:

- mediocre teaching and weak leadership in a minority of schools
- pockets of weak educational provision in parts of the country
- significant underachievement of children from low income families, particularly White children.

4. In the best schools, strong leaders and governors routinely challenge low expectations and mediocre teaching. They recruit and retain good teachers, including by ensuring effective support for new teachers in their first years of teaching. They create a culture in which good teaching can flourish – orderly and welcoming schools that insist on high standards, where teachers routinely challenge children to do better. These leaders reward good performance and tolerate neither inconsistent teaching nor poor behaviour. This contrasts sharply with a minority of schools where leadership loses focus on the essential job of ensuring high standards of behaviour and improving teaching and learning. In these schools, low-level misbehaviour in the classroom often slows pupils' progress.

5. English and mathematics are not taught well enough. Without a strong foundation in English and mathematics, children and young people are not prepared for the next stage in their education. They cannot progress to successful further study and, as adults,

struggle to gain and sustain employment. Around a third of lessons observed by inspectors over the past four years were judged as less than good for the quality of teaching in these two key subjects. This is compounded by disproportionately poorer teaching in the lower sets.

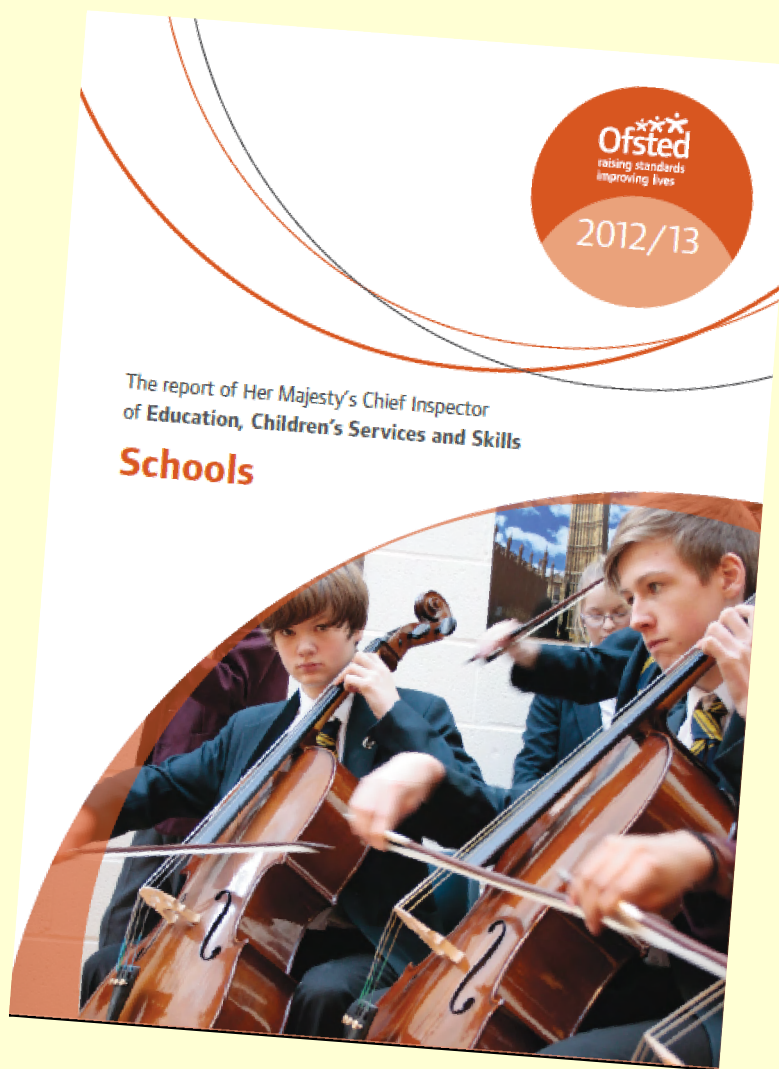
6. The proportion of children attending good or outstanding primary schools has increased considerably this year, including in some of the weakest local authority areas reported on last year. However, there are major concerns over secondary school provision in a number of local authority areas. It is unacceptable that in 13 local authorities, less than half of secondary students attend a good or outstanding school. Schools in these areas often have a range of underlying weaknesses, including high levels of exclusion and persistent absence. By contrast, there are seven London boroughs and two areas outside London where every secondary school student attends a good or outstanding school.

7. White children from low income backgrounds are being left behind. They have the lowest attainment compared with poor children from any other ethnic group. In too many schools, poverty of expectation for these children is leading to stubbornly low outcomes that show little sign of improvement. But economic disadvantage does not have to lead to low attainment. Poor children from other ethnic minority groups do better than poor children from White low-income backgrounds; in some cases they do better than the national level for all children.

8. Academies are now a well-established part of the English educational landscape. More than half of all secondary schools have become academies. In the last year alone, 210 schools converted to become new academies. Ofsted will assess the impact of conversion to academy status on school performance in the coming year along with a more detailed report on the performance of free schools.

9. Sponsor-led academies are delivering a step change in performance for chronically underperforming schools. Academies established in 2007 have narrowed the attainment gap of five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, by eight percentage points. The large majority of sponsor-led academies are members of multi-academy trusts, some of which have performed very strongly. Some trusts, however, are not performing well enough.

10. In conclusion, schools are better than in 2011/12. However, more needs to be done in those schools that continue to underperform. Inspection arrangements for the coming year have been strengthened to tackle weaknesses in regional performance and the underachievement of children who are not yet reaching their full potential. School inspections will be reviewed again in 2013/14.



Overall, the scale of the problem has not diminished sufficiently.

The report states that school leaders and governors are primarily responsible for tackling the decline in teaching and standards that usually lead to a school being judged inadequate. But beyond this the responsible authorities, such as local authorities and those that lead multi-academy trusts, have a key role to play.

Regular monitoring and early intervention, particularly in English and mathematics, can prevent more widespread failure later. But it must be decisive and linked to high-quality support from other schools or organisations. HMI have raised concerns about whether there is sufficient monitoring of, and intervention in, declining schools across the system. In many schools where intervention has taken place, the quality of that intervention has been deficient. As a result, HMI now monitor all schools judged as requires improvement, providing greater challenge with the aim of preventing further decline.

In investigating the reasons why 114 of 480 schools judged inadequate this year failed, HMI identified some of the key leadership features that lay behind the inadequate inspection outcome. In a quarter of the schools, there was a headteacher who had been in post for less than three years, and who had not adapted well to the challenges of their new position. But in another half of those schools, the headteacher was long-established or had left the school in the few months prior to it being judged inadequate.

Many long-serving headteachers had not updated their understanding of what constitutes effective teaching. Nor had they updated their own skills in monitoring the quality of teaching. Their aspirations for the school and its pupils were usually too low. Many of these long-established heads had not been challenged by their governing bodies. In some cases, the schools had resisted attempts by the local authority to provide support and challenge.

In the failing schools, HMI report the following characteristics:

- governing bodies failed to challenge a well established incumbent headteacher until it was too late;
- low aspirations arising from a lack of understanding of how good other schools were, and a failure to understand that 'the world had moved on';
- headteachers who failed, for various reasons, to develop their middle and senior leaders;
- schools were unable to handle the transition to new leadership, either because governors had no plan or because there was too little depth in leadership.

The full report can be downloaded from the Ofsted website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

School leadership

The previous year's annual report had emphasised the importance of leadership in schools. This year, 70% of schools were judged as good or outstanding for their leadership and management, which is a higher proportion than seen in last year's inspections. A key element of this is good governance.

Good governance is crucial to tackling underperformance and supporting improvement. Governance that is weak does not challenge the school about its performance or press the school to increase its aspirations. Over the past year, inspectors judged governance to be weak in around 400 schools and recommended an external review of governance. Some reviews have now taken place and, in others, action has been taken to replace the governing body with an interim executive board. However, not enough time has passed to judge the impact this has had on the quality of governance overall. Ofsted will report on this in greater depth next year.

Inexperienced or complacent leadership leads to school failure

There has been a reduction in the proportion of schools judged to require improvement. However, there were still 583 inadequate schools in England at the end of the last academic year, serving 240,000 pupils. Although many schools were removed from a formal category of concern in 2012/13, other schools continue to take their places.

Parenting Orders and Penalty Notices

Schools and local authorities have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school. The Department for Education has recently updated its guidance on this area.

Parenting contracts, orders and penalty notices for irregular attendance apply only to pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school. Penalty notices for parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours after being excluded also apply only to children of compulsory school age who are registered at a school. Parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices for misbehaviour can be applied to pupils outside compulsory school age e.g. in a sixth form or maintained nursery.

Schools can inform parents about their use of parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices via their behaviour policy.

Local authorities also have other powers to enforce school attendance where this becomes problematic, including the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order, or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school.

Parenting Orders

Parenting orders are imposed by the court and the parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. Parenting orders are available as an 'ancillary order' following a successful prosecution by the local authority for irregular attendance or breach of a school attendance order.

They are also available as a 'free-standing order' by direct application by the governing body of a school, or local authority to the Magistrates' Court, in cases either where exclusion has taken place or where there has been serious misbehaviour. An application for a parenting order for misbehaviour must be made within 40 school days of the date upon which the latest instance of serious misbehaviour occurred or, if applicable, the date on which the exclusion review process ends. If a parent has already entered into a parenting contract, an application can be made within six months of the date the contract was signed.

Parenting orders consist of two elements:

- A requirement for parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions (e.g. parenting education or parenting support classes) where they will receive help and support to enable them to improve their child's behaviour. This is the core of the parenting order and lasts for up to three months; and
- A requirement for parents to comply with the conditions specified in the order. This element can last up to 12 months.

All parenting orders must be supervised by a 'responsible officer' from the school (behaviour orders only) or local authority. They are individually named in the parenting order. Any breach by parents without a reasonable excuse could lead to a fine of up to £1,000. The police may enforce any breach of an order by a parent. Parents have a right to appeal a parenting order to the Crown Court.

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices are fines of £60/£120 imposed on parents. They are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided.

Penalty notices can only be issued by a Headteacher or someone authorised by them (a deputy or assistant head), a local authority officer or the police. All schools and the police must send copies of penalties issued to the local authority. Penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence.

Penalty notices can be used when the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school or where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed-term or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies.

Only local authorities can make decisions on whether parents should be prosecuted for school attendance offences. All schools (including Academies) have a duty to refer regular absence (authorised and unauthorised) to the local authority. This may include evidence to show how they supported the pupil and parent to improve attendance. It is for each local authority to judge each referral on its own merits and make a decision on the next course of action.

Liverpool's 2012/13 data showed attendance at secondary schools improved by 0.23% on the previous year to 93.34%. Primary attendance, however, dipped slightly by 0.31% to 94.69%, largely due to extensive bouts of illness.

Persistent absence (pupils missing 15% or more of lessons) dropped in both sectors: down from 9.92% to 8.54% in secondary schools and from 5.3% to 5.17% in primary schools. However, out of the 152 local authorities, Liverpool had the 12th highest percentage of secondary PA pupils, whilst the city's primary pupils again had the highest PA rate in the country.

The number of unauthorised holidays fell for the third consecutive year, reflecting the efforts made by schools to encourage parents not to take their children out of school in term time. Overall, this accounted for 3.53% of absences.

Thoughts and questions

We thought we would use this issue to put out various ideas as there is a lot happening in the city at the moment.

We think it would be very useful to know generally what Liverpool schools are offering. How many schools run breakfast clubs, after school clubs, choirs, orchestras etc. What is offered and how is it done? Is there a charge for activities and if so, how much? St Anne's School runs a breakfast club and a local company provides them with free cereal bars and fruit. What does your school do?

As governors it would be helpful to know what other schools are doing as it would add weight to the challenge governors should be providing. It also stops having to reinvent the wheel every time if schools can learn from each other and take up successful initiatives from other schools.

I have already asked schools how they are involved in the Year of Reading (a note here is that Jane Davis, the director, would like this to be known as Liverpool – City of Readers as it should be an initiative that has a long term legacy – not just the year).

Please take a minute to look at the www.cityofreaders.org website, you are requested to publicise the use of the website where you can upload videos of people reading, pictures or simple sound bytes, Frank Cottrell Boyce will be using items from the website as ideas for a book.

Don't forget to add the book you are reading every time you email someone!!

Only three schools replied and their responses are on LGF web site. I had hoped more Chairs would tell us about what their schools are doing.

This leads on to:-

How many schools have learning hubs? Do all governors know what a learning hub is?

This is the system whereby data is available that maps out every individual child's progress. It enables staff to know exactly where each pupil is and where targeted efforts should be made to ensure each child is making the progress, he or she should be making. How many of our schools have this working practice? It can make such a difference and can certainly answer the question as to whether Pupil Premium is having tangible effects.

Governors are responsible to Ofsted as to how and where the Pupil Premium is spent and whether it is closing the gap. Data hubs can make the difference. Ask if your school has one.

Another sticky question that has arisen over the past few months is: - Do Chairs of Governors know where to go if they have concerns about anything in their school or if they need an impartial listening ear?

Do governors know that the NW has lots of National Leaders of Governance who can be contacted to assist Chairs in many different ways? If you feel you could do with someone to share your concerns with, contact Dave Cadwallader in Governor Services who will link you with the appropriate NLG. It is a free service.

Obviously, if there are problems below senior management level, then you can approach the SMT or the Head. However, if your concerns are about the Head or possibly finance, or if you think your Head is not giving you the full facts about something – then what do you do? Again, you can go to Governor Services and start the process there. However, it can be very difficult if you are raising questions about the financial probity of the school or the capabilities of the Head neither of which should wait a whole year to be sorted out via performance management.

Schools have fallen into "special measures" or "requires improvement" because no-one has said anything about failings in Senior Management. As governors, we should not be afraid to speak out. It is the children's education that is at stake.

All governors are invited to attend our meetings

On Tuesday 29th April @ 10am, Ngaire Waine, Merseyside Police Area Commander for Liverpool South, will address LGF concerning child sexual exploitation in the city.

Other meetings are scheduled for:

- Tuesday 20th May @ 6pm
- Tuesday 24th June @ 10am
- Tuesday 15th July @ 10am

Our meetings are held at Broughton Hall High School, Yew Tree Lane, L12 9HJ. Please contact our Hon Secretary Cynthia Carmichael at cmcarmichael@blueyonder.co.uk if you would like to attend.

Message Board

After a gap of some years, Liverpool Governors' Forum has again established a discussion forum to enable governors to communicate online for the purposes of problem-solving and the sharing of good practice.

Please visit it and register to share an opinion, raise your concerns about governance or post subjects of interest to other governors.

The LGF Message Board can be accessed via our website www.livgovforum.org.uk.

Kathy Desmond
Chair

Courses for Summer term

Performance Related Pay for Teaching Staff

Monday 28 April 10.00am to 12noon

Ref: G14/21

or

Monday 28 April 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Ref: G14/22

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The session will cover:

- Changes to performance related pay (PRP) for teaching staff
- Governing Body responsibilities
- Monitoring the implementation of PRP
- Understanding the appeals process

Presenter: Katie Smith and Kath Aistrop, School Employment Advisory Team

Safer Recruitment

Thursday 01 May 9.00am to 4.00pm

Ref: G14/23

or

Friday 27 June 9.00am to 4.00pm

Ref: G14/41

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The School Staffing Regulations (2009) makes Safer Recruitment training a mandatory requirement for governing bodies in that no school can recruit staff unless a member of the recruitment panel has successfully completed Safer Recruitment Training. An appointment made by a panel that does not meet this mandatory requirement would be unlawful.

Participants on this course will be awarded a Certificate of Accreditation upon successful completion of a short assessment paper on the day; accreditation lasts for five years.

This course will:

- Provide an understanding and awareness of offender behaviour
- Identify key features of staff recruitment that help deter or prevent the appointment of unsuitable people
- Consider policies and practices that minimise opportunities for abuse or ensure its prompt reporting
- Help participants begin to review recruitment policies and practices with a view to making them safer

Presenter: Phil Cooper, Senior School Improvement Officer, Safeguarding and SEN

Cost: Free with Governor Training Service Agreement 1; £200 if no service agreement.

Termly Meeting for Chairs

Tuesday 06 May 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Ref: G14/24

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

This meeting is open to Chairs, or representatives, of all Governing Bodies.

Councillor Jane Corbett, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services, and Colette O'Brien, Director of Children's Services will be present at the meeting.

There will be a presentation of the Director's Items for the term followed by opportunities for discussion and questions.

Cost: Free



Unit 1: The Role of the Chair Wednesday 07 May 9.00am to 3.30pm

Venue: LACE Conference Centre, Croxteth Drive, Liverpool, L17 1AA

Presenters

Dave Cadwallader, School Governor Services Officer
Fran Stoddart, Sefton Governor Support and Training Officer

The Chairs' Leadership Development Programme is aimed at aspiring Chairs of Governors, as well as new and experienced Chairs. If you are a governor looking to develop your leadership skills this is the programme for you. At a time when Ofsted's scrutiny of Governing Bodies has never been more rigorous, effective leadership has never been more important. The Chair of Governors' Leadership Development Programme focuses on developing governors' leadership skills, with a particular emphasis on leading school improvement, through facilitated workshops, online activities, personal reflection and school-based learning.

The Programme comprises three units. With school improvement as a key theme across the programme, each unit focuses on an essential element of being an effective chair.

The three units can be undertaken in any order or you can choose to undertake a single unit depending on your needs.

One unit will be offered each term on a rolling programme. Coming up:

Unit 2 Effective Governance - Wednesday 05 November

Unit 3 School Improvement - Wednesday 11 February 2015

Each unit includes:

- A workshop providing opportunities to collaborate and learn with peers
- School-based activities leading to school improvement
- Access to a learning partner for support, guidance and challenge
- Interactive online content and support from an online governor community
- An online leadership self-evaluation tool to guide your development.

The cost of the full programme is £300; individual units can be undertaken at a cost of £150 per unit.

National College certification requires completion of the leadership self-evaluation, attendance at the workshop, accessing the on-line materials, and completion of a learning log and development plan based on a school-based activity. Governors completing all three units will be invited to a follow up event to share and celebrate good practice.

This course is offered via Governors' Network North West

To book onto this course visit: www.gnnw.org.uk

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the programme before booking
please contact Dave Cadwallader on 0151 233 3911

Termly Meeting for Clerks

Thursday 08 May 10.00am to 12noon

Ref: G14/25

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

Our termly meeting for clerks to governing bodies and/or committees includes briefings and discussion on current issues as well as an opportunity to share good practice and raise queries.

Presenter: Terry Brown, School Governor Services

Cost: Free

Understanding Pupil Data

Recognising Ofsted's increased expectations of governors' awareness and understanding of pupil data, these sessions offer a detailed explanation of RAISEonline and other data sources over two sessions.

Session 1 Tuesday 13 May: 10.00am to 12noon (Ref: G14/27) or 6.30pm to 8.30pm (Ref: G14/28)

AND

Session 2 Tuesday 20 May: 10.00am to 12noon (Ref: G14/32) or 6.30pm to 8.30pm (Ref: G14/33)

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The sessions will cover:

- School performance – sources of information
- RAISEonline demystified
- Benchmark comparisons
- Identifying trends and patterns
- Questions for governors to ask
- What might Ofsted ask me?

Presenter: Angela Allen, Senior School Improvement Officer

Ofsted Inspections

Thursday 15 May 6.30pm to 8.30pm

or

Friday 16 May 10.00am to 12noon

Ref: G14/29

Ref: G14/30

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The session will cover:

- The framework for inspections
- The inspection process
- How is Governance judged?
- What will the Inspectors ask?

Presenter: Dave Cadwallader, School Governor Services

The Role of the School Governor— an induction course for new governors

This course is an important element of a governor's induction and it is recommended that all new governors attend. It covers the essential aspects of a governing body's responsibilities and provides an opportunity for participants to discuss how best to approach their role as a governor.

The course is informal, non-threatening (you won't be put on the spot!) and provides a forum for you to ask questions about your new role.

The course is offered as two evening sessions on:

Monday 12 May 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Ref: G14/26

AND

Monday 19 May 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Ref: G14/31

OR

a one day session on: Monday 02 June 9.30am to 2.45pm

Ref: G14/36

Venue for all sessions: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The course will cover:

- The different categories of school governor
- School Development Plans
- Monitoring and evaluating progress
- Supporting and Challenging the school leaders
- The legal framework for meetings
- Accountability
- Complaints against the school

Presenter: Dave Cadwallader, School Governor Services Officer

Cost: Free with Governor Training Service Agreement 1; £90 per evening session if no service agreement; £200 for the one day session if no service agreement

Safeguarding

Wednesday 21 May 1.00pm to 3.00pm

Ref: G14/34

or

Wednesday 21 May 6.00pm to 8.00pm

Ref: G14/35

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The session will cover:

- The governing body's responsibilities for safeguarding
- School self-assessment
- Ofsted inspection of safeguarding
- Key questions for governors to ask

Presenter: Phil Cooper, Senior School Improvement Officer, Safeguarding and SEN

Minutes Matter!

Governing Body and Committee minutes are an important source of evidence of the effectiveness of the governing body. This session is aimed at those governors who have taken on the role of minute-taker of committee meetings. (Clerks are also welcome to attend this session).

Wednesday 04 June 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Ref: G14/37

or

Friday 06 June 10.00am to 12noon

Ref: G14/38

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The briefing will cover:

- The purpose of minutes
- Getting organised
- Capturing 'challenge'
- Note taking and transcribing into minutes
- Formatting and presentation

Presenter: Terry Brown School Governor Services

School Food and Nutritional Standards

Wednesday 11 June 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Ref: G14/39

or

Friday 13 June 10.00am to 12noon

Ref: G14/40

Venue: Toxteth Annexe, Aigburth Road, L17 7BN

The session will cover:

- The school food plan- what this means for schools
- New school food standards
- Capital Funding
- Universal Infant free school meals
- Options for trading – school meals

Presenter: Bernie Lee, Healthy Eating Officer

Courses offered by SEAT (School Employment Advisory Team)

The SEAT Team offers a comprehensive range of HR training courses designed to support head teachers, managers and governors in making sure all staff are managed to ensure best outcomes for pupils.

To book onto the courses listed on the right please contact the School Improvement Liverpool team on: 0151 233 3901 or email: SIL@liverpool.gov.uk. Cost: £100 per delegate

All SEAT courses run from 9.30am to 12.30pm and are held at Toxteth Annexe

Managing Grievances	Thursday 8th May
Managing Investigations	Thursday 15th May
Recruitment & Selection	Thursday 22nd May
Absence Management	Thursday 12th June
Contracts of Employment	Thursday 19th June
Employment Law Overview	Thursday 10th July

Booking information

To book on to a course contact Jean Worrall by email at jean.worrall@liverpool.gov.uk or telephone 0151 233 3944.

These courses are available to all schools, whatever their status (maintained, trust, academy, independent sector) and from any Local Authority (LA).

You will receive written confirmation of your booking by email or post.

Unless otherwise stated all sessions are FREE with Governor Training Service Agreement 1 or £90.00 per two-hour session per person if no Service Agreement. Longer sessions are priced individually.

Governors don't pay for training themselves – school budgets include an element for training and development which includes governors. Schools are usually more than happy to support governors in developing their role but, as a courtesy, please liaise with your school before booking onto a course.

In addition to governors, bookings from school staff are welcomed.

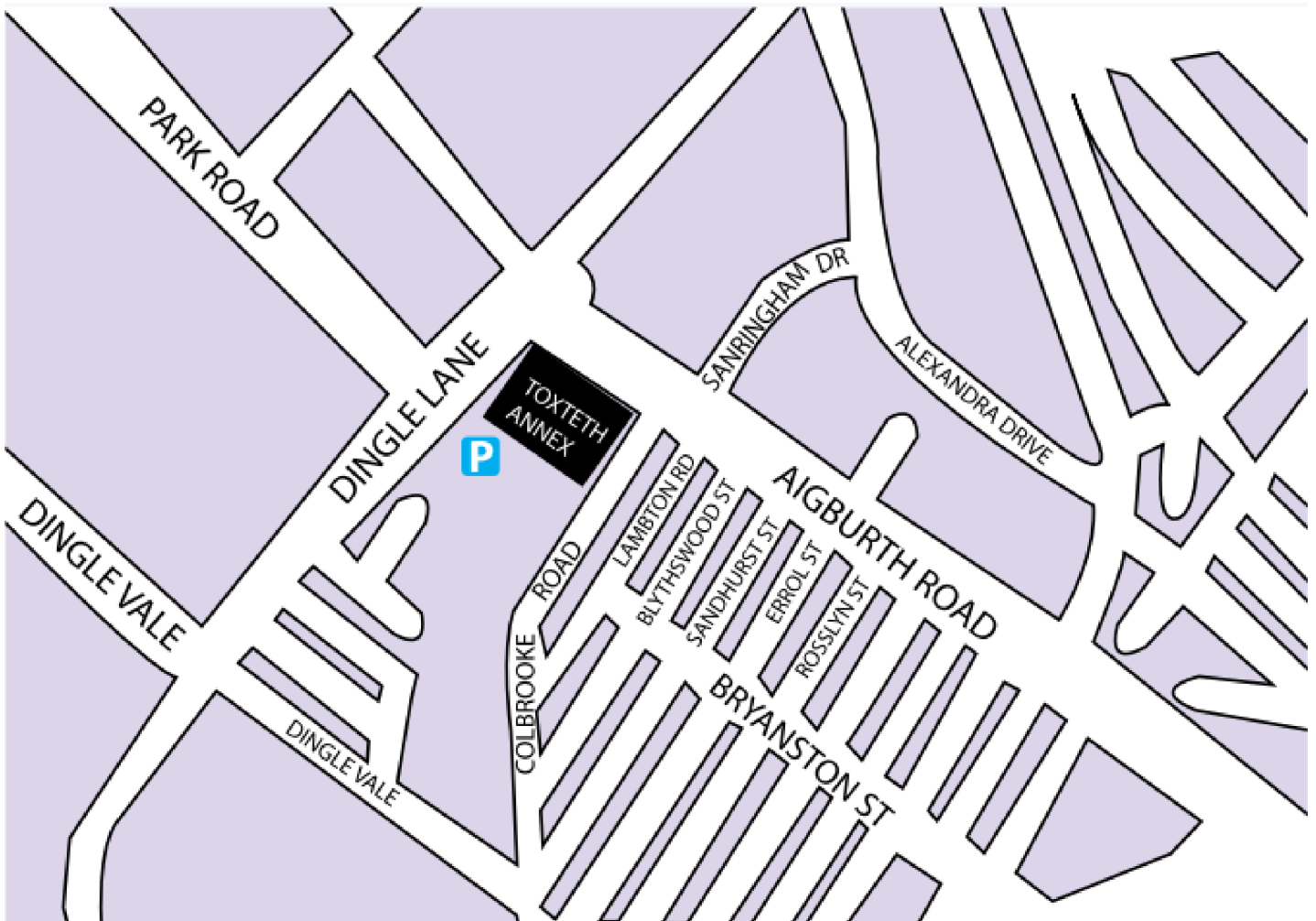
If you are unable to attend a course for which you have booked please tell us as soon as possible otherwise a fee, if applicable, will be charged.

Toxteth Annexe Conference Centre

Our primary venue for training sessions is Toxteth Annexe Conference Centre, Aigburth Road, Liverpool, L17 7BN (please note that Aigburth Road is a dual carriageway).

Free car parking is available within the grounds of the building.

Bus routes 82 and 60 run regular services which stop opposite the building whilst St Michael's train station is located 600 metres away on Southbrook Road, L17 7BQ.



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EDnet is a secure website that enables school governors to access information that previously was only available via the corporate intranet system.

EDnet simplifies and streamlines communications between the local authority and school based staff and governors. In addition to pages dedicated to school governors, the site includes information on curriculum, data, finance, health and safety, Service Level Agreements, vacancies, courses, pastoral care, local and national developments (including consultations) and much more.

Governors can logon to EDnet from any PC with internet access (for example from home, work, at a library or an internet café) using an individual username and password issued by your school.

Governors' News is published termly
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