

Termly Bulletin: Summer 2016/17

Have your say in the biggest governance survey of the year!



The NGA has once again joined forces with the Times Educational Supplement (TES) to survey the nation's school governors and trustees.

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NGATES2017

Closing date: Monday 17 July

The survey is open to all governors and trustees in England, including headteachers, and you do not have to be an NGA member to take part – please share it with your governing board and wider network!

The survey aims to build a picture of who is governing our schools, of governance practice, and to understand the impact of government policies on schools. This includes key issues such as the current crisis in school funding, and the findings will be vital as we continue to campaign for the overall size of the schools budget to be increased.

The findings from last year's survey have shaped much of NGA's approach to improving policy and practice; some examples of the impact include:

- the government backtracked on their plan to remove the requirement for academy trusts to reserve places for elected parents on governing boards, helped by findings on the proportion of governors whose first involvement had been as elected parents;
- fringe events at the 2016 Conservative and Labour party conferences, which put your views directly to senior politicians and policy makers;
- the pilot of the Young Governors' Network and a new project diversifying the cultural makeup of school governing boards were inspired by what we learned about who governs in English schools;
- NGA's responses to the national funding formula, the School Teacher's Review Body, an inquiry into the role of education in children's mental health, and other high profile consultations built on your views;
- and the findings inform NGA's guidance, advice, consultancy and training, campaigns, and conversations with ministers and officials throughout the year.

The survey is your opportunity to set the agenda for NGA's work and influence wider education policy – don't miss the chance to have your say!



Clerking Competency Framework released

The Department for Education (DfE) has published a [Clerking Competency Framework](#) – new non-statutory guidance setting out the competencies required to deliver professional clerking to school governing boards.

Governing boards in all maintained schools, federations, academies and MATs could use the Framework to understand the role of professional clerking and how it can improve the quality of governance in an organisation. The Framework can also help with recruiting a clerk and once recruited, be used to set the clerk's objectives and inform the clerk's performance appraisal process. Boards can also use the Framework to identify where improvement may be required in the services they receive from their clerk.

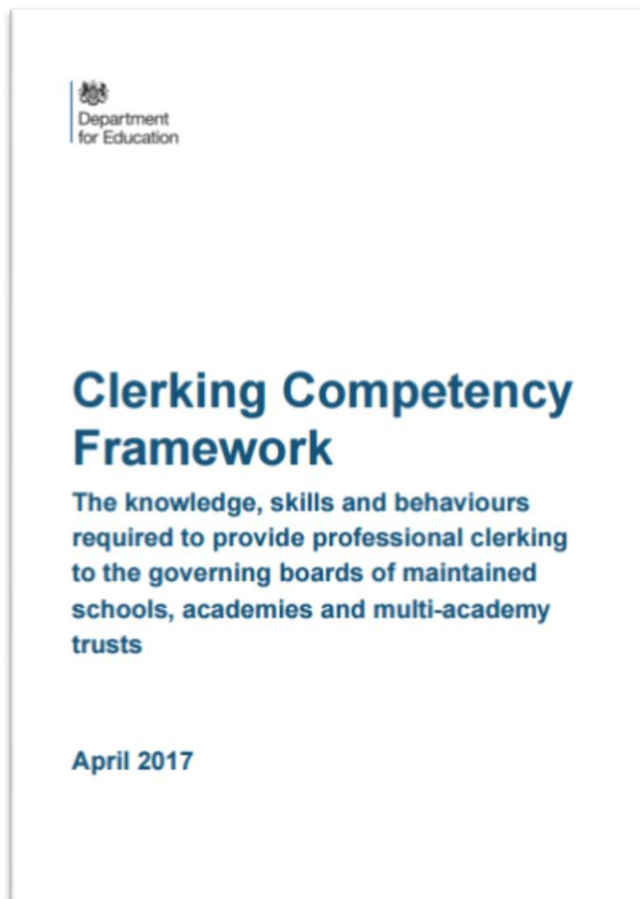
Individuals providing professional clerking services to governing boards and organisations including local authorities (LAs) employing people to provide clerking services, can use the Framework to support individuals in assessing their own practice, skills and knowledge and identifying their development needs. As with governing boards, organisations and LAs can use the framework to recruit and performance manage the people they employ.

Training providers designing and delivering training and other learning and development activities for governance can use the Framework to inform the design of training and development programmes for improving the quality and professionalism of clerking.

The Framework details specific knowledge, skills and effective behaviours for clerks, grouped under the following competencies:

1. Understanding governance: understanding the board's duties and responsibilities including governance legislation and procedures
2. Administration: ensuring that the processes and procedures of governance are administered efficiently
3. Advice and guidance: access to timely and accurate advice and guidance, or signposting to expert advice where appropriate
4. People and relationships: ensuring that the board has accurate records of its people and their skills

NGA has campaigned for a number of years for the role of clerk to be professionalised and are pleased that the DfE have released this Competency Framework. Individual clerks and organisations that provide clerking services should use the Framework to help them deliver high quality, professional clerking.





Exclusions guidance 2017: government consultation

In March 2017, the Department for Education (DfE) launched a five-week consultation on proposed revisions to the school exclusion guidance. The amendments centre on both statutory and non-statutory information and are expected to bring greater clarification to the rules that apply to exclusions and the accompanying process of review.

The consultation collated the views of head teachers, governing bodies, local authorities, academy trusts, independent review panel (IRP) members and special educational needs experts, all of whom understand the practical shortcomings of the current guidance. It is hoped that the feedback gathered from this consultation will help the DfE identify the areas that were “causing confusion” for schools.

The Government has avoided making significant changes to the existing guidance, instead it will look to correct any “factual inaccuracies” which relate to the descriptions of existing requirements. Two non-statutory annexes have been added for headteachers and for parents respectively, to help them understand the exclusion process.

The NGA welcomes the DfE’s attempt to update this guidance in a small number of areas, to provide greater clarity to governing bodies, head teachers and independent review panels on their responsibilities in relation to exclusions decisions. Whilst attempts have been made to remove ambiguities in the previous guidance document, there are some points that need further explanation and amendments.

In our view, the most profound flaw in this update is the DfE’s failure to take into account the existence of academies, and particularly multi-academy trusts. Given that it has been two years since the DfE announced that it would be working on a revised guidance, it is unfortunate that such references have been omitted.

The majority of the proposed changes to the guidance do appear to provide greater clarity. For instance, NGA welcomes the emphasis that is placed on the role of the governing body. However, to ensure that these factual changes are workable, we urge the DfE to reiterate the importance of governor training.

NGA looks forward to seeing the revised guidance once it is published in Summer 2017. View NGA’s [full response to the consultation](#).

Consultation on primary assessment: closes next week!

The Department for Education’s consultation on changes to primary assessment closes next Thursday 22 June. The consultation was launched earlier this year following concerns around the current system and aims to set the long term direction for the primary assessment system.

The consultation asks for responses on a number of issues, including:

- refining the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
- establishing a reception baseline to measure progress throughout primary school
- making end of key stage 1 tests non-statutory
- the point in key stage 2 at which the new multiplication tables check should be administered
- a move to a more flexible approach to assessing pupils’ writing
- alternative approaches to the moderation of teacher assessment

You can access the full documents and respond to the consultation online at

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/assessment-policy-and-development/primary-assessment/>



Online professional development with Learning Link

nga
learninglink



NGA is partnering with Virtual College, one of the UK's top e-learning providers, to deliver an innovative e-learning portal for governors, trustees and clerks.

With many governors undertaking their e-learning in the evenings and on weekends, learning can be done at any time, place and pace that suits them. Learning Link gives you 24/7 access to course materials and training records. Progress can be saved so governors are able to complete their courses in bitesize chunks. Governors can also access their e-learning across different devices including smartphones and tablets.

Learning Link offers bespoke training on all aspects of school governance and offers a catalogue of high-quality content on key topics including: strategy, team work, assessment, staffing, financial oversight, elements of effective governance, compliance and collaboration. It currently hosts 41 governor e-learning modules which have been updated to reflect changes in legislation, the new Governance Handbook and the Competency Framework.

NGA have also designed a new programme of eight new induction modules. These will be added to the current e-learning content catalogue. The modules will provide interactive and engaging e-learning with next steps guidance for further development and links to essential resources. New content will be released throughout the year.

For more information visit www.nga.org.uk/learninglink. To purchase Learning Link or find out more about e-learning and the benefits it could bring please call our team on 0121 237 3780 or email bill.kiely@nga.org.uk

NGA's priorities for the new government

During the general election campaign, the NGA published some of our priorities and asked candidates across the political spectrum to consider how their policies would address them.

1. Articulate a clear vision and long term strategy for the school system in England that ensures all young people have a well-rounded education
2. Fund the future by redressing the real term cuts facing schools, committing to protecting per pupil funding in real terms, implementing funding reform and ensuring health, care and well-being support services are available for children and young people
3. Understand and value the role that school governance plays in ensuring a good education for all pupils
4. Take action to address the shortages of headteachers and teachers across the country and invest in their professional development
5. Introduce a 'policy relief period' to give schools a chance to review the impact of the many recent and substantial changes to their practice

With a new government now being established, the NGA will continue to raises these priorities with ministers and officials at every opportunity.



Inspiring Governance – Future Chairs Recruitment Service

The Chairs Recruitment Service is part of the Inspiring Governance programme, supported by the Department for Education and delivered by the Education & Employers and the National Governance Association (NGA)

www.inspiringgovernance.org



The Chairs Recruitment Service will help boards with the vital task of recruiting a high calibre individual who has the potential to become a chair, vice-chair or committee chair within a year of joining a school governing board. The service will identify and recruit appropriately experienced individuals from within and beyond the education sector who are willing to be considered for this opportunity.

Recruitment of Future Chairs

The Inspiring Governance team will work with and support both the recruiter and the volunteer through the recruitment & induction process. Potential volunteers are contacted by NGA and undertake an initial screening telephone interview. Matched volunteers will then have a meeting at the school and a face to face interview with the recruiting board. If the candidate is successful, they will be appointed to the board, in accordance with the board's procedures. The final recruitment decision rests with the board.

Training & Support

Once the volunteer is appointed as a Future Chair, they will be able to access twelve months of training and support:

- A copy of Welcome to Governance or Welcome to a MAT.
- A copy of the Chairs Handbook,
- The opportunity to be mentored by an Inspiring Governance Mentor.
- Offered support and guidance for twelve months via a dedicated phone line and email address
- Access to the NGA website and guidance centre
- If under 40 years of age, introduced to the Young Governors' Network.
- Access to Learning Link - induction e-learning modules - will also be available.
- The chance to join a Leading Governance training course.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Inspiring Governance team:

Judith Hicks – Head of Inspiring Governance at NGA – 0121 237 3780

Simon Richards – Chairs' Development Manager at NGA – 0121 237 3780

Tamanna Ali – Assistant Inspiring Governance Manager at Education & Employers – 0207 566 4882

Dates for your diary

Community MATs network event

Are you a trustee or clerk of a multi academy trust? Come along to the next community MATs network event, on Friday 23 June in central London. Find out more about [the network](#) and [book a place](#).

Autumn regional meetings and conferences

Every spring and autumn, NGA holds a conference or meeting in each of the nine regions. This autumn, conferences will be in the West Midlands (23 September), South East (7 October) and North West (14 October) with a speaker from the Fischer Family Trust on new data tools for governing boards. Booking for these events will open at the end of the summer term through www.nga.org.uk/events, where you can also find a full list of dates.



The Southern Education & Academies Show

Wednesday 28 June 2017, 8.30am - 3.30pm

Hall 5, Farnborough International Exhibition & Conference Centre



FIVE Venue
FARNBOROUGH

NGA will be attending [The Southern Education & Academies Show \(SEAS 2017\)](#) – the largest education-related event in the South of England. This is a new forum for the promotion and development of effective school leadership, management, learning and teaching and features a high-level conference, inspirational workshops and a comprehensive exhibition of leading suppliers of key services for schools, colleges and academies.

[Come and visit NGA at stand 143!](#)

NGA Workshop

Clare Collins, Head of Consultancy, NGA

Time: 11.00 am – 11.40 am

Location: Keynote Theatre

[The DfE Competency Framework for Governance: what does this mean for your school or trust?](#)

An overview of the DfE's competency framework: why we need to ensure that governance is fit for purpose, why we need a framework, the rationale and development of the framework, how it works, and some ideas for how it might be used.

[Free-to-attend: Register now for FREE online, or call 01892 820366](#)

The event is free to attend for headteachers, deputy headteachers, finance directors, bursars, business managers, governors, local authority education leaders, PTAs, IT managers and school leadership teams from the state, academy and private sectors.

Lunch, refreshments and parking are free-of-charge for all attendees.

Membership of NGA

If you have found this bulletin useful and aren't currently a member of the National Governance Association, please consider joining. We have two levels of membership for schools: Standard (£85 per year) or GOLD (£260 per year). Both cover the school for up to 25 governors/trustees, giving them access to a wealth of resources online and an e-newsletter tailored for governance every Friday in term-time. Group, multi academy trust and local association memberships are also available. GOLD members have access to our GOLDline Advice Service and receive free guides.

Full details can be found at www.nga.org.uk/membership.

If you have any questions about membership, just give us a call on 0121 237 3780 or email our membership team on membership@nga.org.uk.