

National Governors' Association

February 2012 Bulletin Board

The National Governors' Association is an independent charity representing state school governors – the largest volunteer group in England – from both local authority maintained schools and academies. NGA provides support to members in the form of a weekly e-newsletter, bimonthly magazine *Governing Matters*, guidance on our website (www.nga.org.uk), an advice service for gold members, conferences, as well as guides for purchase. If you are a member of NGA, you will receive direct from us an e-newsletter every Friday in term-time. If you are not a member of NGA, and have found this bulletin useful, this is only a fraction of the information NGA produces for governors, please consider joining us: see section G.

This monthly NGA bulletin board is distributed to local governor associations and co-ordinators of governor services who are members of the NGA so that they can keep local schools up to-date. It is intended to update governing bodies on our work, the changes and developments in governance, and active Government consultations. So, please help to keep others informed by sharing and distributing this widely. You may notice that the format has changed. We would like to thank Judith Bennett, NGA vice-chair, for all her hard work on this bulletin board over the years ensuring that NGA has communicated with members of local governors associations.

If you have any comments on this Bulletin or suggestions for future editions: please contact Laura.owen@nga.org.uk.

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A. National College offering £2,000 grants for chairs training

The National College is giving grants of approximately £2,000 to schools (LA maintained and academies) to provide workshops for groups of chairs of governors. The grant will cover the hire of a facilitator to co-ordinate and deliver the workshop, produce and write reports for the College both on the local good practice, and a later report on the actions taken as a result. These workshops aim to improve school leadership by encouraging collaboration across governing bodies; improving the sharing of good practice across governing bodies; and sharing examples of governing bodies' contributions to school improvement.

Visit the National College website for more information – www.nationalcollege.org.uk.

Don't miss out – apply by Saturday 25th February. Local associations and local authorities are well placed to encourage applications from groups of schools. Although one school has to be identified as the grant holder, someone else can fill in the form, which should only take about half an hour.

B. Education News

1. Ofsted Changes: New framework, no-notice inspections, and the end of 'satisfactory'

January was a busy month for Ofsted, bringing with it lots of changes, including the new inspection framework, which can be viewed on the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk). In addition, Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty's new Chief Inspector, announced that, from September, no-notice inspections will extend to all routine inspections. He said that inspectors needed to see "schools as they really are." He noted that with the launch of the Parent View website, parents had the opportunity to comment at any time and this reduced Ofsted's reliance on questionnaires issued at the time of inspection.

Sir Michael has also proposed that the both the 'Satisfactory' and 'notice to improve' categories should be abolished and replaced with one new category: 'requires improvement'. He highlighted the fact that too many schools have been judged 'satisfactory' in successive inspections, suggesting that if after two inspection cycles schools have not improved, then more drastic measures are needed and it should automatically be placed in special measures. The maximum gap between inspections would also be reduced to between 12-18 months. Any changes will be the subject of consultation.

2. Statutory Policies Published

The Department for Education (DfE) published the long awaited updated list of statutory policies and documents that schools are required to have. It includes information on how often each policy must be reviewed, and a reminder that governors do not have to write these themselves and can delegate the task to a member of staff. NGA would go further and argue that the drafting of policies should be delegated to a member of staff, who will take into account the strategic steer from the governing body.

The list provided includes only those policies or documents which are specifically referred to in legislation. Child protection and collective worship policies are not included in these – BUT (and it is a big but!) child protection, as an example, is referred to in statutory guidance *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*, which governing bodies **must** have regard to, and the Education Act 2002, which states that "the governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school."

The published document was a list of **statutory policies, NOT of statutory duties**. The DfE reported a technical glitch with their website for a while, in which the notes at the bottom explaining this were missing. The correct version of the list can be viewed on our website (www.nga.org.uk).

The DfE is planning to release an additional list of policies which are mentioned in statutory guidance as opposed to legislation. So no confusion there then!

3. Performance Management

In January, the DfE also issued the revised regulations for teachers' and headteachers' performance management, and the new model policy on teacher appraisal and capability. It will come into effect from September 2012 and includes:

- giving schools more freedom over managing their teachers through simpler, less prescriptive appraisal regulations;
- removing the three-hour limit on observing a teacher in the classroom;
- a requirement to assess teachers every year against the new Teachers' Standards;
- allowing poorly performing teachers to be removed in about a term – the process can currently take a year or more;
- an optional new model policy for schools that deals with both performance and capability issues, and represents a reduction in the number of pages of guidance.

The earlier consultation included a proposal to require schools to pass copies of teachers' annual appraisal reports to prospective employers. That proposal is not being taken forward. A new consultation asks for views on an alternative proposal to require schools to pass on to prospective employers, on request, information about whether a teacher is or has been subject to capability procedures.

C. NGA News

1. This Month's Poll

A new poll is now on the home page! Please vote in the February poll:

'Should chairs of governing bodies be paid?'

2. January's Poll

Last month we asked you:

'Should there be a limit on how long someone can spend on one governing body?'

- 55% No (272)
20% Yes, 8 years (102)
17% Yes, 4 years (85)
6% Yes, 12 years (31)

Thank you to everyone who voted. The NGA does not currently have a recommendation on length of service for all governors, but we do believe it is good practice for chairs to step down after 6 years being chair on the same governing body.

3. New Edition of *Welcome to Governance*

The new edition of *Welcome to Governance* is now in stock. This induction guide for new governors has been substantially updated and is fully applicable to academy governors as well as maintained schools. Please contact the NGA office to order a copy – call 0121 237 3780 or email admin@nga.org.uk.

Non-members price: £10
NGA members' price: £5.50

4. Meetings attended by NGA

This item was previously featured in the Bulletin Board, but it has now been moved onto our website under 'About Us.'

D. Dates for your Diary

1. NGA Spring Regional Meetings: Driving school improvement

NGA regional meetings will focus on the theme of how governing bodies can best affect school improvement without over stepping the non-executive role. We will feed discussion into the Department for Education's governance review. These free events are for **NGA members only**.

Region	Date and Time	Venue
York & Humberside	Tuesday 21 st February, 19.00 – 21.00	Royal York Hotel, York
North East	Tuesday 6 th March, 19.00 – 21.00	Durham County Hall
London	Wednesday 7 th March, 19.00 – 21.00	Hilton London Metropole
East of England	Saturday 17 th March, 10.00 – 13.00	Hinchinbrooke School, Huntingdon
South West	Saturday 17 th March 11.00 – 14.00	Taunton (venue tbc)
North West	Monday 19 th March, 18.30 – 20.30	Swallow Hotel, Preston
East Midlands	Tuesday 20 th March, 11.00 – 14.00	Derbyshire (venue tbc)
South East	Tuesday 20 th March, 12.00 – 14.00	London (venue tbc)

2. Leading governors: free regional training workshops

As part of the Leadership Development Offer for Chairs of governing bodies, the National College is offering a series of free workshops. The aims of these workshops are to provide professional development, focusing on the changes occurring within education and governance, and an overview and trial of the National College training, with an opportunity to comment on the development to-date. Not only are these events free, but travel expenses will be paid. This means for York and Humberside and London, if you attend the National College workshop before the NGA regional meeting, your travel will be paid. These are free for **anyone to attend**.

As well as chairs of governors, the events are open to vice-chairs and aspiring chairs, headteachers, co-ordinators of governor services, and diocese leaders. Places are limited. Contact National College to book a place (www.nationalcollege.org.uk).

Region	Date and Time	Venue
York & Humber	Tuesday 21 st February, 14.00 – 18.30	Royal York Hotel, York
East of England	Thursday 23 rd February, 14.00 – 18.30	University Arms, Cambridge
London	Wednesday 7 th March, 14.00 – 18.30	Hilton London Metropole
South East	Wednesday 14 th March, 15.30 – 18.00	Ashford International Hotel, Kent
South West	Thursday 15 th March 14.00 – 18.30	The Rougemont Hotel, Exeter
North West	Tuesday 20 th March, 15.30 – 20.00	Renaissance Manchester Hotel, Manchester
North East	Wednesday 21 st March, 14.00 – 18.30	Copthorne Hotel, Newcastle
East Midlands	Monday 26 th March, 15.30 – 20.00	National College, Learning and Conference Centre, Nottingham

3. Free Workshops on the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The National College has also provided funding for one day workshops on the SFVS. The training is available free to Chairs of Governors and Chairs of Finance/Resources Committees. The training is being provided by those companies licensed by the National College to provide School Business Manager training: Anglia Ruskin University, Education Management Direct and Serco. To find out more about the programme and the dates, visit <http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/about-us/national-college-initiatives/chairsofgovernors/schools-financial-value-standard.htm>.

Places are limited so if you want to attend, book a place as soon as possible.

4. NGA at the Education Show, NEC Birmingham – Friday 16th March

The NGA will be exhibiting at the Education Show, as well as holding two seminars. They are free to attend, and will apply to governors of every type of school. To book a place, you will need to register with the Education Show (www.education-show.com).

10.30 – 12.30 Effective Governance in a changing world

Keynote speaker: Mike Ion, Best Practice Network

14.00 – 16.00 Effective Governance: Knowing your school

Keynote speaker: Tom Winskill, HMI Ofsted

Come and hear what the new Ofsted framework will mean for you.

5. Chairs of Associations Conference, Nottingham, 27th – 28th April 2012

6. Yorkshire and Humberside Data Conference, Sheffield, Saturday 19th May 2012

This free event is open to anyone, not just NGA members.

7. NGA Summer Conference, London – Saturday 16th June 2012

8. NGA Conference and 2012 AGM, (venue tbc) – Saturday 24th November 2012

E. DfE Consultations (closing dates are for DfE)

1. [Supporting Families in the Foundation Years: Proposed Changes to the Entitlement to Free Early Education and Childcare Sufficiency](#) **Closing Date:** Friday 3 February 2012
2. [A consultation on revised statutory guidance and regulations for exclusions from schools and pupil referral units in England](#) **Closing Date:** Friday 17 February 2012
3. [Consultation On Proposed Changes To The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009 To Require Governing Bodies To Share Information With Prospective Employers About Whether Head Teachers And Teachers Have Been In Capability Procedures](#) **Closing Date:** Friday 24 February 2012
4. [Removing the duty on maintained schools to follow the information and communication technology \(ICT\) Programmes of Study, Attainment Targets and statutory assessment arrangements](#) **Closing Date:** Wednesday 11 April 2012

5. [Consultation on the Raising the Participation Age \(RPA\) regulations](#)

Closing Date: Friday 13 April 2012

To view the consultations, please go to <http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm>.

NGA is always interested in hearing governors' views and experience on these and other topics; please e-mail any comments or copies of any submission you make to NGA's policy manager: Gillian.allcroft@nga.org.uk

F. NGA Partners

1. School Governors' One-Stop Shop (SGOSS)

The School Governors' One-Stop Shop is a charity dedicated to recruiting and placing school governors. Its services are free to schools, LAs, volunteers and employers. If your school's governing body has vacancies, or is seeking a volunteer with particular skills, contact SGOSS on 0207 354 9805.

Visit the SGOSS website at: www.sgoss.org.uk

G. NGA Membership Benefits

Make sure your association is receiving all its benefits. Members of the executive committees of local associations are entitled to receive a copy of the NGA magazine, *Governing Matters*, sent to their home address, to have access to the members' only section of the NGA website, and to have the e-newsletter sent direct to their email address. If you have not yet given us the names, addresses and email addresses of your executive members, or if these have changed, please send details to: membership@nga.org.uk.

Governing bodies can join the NGA to receive more benefits. Every governor will gain access to the members' only area of the website, and receive the weekly newsletter.

Standard governing body membership: £63 entitles you to five free copies of the magazine, discounts on publications, and a free place at members' events.

Gold governing body membership: £250 ensures in addition that every governor receives the bi-monthly magazine *Governing Matters*; the school gets a free pack of guides, additional event places, and is entitled to advice from the NGA, including **access to our legal service**.