

March 2014 Bulletin Board

The National Governors' Association is an independent charity representing state school governors from local authority maintained schools and academies. 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 governing bodies up-to-date on our work and the changes and developments in governance. So, please help to keep others informed by sharing and distributing this widely. 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 I.

If you have any comments on this bulletin or suggestions for future editions, please contact laura.owen@nga.org.uk.

Contents:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. Cover story | F. Dates for your diary |
| B. Education news | G. Consultations |
| C. Parliamentary news | H. NGA partners |
| D. Improving practice | I. NGA membership benefits |
| E. NGA news | |

A. What is the current state of school governance?

Today, the National Governors' Association, in partnership with the University of Bath and the charity the Education and Employers Taskforce launch a survey into the current the state of school governance. Professor Chris James, University of Bath, said 'it is six years since the University of Bath was last involved in a survey of this kind, when over 5000 school governors took part. Since then, there have been a number of changes to the educational landscape; many of which have affected the important work that school governors undertake.'

Emma Knights, Chief Executive of the National Governors' Association, said 'this survey is very important because the results will directly inform NGA's work to support governing bodies to improve. In particular, we want to know more about the amount of time governors are spending on governance and how they are spending it. This is an issue NGA is keen to clarify as governors tell us they are spending increasing amounts of time and such levels of commitment may well deter volunteers with full-time employment and other responsibilities.'

Nick Chambers, Director of the charity the Education and Employers Taskforce, said "With schools becoming increasing autonomous the role of the governing body becomes ever more important. I would encourage all serving school governors to complete this survey to give us an accurate picture as possible of the current state of school governance in England.' A report of the survey findings will be published on the 15 May 2014 to coincide with a new alliance to support and promote school governance being announced that day. The report of the survey findings will be available on the National Governors' Association website.

To take part, [click here](#). If you have any questions, please contact [Ellie](#).

The survey closes Monday 14 April 2014.

Findings from the previous study by the University of Bath in 2008 can be found [online](#).

B. Education news

1. Forthcoming changes to school teachers' pay and conditions –

On 13 February 2014 the School Teachers' Review Body published its 23rd Report into teachers' pay and conditions. The STRB is an independent body established by Government to make recommendations on teachers' pay. STRB receives a remit from the Secretary of State for Education to look at particular aspects of teachers' pay and make recommendations annually. STRB then collects evidence from a number of statutory consultees (including the NGA) as well as commissioning its own research and then publishes its report along with its recommendations. For local authority maintained schools the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) is a statutory requirement. Academies are not bound by the STPCD but many have continued to use it as a framework.

The report sets out the STRB's analysis of evidence given by relevant organisations and makes proposals on teachers' pay. The key recommendation relates to leadership pay where STRB has proposed that the leadership scale is simplified and although broad pay bands should be retained the existing spine points should be removed. It will be for governing bodies to set individual pay ranges within those bands. It has also proposed a simple three stage approach for governing bodies to follow in setting pay when appointing new headteachers, requiring them to assess the particular challenges and circumstances of their school and judge the extent to which these, together with the skills they are looking for, need to be reflected in the head's individual pay range.

The report states that governing bodies should have access to benchmarking data, including on pay levels and on school challenge and context. It underlines the importance of support from a professional clerk able to advise the governing body on their duties.

The Secretary of State has stated that, subject to the views of consultees, he will accept all the key recommendations from the report. It is likely that changes will apply to school leaders who are appointed after September 2014.

[NGA briefing for members](#)

2. DfE release guidance and support for providing universal infant free school meals

The Minister of State for Schools, David Laws, has announced a package of measure to help schools deliver free school meals (UFSM) from September 2014, including an [advice document](#), a [support service](#), and an [online toolkit](#). It has also launched a [consultation](#) on revising the school food standards regulations.

[DfE Press release](#)

3. Teaching union to strike – 26 March

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) announced on 7 February that it has called a national strike on Wednesday 26 March in relation to its ongoing dispute with the Secretary of State over pay and conditions.

[NUT Press release](#)

4. Pupil Premium Awards

The DfE has launched its 2014 Pupil Premium Awards which recognise the schools that have done the most to boost the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils. The aim of the awards is to celebrate those schools which have made best use of the premium and showcase innovative and effective practice. The closing date is midday 7 April.

More details can be found at [DfE Pupil Premium Awards](#)

C. Parliamentary news

Academies and free school education select committee inquiry

DfE officials gave evidence in front of the Education Select Committee on Wednesday 4 February 2014, at the first evidence hearing for the Committee's inquiry into academies and free schools. Officials were also quizzed about the appointment and remuneration of academy brokers, regional commissioners, and the establishment of free schools.

MPs wanted to know how the process for sponsored academy conversion of a school worked in practice. The Committee was told that schools judged 'inadequate' by Ofsted were approached, initially by letter, within five days of Ofsted's final moderated judgement explaining the DfE's policy assumption that they would become an academy. Within 20 working days, a visit would be arranged by an academy broker. NGA has a [Q&A for schools facing sponsored academy conversion](#) in our guidance section.

The committee has also taken evidence from Andreas Schleicher, Deputy Director for Education and Skills at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – the man in charge of PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) tests. He said that free-standing academies have the flexibility and control they need, though expressed concern that academy chains will reduce the feeling of 'ownership' a school gets when it leaves the local authority. OECD's global research has found that schools with local autonomy but high accountability are the most successful.

Members can read more about the inquiry on our [Parliamentary pages](#).

D. Improving practice

Female headship: are governors being 'traditional?'

According to [Department for Education \(DfE\) figures](#), in 2012 4% of women in schools were headteachers compared to 6% of men, and 23% of men working in schools were in the top pay band compared to 19% of women. Kate Chhatwal, director of headship at [The Future Leaders Trust](#), told [The Guardian](#) that women face for more hurdles than men when applying for headship positions. 'It can be a minefield for women. Recruiters can have quite traditional views of what they're looking for and it can be tricky to navigate that,' she said.

Furthermore, Dr Karen Edge, a senior lecturer at the London Centre for Leadership in Learning, is currently looking into this issue as part of her research at the [Institute of Education](#). The preliminary evidence has shown that women in England may be having a radically different and potentially more difficult leadership experience than those in America and Canada.

Recruiting a headteacher is one of the most important tasks a governing body will undertake. It is therefore important that, using a thorough and well-planned process, governors give themselves the best opportunity of getting the best head for their school.

[The Guardian teacher network – the glass ceiling in education](#)

[NGA guidance on recruiting a head](#)

[NGA/NCTL joint guidance on selecting and recruiting a new headteacher](#)

E. NGA news

1. New NGA resources

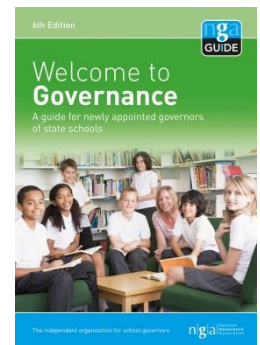
Welcome to Governance

The 6th Edition of Welcome to Governance is now available. Covering governors in LA maintained schools and academies, the new edition goes through changes introduced last year to curriculum and assessment, funding (including pupil premium), data dashboards and Ofsted, and the *School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013*.

Lord Nash said 'high calibre governors who understand and carry out their role confidently are a huge asset to a school. I would encourage every governor, especially those new to the role, to make the most of the resources and guidance available to develop their knowledge and skills. NGA's Welcome to Governance continues to be a valuable resource for thousands of new governors.

Members: £5.00

Non-members: £10.00



Purchase a copy [online](#). For bulk discounts (over 15 copies) please call the office on 0121 237 3780, or email [Ravinder](#).

New publication on multi-academy trusts

On 5 March, NGA attended the Independent Academies Association's Spring conference at the Emirates Stadium in London. In partnership with IAA, NGA ran the governance strand of the conference on multi academy trusts (MATs), and a report will be published at a later date.

However, for the event, NGA and Browne Jacobson, our legal partner, produced an introductory guide on the governance of MATs. The first version of the document can be found on the [NGA's website](#) along with other presentations from the governance strand.

This is a first edition of the briefing, which we intend to update. We would greatly appreciate any comments that members have on the document. If you have any, please send them to [Philip Wood](#).

There is also a new resource on MATs from the [National College of Teaching and Leadership](#)

Model procedure for electing parent governors

NGA has produced a model procedure document for electing parent governors. It contained a model nomination letter, nomination forms, a letter for parents, ballot papers, and a copy of the qualifications and disqualifications to serve as a school governor.

It is available to members in the [Guidance section of the website](#)

2. NGA Web Polls

Thank you to everyone who voted in last month's poll:

'Have you ever tried approaching local employers to find a new governor?'

- 53% (76) No
- 25% (36) Yes, it was unsuccessful
- 20% (29) Yes, it was successful

Please take the time to vote in the new poll:

On a scale of 1-5 (5 being very confident), how confident are you that staff are prepared for the new national curriculum?'

NGA Poll:

Have you ever tried approaching local employers to find a new governor?



F. Dates for your diary

If you would like us to advertise your local event, please email [Laura Owen](mailto:laura.owen@nga.org.uk).

1. Local association conference

NGA is holding its second conference for chairs of local associations. The day will be focused on working together and learning from each other. There will be a report on the local associations' survey (coming soon!), along with discussions around how NGA can help you, succession planning, where you want to be in 3 years, and how to get there.

If you are the chair of an association and haven't received an invitation, please email [Laura](mailto:laura.owen@nga.org.uk).

2. Academies Show London

The next Academies Show takes place on Wednesday 30 April at the ExCeL Centre in London. The show is both for LA maintained schools and established academies and is free to attend. It aims to provide visitors with a clear understanding of the process of converting, how to manage a successful academy, and information about the future of education policy from those who decide it.



Emma Knights, NGA Chief Executive, will lead an interactive session dedicated to providing the audience with answers to their questions about good governance. Also in attendance will be Philip Wood, NGA Parliamentary and Advice Officer, who will be leading a seminar discussing Choosing the Best Governance Structure for your Academy, including: how to govern effectively as a group; improving your governance structure and working effectively with sponsors.

G. Consultations since the last bulletin (closing dates are for DfE)

1. [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#) **Closing date:** Friday 14 March 2014
2. [Management of independent schools: proposed regulations](#) **Closing date:** Thursday 10 April 2014

NGA is always interested in hearing governors' views on any subject; please email any comments, or copies of any submission you make to NGA's policy manager, [Gillian Allcroft](mailto:gillian.allcroft@nga.org.uk).

H. NGA partners

Work with Future Leaders to develop your school's SLT

The Future Leaders Trust is working to improve school leadership in challenging contexts across England. If your school meets its criteria, it could recruit a new member to SLT or nominate an existing staff member with leadership potential to join the Future Leaders programme. This individual will then be part of a fully-funded leadership development programme that will help prepare them for headship. There are just a few places left for the application round closing on Monday 17 March 2014.

For more information about the Trust view the Future Leaders Trust website. You can contact the Trust via its School Networks team before the end of March to find out how your school work with us by calling 0800 0094142 or emailing schools@future-leaders.org.uk.

I. NGA membership benefits

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. Members also receive generous discounts off our publications.

GOLD governing body membership: £260 ensures in addition that every governor receives NGA's magazine *Governing Matters*, free induction guides, additional event places, and is entitled to advice from the NGA, including **access to our legal advice service**.

Standard governing body membership: £72 entitles you to five free copies of the bi-monthly magazine, discounts on publications, and a free place at members' events as well as the weekly newsletter and web resources.

Make sure your association is receiving all its benefits. If you have not yet given us the names, home addresses and email addresses of your executive members, or if these have changed, please send details to: membership@nga.org.uk.

