

June 2012 Bulletin Board

The National Governors' Association is an independent charity representing state school governors – one of the largest volunteer groups in England – from both 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 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.

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.

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. Cover Story

NGA TES Joint Survey: A Chance to Give Your Views

The NGA has again teamed up with the Times Educational Supplement (TES) to run a joint survey on issues for governors. You may remember last year it resulted in much needed coverage of governance in the TES as well as being a very useful tool for NGA when representing governor opinion. The survey is open to all governors, so please feel free to circulate to non-NGA members (while of course encouraging them to join NGA!). The survey is open until 11 June.

Last year, over 950 governors took part. We want to beat that figure, so please pass this on to other governors and encourage them to take part. Last year, we discovered that an astonishing 48% of secondary governors said their schools had altered their curriculum as a result of the English Baccalaureate. This year, we are asking about academies, performance management, local authority cuts, and much more.



The survey only takes a few minutes. Please take the time to fill it in! There is the chance to win one of two £50 Amazon vouchers at the end.



<http://www.tes.co.uk/GovernorsSurvey>

B. Education News

1. Changes to Ofsted inspections to be introduced from September 2012

On 30 May Ofsted released its response to the consultation on school inspections. The National Governors' Association welcomes Ofsted's announcement, and agrees that the acceptable standard of education should be 'good'. The NGA is pleased to note that many of the concerns we expressed in our consultation response have been taken on board in Ofsted's response. We look forward to discussing with Ofsted how the fine detail will work in practice.

Summary of the changes:

- 'Outstanding' schools will have to have 'outstanding' teaching, though not every lesson must be 'outstanding' for this grade
- 'Notice will be given the afternoon of the working day before the inspection
- 'Notice to improve' will be replaced by 'serious weaknesses.' This will be applied to schools that are inadequate, but have the leadership capacity to improve.
- The 'satisfactory' category will become 'require improvement'; schools which 'require improvement' will have earlier re-inspections, now within 2 years, but with continued monitoring and support
- Normally, schools 'requiring improvement' after two subsequent consecutive inspections (i.e. usually within four years) will be placed in special measures. Ofsted have made exception to those that are making good progress, but not yet good
- Schools will have to provide anonymised performance management information to inspectors.

2. Governors' Guide to the Law

After much lobbying from the NGA, we are pleased to inform you that a new edition of Governors' Guide to the Law is out! The Department for Education (DfE) has informed us that it will be updated again to take into account changes from September (including constitution regulations), but will be in a new slim-line format.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance/b0065507/gtll>

3. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

On 15 May, the DfE finally published its response to last year's consultation on the *SEND Green Paper - Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability - Progress and Next Steps*. Although much of the press coverage centred on 'personal budgets for parents,' there were other important issues covered in the announcement. Sarah Teather (Minister of State for Children) confirmed that statements would be replaced with Education, Health and Care Plans, and that these would retain the statutory protection currently provided by statements but would extend to cover young people from age 0-25. Personal budgets are being tested by the SEND pathfinders and this does include some educational provision.

For children without statements the DfE has confirmed that it will abolish the school action and school action plus designations and replace it with a single school based SEN category.

It is important that the DfE makes available clear guidance to schools to ensure children are appropriately designated and no child slips through the net.

The NGA will be providing a detailed brief on the DfE paper to members and the DfE will be presenting its plans to NGA's conference on 16 June

<http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a00209040/changes-to-sen-support-for-2014>

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/support%20and%20aspiration%20a%20new%20approach%20to%20special%20educational%20needs%20and%20disability%20%20%20progress%20and%20next%20steps.pdf>

<http://www.nga.org.uk/Resources/Consultation/SEN-Green-Paper.aspx>

4. Changes to free nursery places

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has announced his plans to extend free early childcare to include two-year olds from September 2012, earlier than the 2013 start indicated in previous plans. There are currently 800,000 three to four year olds taking up to 15 hours a week free early education. The scheme will be trialled in ten areas, reaching around 1,000 two-year olds from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

Clegg also wants to make the scheme more flexible; currently, parents must split their 15 hours a week over 3 days between 08.00 and 18.00. The changes will allow the hours to be split over just 2 days, and between 07.00 and 19.00 to make it more flexible for parents working part-time. 'There will be more free childcare, it will be higher quality, and it will be more flexible for parents.' Children's Minister Sarah Teather said 'high quality education is the key to making a difference early on in a child's life.' The challenge will be to make sure all eligible families get access to the free childcare.

The statutory guidance will be revised and made clearer so parents know that they do not have to pay anything to get the free place. Councils and the Local Government Association (LGA) are worried about the funding for nurseries, though the LGA were otherwise pleased by the plans. Shadow Minister of State for Children and Families Sharon Hodgson also voiced concerns about the funding, particularly with the closure of many children's centres, and whether there will be enough high quality trained staff to cope with the increase.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a00209664/deputy-prime-minister-hails-a-revolution-in-free-pre-school-education>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-18248658>

5. Children and Families Bill

The Queen's speech announced that in early 2013 a Children and Families Bill would be introduced into Parliament. The Bill will cover family law, shared parenting, and strengthen the role of the Children's Commissioner and will also put into effect some of the proposals from the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Green Paper published last year (see above).

The Bill will:

- replace SEN statements with a single assessment process (the Education, Health and Care Plan), which will protect children and young people up to the age of 25, instead of the current age of 16
- give local authorities a requirement to publish a local offer setting out the support on offer to children and young people with SEND
- give the right to a personal budget for their support to young people with an Education Health and Care Plan
- Finally, the bill will strengthen the remit of the Children's Commissioner giving an new overall function to 'promote and protect children's rights,' including the functions of the Children's Rights Director at Ofsted. The term of office will be limited to a single six-year term.

6. Exclusions Guidance

The DfE has released the new exclusions guidance for local authority (LA) maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units. The guidance and new regulations will take effect from 1 September 2012. NGA will be producing a briefing on exclusions shortly.

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00042-2012>

C. NGA News

1. June Poll

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

'Do you think that teachers who add the most to pupil performance should be paid more?'

2. May Poll

Thank you to everyone who voted in the May poll on:

'Should there be performance management of governors?'

73% Yes (384) 26% No (136) 1% Don't know (7)

This result is reassuring as it demonstrates that most governors are willing to have their own contributions reviewed and evaluated.

3. Headteacher Recruitment

The NGA is working with the National College to update and consolidate existing guidance for governors on recruiting headteachers. We are interested in including examples of job descriptions and job specifications, some practical guidance about candidate brochures, and selection activities/assessment centres (e.g. did you use an in-tray exercise, learning walk observations, psychometric testing, pupil/staff discussion group or panel?).

If you have recruited for a headteacher in the last couple of years, what assessment exercises did you use and how effective do you think they were? Please email any comments or a copy of your candidate information pack/brochures to our Policy Manager, Gillian Allcroft at: gillian.allcroft@nga.org.uk.

The updated guidance will be presented at a workshop at NGA's conference on 16 June and will be available on www.nga.org.uk the following week.

4. Call for nomination for the NGA Board of Trustees

The NGA Board is made up of 18 members; nine Regional Directors, elected directly by NGA members in their region, and nine General Directors, elected by the whole membership via postal ballot. Each year one third of places for General Directors come up for election.

The General Directors elected will take office following the AGM on 24 November 2012.

All categories of NGA member are entitled to stand as candidates or nominate candidates for election. All candidates must be serving governors. The closing date for nominations is: 18.00 on 31 July 2012.

We are also seeking nominations for the position of London Regional Director. The same deadline applies.

Nomination forms and details of what being an NGA Director entails can be obtained from the NGA office via email governorhq@nga.org.uk or by ringing 0121-237-3780. Alternatively details can be downloaded from the About Us section of the NGA website. www.nga.org.uk

D. Dates for your Diary

Autumn Regional Meetings

These NGA Regional Meetings are free events usually for **NGA members only**, but the London regional conference is open to non-members. Future bulletin boards will contain more information.

Region	Date	Location
East of England	Saturday 13 October	Stansted
East Midlands	Wednesday 17 October	TBC
London	Saturday 6 October	London
North East	Monday 1 October	Durham
North West	Monday 17 September	Preston
South East	Tuesday 23 October	London
South West	Saturday 20 October	Taunton
West Midlands	Wednesday 19 September	Birmingham
York & Humberside	Tuesday 18 September	Wakefield

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

1. [Consultation on careers guidance for schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions](#) **Closing Date:** Wednesday 1 August 2012
2. [Safeguarding children: proposed changes to child performance legislation](#) **Closing Date:** Friday 3 August 2012
3. [Protection of Biometric Information of Children in Schools: Consultation on draft advice for Proprietors, Governing Bodies, Head Teachers, Principals and School Staff, Young people, Parents and Representative bodies](#) **Closing Date:** Friday 3 August 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

School Governors' One-Stop Shop (SGOSS)



The School Governors' One-Stop Shop is a DfE funded 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

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.

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**.

Standard governing body membership: £70 entitles you to five free copies of the 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. 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, home addresses and email addresses of your executive members, or if these have changed, please send details to: membership@nga.org.uk.