

National Governors' Association BULLETIN BOARD

BB 12/11 **1 December 2011**

Ground Floor, 36 Great Charles Street, Birmingham B3 3JY
Tel: 0121 237 3780 Fax: 0121 233 1323 E-mail: governorhq@nga.org.uk Website: www.nga.org.uk

The Bulletin Board is an NGA membership benefit circulated to Local Associations and to Co-ordinators of Governor Services to update them on NGA's work, consultations and developments in school governance.

Please share this information widely, through your email contacts and at local meetings, to keep governing bodies better informed of, and more involved in, current activities and national issues.

FOR ACTION

First in a new series of briefing notes from NGA

Knowing your school: RAISEonline for Governors of Primary Schools

The NGA has published the first in a series of briefing notes for school governors produced in association with partners. The first, written by RM Education, is aimed at helping primary governors' understanding of RAISEonline, but we will follow this up with a version for secondary school governors. Further briefing notes will follow considering other aspects of school life.

Lord Hill, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools, said: 'One of the key jobs of the governing body is to hold the head to account for the performance of the school. To fulfil that role, governors need access to reliable information, know how to interpret it, and know the right questions to ask. RAISEonline is a vital source of information and I hope that this useful publication will help you to put it to the best possible use.

'The Government is committed to publishing more school data and to giving parents more information. I congratulate the National Governors' Association on producing notes on "Knowing your school" and I welcome this publication on RAISEonline for primary school governors.'

Unlike NGA material for members only, this briefing note can be forwarded to other primary schools, so please do circulate it to governors outside NGA network, and of course suggest they might like to join!

The briefing note can be downloaded from the NGA website – [Knowing Your School](#)

This month's NGA poll

On NGA's home page, there is a new monthly poll. Please vote in December's: *The NGA and RM have just issued guidance about RAISEonline – do you think your headteacher keeps your governing body sufficiently informed about this issue?*

Last month's NGA poll

Last month we asked you: Do governing bodies have a role in school improvement? 387 of you responded and of those:

91% Yes, a significant role 353

- 5% Yes, a small role 21
- 2% No role at all 9
- 1% Not sure 4

This question was posed because the Department for Education (DfE) is currently undertaking a review of governance with a focus on the role of governing bodies in school improvement. The review is examining:

- what we expect a highly effective GB would do in relation to school performance;
- the barriers that commonly prevent GBs from achieving this;
- the extent to which changes in policy and at local authority level will impact on GB effectiveness;
- ways in which the DfE could influence practice.

The review, which will report in the New Year, has identified the following issues:

- Lack of clear focus on raising attainment and narrowing gaps;
- Difficulty in attracting and retaining the right people and removing governors who are not performing;
- Difficulty in accessing and acting on information and data;
- Difficulty in getting the right relationship between the head teacher and GB.

The aim of NGA’s poll in November was therefore to get an impression of how widespread the lack of focus on school improvement and children’s attainment is. The result suggests that while some governors perhaps do not appreciate their role in school improvement the clear majority do.

NATIONAL COLLEGE – CHAIR OF GOVERNORS’ DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

National Leaders of Governance

The application round for National Leaders of Governance (NLG) will be opening soon on the National College website.

NLGs are highly effective chairs of governors who will work with other chairs to help them develop and to improve school performance. The National College is working with NGA and partners to designate around 50 NLG in this first cohort. NLGs will be deployed to areas of greatest need, where their skills can be most effectively used. It’s likely that the time commitment for an NLG would be 10 – 20 days per academic year, and this would be made up of around three to six deployments, providing a combination of face-to-face, email and phone support. The application round for the first cohort of NLG will be open until 16 January. Applicants who meet the criteria and are successful at assessment will be invited to induction and training in the Spring term.

For further information: www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors

One-off grants for chairs of governor for facilitated workshops

The National College is making one-off grants of around £2,000 available for facilitated workshops, in order to provide opportunities for chairs of governors to share current best practice within their local area on school improvement. The grant application form, and details of the terms of the grant will be on the National College website from 16 December. Applications for this limited funding must be submitted to the College by 24 February, and successful applicants must return signed grant letters returned by 31 March.

In the meantime, professional leadership development resources, currently being developed by the National College, the NGA, NCOGS, FASNA and partners, will be available from the National College from early Summer 2012. These will be delivered by licensed providers.

Register your membership of the National College

Membership of the National College is free and offers a wealth of resources, including the College's online Leadership Library and online networks. To register simply (your membership) go to www.nationalcollege.org.uk/membership. You'll receive the latest news on professional development and events in your area.

NGA DATES FOR YOUR DIARY and NGA NEWS

NGA Summer Conference – Saturday 16 June 2012 – London

NGA Conference and 2012 AGM – Saturday 24 November 2012 (venue tbc)

NGA Annual General Meeting and Conference: *Governors as Leaders*

The presentations and report on the conference held in Birmingham on Saturday 19 November 2011 are posted on the NGA website.

NGA Board Elections

General Directors – The following were elected to the NGA Board of Trustees: Stephen Adamson, Judith Bennett, Maggi Bull, and Richard Thompson.

NGA Regional events and news

Saturday 21 January – West Midlands Data Conference

NGA, along with Association of Sandwell Governing Bodies, is holding a free event for governors from 10 am to 1 pm on Saturday 21 January 2012. The venue is Rowley Learning Campus in Sandwell.

The keynote speaker is Paul Charman, from RM education, who designed RAISEonline.

We want to showcase a number of governing bodies that have used data to make a difference to children's outcomes. We are looking for volunteers to come and present at the event on what they did which worked well. If you have an experience to share, please contact laura.owen@nga.org.uk offering your services. This opportunity to share your good practice is open to members from all over the country and NGA will of course pay expenses to those who given presentations to this event.

If you want to reserve your place on this event, e-mail governorhq@nga.org.uk. You will be sent further details of the event nearer the time.

You do not have to be an NGA member to attend, but if the event is over-subscribed, NGA members will be given priority.

Local Associations Survey

The results of the survey can be found on the Local Associations page of the NGA website – www.nga.org.uk

NGA Conference for Chairs of Associations ~ a date for the diary

There will be a conference for Association Chairs on Saturday 4 February 2012 at the National College Conference Centre in Nottingham. This event will follow up some of the issues raised by the survey, giving associations a chance to share local practice, but will also provide an update on, and an opportunity to feed into, relevant national issues, including the National College's development programme.

A direct invitation will be sent to all chairs of associations before Christmas.

NGA Website

We are continuing to update and amend the content on the relaunched website – please bear with us as we go through this process. There may be times when content disappears temporarily, but it should reappear in an updated form. If you have any problems with the website or suggestions of what you would like to see on the site, please contact laura.owen@nga.org.uk or philip.wood@nga.org.uk.

The Local Association page of the website has a list of all the Local Associations with links to help you find out information. Please view the web page: [Local Association websites](#) If there are any changes you wish to make, please contact Laura Owen via email at: laura.owen@nga.org.uk

CONSULTATIONS: NEWS and ACTION

PLEASE NOTE: The wording in consultation items is taken from the consultation summaries on the DfE website and express the views and proposals of the DfE, not those of the NGA.

1 Auxiliary Aids for Children with Disabilities

The consultation deals with implementing the requirement for schools and local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to provide auxiliary aids for disabled children under the *Equality Act 2010*. The Equality Act covers England, Scotland and Wales, but *this* covers England only: parallel consultations will be taking place in Scotland and Wales

The consultation can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: AuxiliaryAids.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk or by post to: Mark Sands, Special Needs and Disabilities Division, DfE, 1st Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DfE deadline 5 December 2011

Please copy responses to NGA

2 16 – 19 Funding Formula Review

Proposals in this consultation include moving away from the current complex system of funding on the basis of 'payment per qualification', to introduce a much simpler system of funding at the level of the learner. The aim is to make a reality of the proposals in Professor Alison Wolf's report on vocational education. It also supports the Government's aims of reducing bureaucracy for education providers and making the funding system simpler, more transparent and readily understood by all.

The consultation can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/, sent by email to: 16-19Funding.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk or by post to Consultation Unit, Area 1C, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn WA7 2GJ

DfE deadline 4 January 2012

Deadline for comment to NGA 9 December 2011

3 Study Programmes for 16 – 19 year olds

The Government response to Professor Wolf's Review of Vocational Education, published in May 2011, accepted the Review's recommendations in full. This consultation paper sets out proposals to ensure that all 16 –19 year olds study coherent, well thought out programmes which offer them breadth and depth and do not limit their options for future study or work. This new approach,

planned to be introduced at the same time as a new funding formula in 2013, will give providers substantially more freedom in designing full time course provision for students between the ages of 16 and 19.

The consultation can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: Wolf.studyprogrammes@education.gsi.gov.uk or by post to: Helen O'Neill, Qualifications Policy Division, Level 2, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DfE deadline 4 January 2012

Deadline for comment to NGA 9 December 2011

4 Removing the statutory duty to deliver work-related learning at Key Stage 4

In line with work being done in regard to various aspects of work experience including the changes that are being made around work experience for students, post -16, the Government is seeking to remove the statutory duty to provide every young person at Key Stage 4 (14-16 year olds) with work-related learning. However, schools will still be free to determine whether and how work experience for young people at Key Stage 4 is provided. This consultation seeks views about the Government's intentions.

The consultation can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: workrelatedlearningconsultation@education.gsi.gov.uk or by post to Sarah Ballinger, Department for Education, Post Point A, 6th Floor, St Paul's Place, Sheffield S1 2FJ.

DfE deadline 4 January 2012

Deadline for comment to NGA 15 December 2011

5 Academies Land Transfer

This consultation asks for the views of local authorities and others in England on draft regulations that will enable the Secretary of State to secure the information that he may need in order to make schemes for local authority owned land that is no longer used for maintained schools to be transferred to Academies and Free Schools.

Alongside the draft regulations are model schemes for both freehold land and leasehold land, and a Q&A document with some further details on the measures, which DfE hopes will address any further questions anyone may have.

The consultation can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: LandTransferSchemes.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk or by post to Julia Armstrong, School Choice, Organisation and Fair Access, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DfE deadline 18 January 2012

Deadline for comment to NGA 3 January 2012

6 Revised School Premises Regulations

There are currently two sets of school premises regulations (for maintained schools and for independent schools including academies and free schools) and a substantiation amount of other legislation applying to all buildings including schools. These relate to the safety and wellbeing of pupils. The Government is aiming to remove any school-specific premises legislation where these duplicate other legislation, to simply those that are still needed, and to establish one clear set of requirements that apply to all types of schools. This consultation sets out the rationale for changes, new guidance and the new regulations. The Government is keen to know if anyone can see flaws or possible adverse effects in the proposals.

The consultation can be found at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: PremisesRegulations.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk or by post to Sally Smith, Central Capital Unit, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DfE deadline 26 January 2012

Deadline for comment to NGA 7 January 2012

FOR INFORMATION

1 Key meetings attended by NGA in November

- National Heads, Directors of Children's Services and Governors Group (2.10.11): This meeting discussed independent advisers for Heads' performance management, pensions and the DfE review of governance.
- PTA-UK launch (3.11.11): The National Confederation of PTAs launched its new name at a reception held in the House of Lords
- School Funding Implementation Group and sub-group (4.11.11)
- DfE Capital Consultation Group (10.11.11)
- DfE Advisory Group on Governance (15.11.11) at which the main item was the DfE's review of governance (see above)
- DfE Education Forum (16.11.11) chaired by Nick Gibb, Minister for Schools, at which further discussion of the review of governance took place
- Meeting with the School Commissioner, Liz Sidwell, to discuss the work of her Brokerage and Underperformance Division
- All Party Parliamentary Group on Governance (21.11.11): This was the first meeting of this group and NGA acts as the secretariat
- House of Commons Education Select Committee (23.11.11): NGA's Chief Executive, Emma Knights, gave oral evidence to the Select Committee on the subject of *Attracting, Training and Retaining Teachers*.
- National College's steering and partnership group meetings on the Chairs' Development programme

2 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.sgooss.org.uk

3 New Edition of Welcome to Governance – Pre-order your copy now!

A new edition of Welcome to Governance - the NGA's popular induction handbook for new governors will be out in January. We are taking pre-orders; please contact the NGA office at admin@nga.org.uk or call us on 0121 237 3780.

4 Regional stories needed

Have you held a successful event or do you want to share success stories on governance or your local association? We now have a regional page available in our membership magazine to enable you to communicate to a wider audience. If you have any story ideas, please contact editor@nga.org.uk

5 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

6 Incentives for associations to encourage schools into NGA membership

Did you know that, if half of an association's members join the NGA (as governing bodies), then the association itself does not have to pay any membership fee to NGA? NGA has now extended this principle so that, if just one quarter of an association's schools becomes members of the NGA, we will halve the association's fee for the following year.

In addition, an association's members are be entitled to a £5 reduction on their school's NGA membership fee, which means that, instead of £63 for standard governing body membership, the school would pay NGA £58. If you are interested in promoting NGA membership to your schools, please e-mail governorhq@nga.org.uk.