

Note PAD

*A regular news sheet for
Governors of Schools
throughout the Bradford
District*

Education Bradford
School Governor Service

OCTOBER 2006



To Achieve School Improvement through
the Effective Governance of Schools

Annual Governors' Conference 2007: Leadership & Governance

Following on from our successful conference in June of this year we have arranged the date of our next annual conference.

This will take place on Saturday 16 June 2007. Our Keynote Speaker will be Professor John West-Burnham. John West-Burnham works as a teacher, writer and consultant in leadership

development. He is Senior Research Adviser at the National College for School Leadership. The theme for the Conference will be Leadership and Governance.

Further details will be announced later in the year. But for now please put the date in your diary!

THE ITEMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE:

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Performance Management: U p d a t e

Having considered the outcomes of the consultation and the advice of the Rewards & Incentives Group

(RIG) social partners, Ministers have agreed that the timeline for implementing the revised arrangements for teachers' performance management will be extended until autumn 2007. The revised regulations and guidance will still be published as planned in the 2006 autumn term to ensure schools and local authorities have as much time as possible to plan and prepare in the current academic year.

As a result of this delay, governor trainers will not be receiving their training until later on in the autumn term, and consequently, it has been decided to postpone until the spring term the Performance

Management – Update governor training sessions that had been planned for 31 October and 15 November. All governors who were booked on these sessions have been informed and will be offered an alternative date when these have been arranged.

The sessions on Friday 3 November and 21/28 November are still going ahead as these courses are for governors who will be undertaking performance management this term but have not had training before. If you need any further information please contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629.



Safe Adventure for Schools

Field trips and residential visits – especially involving outdoor or adventurous activities – are sometimes viewed as onerous responsibilities by school governing bodies. Despite this, adventurous activities, especially as part of an extended residential visit, should remain a part of all children's school experience.

Although improvements in academic achievement and classroom behaviour may be argument enough in support of outdoor education, some further sobering facts regarding life outside school point to the need for outdoor activity:

- We are an increasingly obese population, a trend observable in the young.
- Drug abuse, self-harm and suicide are all increasing among young people
- Young people are increasingly unable

to make appropriate judgements regarding their own safety.

No compromise of safety can be tolerated. Governors have a responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of their charges, and unless they have unusual expertise, the organisation of adventurous activities can put them in a vulnerable position should an accident occur. The surest way of maintaining outdoor activities while acting responsibly regarding safety lies in the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority.

This governmental organisation promotes and ensures good safety standards among those providing adventurous activities for youngsters. Outdoor centres are visited annually, and checked for:

- Appropriate risk assessments and safety procedures
- Well qualified, experienced, and supervised instructors

(including CRB)

- Correct, well maintained safety equipment.

Any organisation possessing an Adventurous Activities Licence has recently demonstrated that it has a good safety record based on sound ethics and robust procedures. In terms of the duty of care, a non-expert body has done all it reasonably can to ensure the safety of its pupils by ensuring that any organisation leading pupils on adventurous activities possesses an AALA license.

Education Bradford owns two licensed Outdoor Education Centres - Buckden House and Ingleborough Hall.

You can get further information on Outdoor Education and our Outdoor Education Centres by e-mailing BuckdenHo@aol.com or ringing 01756 760254.

The NGA Award for Outstanding Clerks

The National Governors Association (NGA) is looking to celebrate good practice in governing body clerking in maintained schools. If you think your clerk provides a good service for your governing body, please take time to put him/her forward for an award.

On 10 March 2007 there will be an award ceremony in Birmingham where they will celebrate with nine regional winners and their Chairs of Governors. Each regional winner will receive personal prizes including a cheque for £300 and their school a cheque for £100. In addition to this, the National Clerk of the Year will be awarded £1,000 and their school £750.

Your school will have received an application form with the September Issue of Governors' News. If you do not have a form please contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629 and we will send you a copy. The closing date for applications is first post on 8 December 2006.



Putting a Stop to Cyberbullying

Guidelines have been published to assist schools and governing bodies in updating their anti-bullying policies to include cyber-bullying. Governing bodies and schools must ensure that:

- bullying via mobile phone or the Internet is included in their mandatory anti-bullying policies, that these policies are regularly updated, and that teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyberbullying in school
- the curriculum teaches pupils about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely
- all e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored
- clear policies are set about the use of mobile phones at school and at other times when young people are under the school's authority
- Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked
- they work with pupils and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local and national guidance and good practice
- security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside school
- they work with police and other partners on managing cyberbullying.

Further information and guidance can be found at www.dfes.go.uk/bullying

Changes to Ofsted Inspection Routines

As of September 2006, Ofsted has introduced a reduced inspection for schools that are high-performing, where self-evaluation is good, and where there is a successful track record in inspections. The new inspections will be held over the course of a single day and will usually be conducted by just one inspector.

Ofsted has also proposed to monitor schools that have been given notice to improve. It wants to ensure they make sufficient progress to be judged at least satisfactory when they receive a further inspection a year later. The monitoring visit will take place six to eight months after the initial inspection. More information can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk

Parent Governor Representatives on Young People & Education Improvement Committee

The School Standards and Framework Act includes a requirement that the Local Authority (LA) have representatives of parent governors on their committees that deal with education.

In Bradford this requirement is met by there being four places on the Young People & Education Improvement Committee. Governors on this committee play a vital part in overall governance, and includes putting issues on a public agenda for debate, analysing and challenging policy proposals and reviewing service delivery.

To support parent governors who take on this role, there is initial training available to familiarise governors with the processes; expenses are payable and the Council has agreed that parent governor representatives can also receive an allowance of £500 per annum.

There are currently 4 vacancies for parent representatives in Bradford. Parent governors who work in school or are employed by the Council are not eligible to stand for parent governor representative. Closing date for returning nomination forms is Friday 23 November 2006. If there are more than four nominations, a ballot will be held.

If you would be interested please contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629 for a nomination form and more information.



Evaluation of School Governor Service 2005/2006

Thank you to those of you who returned your evaluation form at the end of last school year – we do value your comments which were analysed as part of our team review of 2005/06 and informed our planning for the year ahead.

Comments regarding training were

generally very positive, with individuals being 'impressed with the training, which was informative and helpful', a 'tremendous help' and 'well presented, well run'. However a request was made for the opportunity to indicate preferences for future course content – this is available on our course evaluation

forms and you can also contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629 or e-mail school.governor@educationbradford.com with your suggestions.

The results from this year's evaluations are set out below:

	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good
Telephone Helpline		22.2%	77.8%
Quality of Advice & Information		34.5%	65.5%
Promptness		46.5%	53.5%
Termly Notepad		43%	48.5%
School Governor Forums		25%	37.5%
Briefing Notes	10.7%	43%	39.3%
Governor Training	6%	59%	31%

Detailed analysis of the results will be discussed at Governors Advisory Group this term.

New Primary Strategy Materials: Information for school governors

'Excellence and Enjoyment: Learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years' – Ref: 0013-2006PCK-EN

Education Bradford was selected by the DfES to take part in the English as an Additional Language pilot from September 2004 – July 2006.

As a result of the national pilot, the DfES has now produced new materials to support schools with minority ethnic pupils in their implementation of the Primary National Strategy.

The new materials are now part of a national programme to support schools in continuing to raise standards for their minority ethnic pupils. The focus of these materials is on advanced bilingual learners - those children, often born in this country, who appear to be appropriately fluent for their age in everyday conversational contexts but who need continued support in order to develop the language required for academic success.

The overall aims are:

- To promote equality of opportunity with particular reference to raising the standards of attainment and

accelerating the progress of children learning English as an additional language.

- To develop the confidence, skills and expertise of the school community in general and mainstream teachers particularly in meeting the needs of bilingual pupils.

For further information please contact the Ethnic Minority Achievement Team on (01274) 385796.



Important Advice for Primary, Nursery & Special Schools on the School Censuses: January, May & September 2007

On the 18 January 2007 all primary, nursery and special schools will complete the DfES school census for the first time, the school census being the successor to the annual PLASC. 2007 will also mark the changeover from a once per year census to a three times per year event, with additional school censuses being held in May and September. These censuses are a statutory obligation and must be completed by every school.

Governing bodies should be checking that:

- their school is aware of the changes due to take place in the school census,
- a member of the school administrative staff has been booked onto a school census training course
- the school management is aware of the need for the school student database to be kept completely up-to-date, especially attendance and exclusions data,
- their school intends to take advantage of the "test run" facility offered by EB prior to each census. By using the test run facility schools can foresee any problems with their census prior to enumeration day, 18th January 2007,
- check that the DfES Notes for Guidance have been downloaded from the DfES S2S website in readiness for the census in January:

Should you require any help or advice on school census matters please contact Paul Staincliffe Tel 385638 or Stuart Carlton Tel 385644.

Alternatively email Paul or Stuart at:

School.census@educationbradford.com

Improvements to the School Profile

Following on from consultation around the effectiveness of the online School Profile, the DfES are making a number of important improvements. They hope this will make it much easier for schools to complete the next time round, and offer a more accurate reflection of their performance.

Schools Minister, Jim Knight, has sent a letter to all Headteachers explaining these changes and the timescale involved. As a result of this, schools will not be able to access their profile templates after 9 October 2006. The DfES will be in touch with schools again as soon as new templates are available.

National Training Programme for Clerks to School Governors

Over the last two years 45 clerks to governors in the Bradford district have successfully completed a National Training programme. The programme includes 12 hours taught training over four consecutive weeks together with background reading and assessment tasks to be carried out between sessions. The taught modules cover: the governing body, clerks as administrator, clerks as information manager and clerks as adviser. Trainees are expected to develop a portfolio of evidence as a result of their training. Completion of the course means that these clerks have developed the competencies necessary to provide a Level 2 Clerking Service, which matches the

National Job Description and Person Specification.

These clerks have received a certificate from the Yorkshire & Humber Co-ordinators of Governor Services in recognition of their hard work.

The next training programme is scheduled to begin on Wednesday 28 February and will run for four weeks from 9.00 – 12.00 each week at Future House. For a booking form and further information please contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629 or e-mail school.governor@educationbradford.com

Ofsted Inspection Reports

During the school year 2005/06, 33 schools in Bradford were inspected by Ofsted under the new framework. 94% of these schools were judged as being satisfactory or better with regard to governance in the leadership and management section of the report, and 39% were good or better – with one school being judged as outstanding.

To be graded as good or better the governing body needs to be carrying out its role of monitoring and

evaluating the work of the school and the effectiveness of its policies. In order to do this, governors should be asking challenging questions of their head teacher and school management team whilst providing support to meet the challenges set; thus enabling the governing body to carry out its role as a critical friend to the school.

Schools who are expecting to receive an inspection during this school year may wish to consider

sending a governor on the Ofsted Inspection & the SEF course on 8 November. Another useful course to aid in the monitoring role of governors include 'Effective Financial Governance' on 23 November. Alternatively a Mini (one hour) or Learning Together (two hour) Course can be tailor-made for your governing body – contact School Governor Service on (01274) 385629 for further details.

Bradford Council Corporate Procurement Unit and Education Contract Management Team: how we can help schools...

The Education Contract Management Team was created following the outsourcing of the Education Support Services to Serco (Education Bradford). We are based within the Corporate Procurement Unit in Britannia House, Bradford and Governors may not know that the Unit is able to offer free support and advice to schools who are interested in procuring goods and services.

A number of schools have experienced difficulties when buying photocopiers and associated equipment from some companies who are offering deals that represent poor value for money and have onerous terms and conditions. We

therefore recommend that all lease and maintenance contracts are thoroughly checked before they are signed and the Unit is happy to review any contracts on your behalf.

Schools are also able to access a number of corporate contracts including office furniture, paper and bottled water – further information on these contracts and other services that the Unit can offer is available at bradford.gov.uk/council/procurement. Alternatively, please contact us: Ian Smart, Head of Procurement on 433535 or Michelle Carroll on 437743.

Consultation on Admissions Arrangements

Can we remind governors of voluntary-aided, foundation schools and city academies that you are required by Section 86 of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act, to consult other admission authorities, including the local authority, within the 'relevant area' about your admission arrangements for 2008/2009. The relevant area is defined as all other admission authorities within a two mile radius for primary and a three mile radius for secondary schools. Consultation needs to be completed by 1 March 2007 and admission policies formally determined by 15 April 2007.

Any governing body that consulted last year for the 2007/2008 admission arrangements, need not consult again for 2008/2009 unless they are

intending to change their policy. However, most schools did not consult last year so this should be an agenda item for the Autumn term. Admission arrangements to be consulted on must include:

- the admission number
- application procedures
- oversubscription criteria
- whether a waiting list will be kept and for how long
- how late applications are dealt with

The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2005, state that all admission authorities for maintained schools must give top priority in its oversubscription criteria to looked after children. Also, following DfES guidance, in May 2006, the

Admission Forum agreed that all schools formally adopt the 'Hard to Place Pupils Protocol' within their admission arrangements from September 2008. **Please ensure that your admission policy reflects these.**

Val Jordan, (Senior Officer, Admissions) will be writing formally to headteachers and chairs of governors in November regarding consultation of admission arrangements of schools for which the LA is the admission authority.

Please send details of your proposed admission arrangements to Val Jordan, Admissions, Education Bradford at Future House. If you have any queries, please contact her on 01274 385607 or by email at: val.jordan@educationbradford.com

How can watching TV help you to become a better governor?

The answer is easy... By watching Teachers' TV. It's not only for teachers, it's for everyone involved with schools and, as you know, no-one is more involved (and accountable) than governors. The responsibility to keep up to date can seem overwhelming. There's so much you need to know, so many new developments you need to be aware of.

Teachers' TV can help. You can watch it on digital television or you can watch it on the web when you want. Just click on to www.teachers.tv. There's even a special series called Just for Governors. You will find details on the website. Enter 'Just for Governors' in the search box.

How often have you wished that you could see how others deal with issues such as bullying, problems with personnel, child protection, exclusion and drugs, recruiting a new head, looked after children, setting targets, finance, an injury in the playground, special needs and other matters? These programmes are all there in the video library, ready for you to watch on your computer, whenever you can find the time.

Richard Safer Recruitment Training

Over the past year the DfES, NCSL, Head teacher, Governor and Local Authority associations have encouraged Head teachers and a nominated Governor to complete the Safer recruitment online training hosted on NCSL's talk2learn website. So far only 10% of those targeted for the training have in fact completed it.

DfES and NCSL have listened to Heads and Governors concerns over the online training, specifically the ambiguity of the assessment. As a result, the assessment stage of the online training has been updated. This update has made the assessment questions clearer and allowed for greater interpretation of the training materials.



All organisations involved in safer recruitment are committed to ensuring the recommendations of the Richard enquiry are met and that the welfare of children is at the heart of everything we do. If you have not yet completed the training you are strongly urged to do so.

Notepad is a regular news sheet produced for all governors of schools throughout the Bradford District. It is intended to be a brief and cost effective way of providing all school governors with up-to-date information about services, local and regional activities, and training opportunities.

Notepad is compiled and produced by School Governor Service, Education Bradford, Future House, Bolling Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD4 7EB.

John Hesketh, Linda Townsend, Diane MacBairdy, Geoffrey Green, Diane Kenyon and Jean Jordan are happy to provide any further information you may need about any item appearing in this issue. We can be contacted at the above address, Tel 01274 385629, Fax 01274 385624, e-mail: school.governor@educationbradford.com



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