

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

**Education Bradford
School Governor Service**

AUGUST 2007



To Achieve School Improvement through
the Effective Governance of Schools

Leadership & Governance Conference

Despite the poor weather this year, the number of governors attending the annual conference was double that of last year. 64 governors from across the Bradford district experienced an enjoyable and stimulating morning with two very well received speakers: John Gaskin and John West-Burnham. In addition the event provided an opportunity for governors to meet together and share experiences at a wonderful venue. The speakers were both inspirational and aspirational – providing governors with food for thought.

After a warm welcome from John Hesketh, John Gaskin gave a balanced outline of the achievements and the issues for education in Bradford today. He concluded by setting out the future for all those who are involved in education in the city:

- Implementation of Children's Services
- Duty to promote well-being
- Locality based working
- Partnerships, collaboration and shared responsibility for bringing about improvements for all children and young people in the District



- Duty to promote community cohesion

Following the coffee break John West-Burnham presented his thought-provoking talk on 'Leadership and Governance' which began with the challenge to provide leadership which is able to carry schools forward into the 21st century, focusing on learning and taking account of social and economic change. John focused on the leadership implications of the Every Child Matters agenda, encouraging governors to 'predict and prevent' rather than 'find and fix'.

During the morning a demonstration of the learning platform was provided, showing the information available to governors when they login

through their school's learning platform – a user name and password is available from the platform administrator of schools using the platform. Copies of the presentations given during the conference are available on the learning platform.

After a pleasant lunch governors left the conference taking with them plenty of ideas to use in their schools and governing bodies. We look forward to seeing even more of you at an equally informative and challenging conference next year.

THE ITEMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE:

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Implementing the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

A new vetting and barring scheme covering those who work or volunteer, or seek to work or volunteer, with children or vulnerable adults is due to be introduced from Autumn 2008. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVG Act) provides the legal framework for this new scheme. An individual who is working or volunteering, or seeking to work or volunteer, with children or vulnerable adults must apply to join the scheme.

If the individual is considered unsuitable they are barred from working with children or vulnerable adults, if not they become a 'member' of the scheme. We expect there to be over 10 million members of the new scheme in due course. Closing Date for consultations Friday 14 September 2007. Further information can be found by logging on to <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/>

School Governance Regulations 2007

Some new technical changes to the school governance regulations came into force on 25 May 2007. The major changes that these regulations introduce are:

- A new duty on governing bodies of maintained schools in discharging their functions to have regard to any views expressed by parents. Guidance will be available, shortly.
- A requirement that a proposal to change a school name must be determined by a unanimous vote of the governing body and that any governor who is unable to be present at the meeting when the vote is taken, will be able to vote by proxy but this must be in writing. Proxy voting, however, is not allowed in any other circumstances.
- The removal of the restriction on not more than 5 governing bodies being able to federate under a single governing body.
- A new upper limit of 29 for the membership of a federated governing body.
- Provision whereby partnership governors can be removed from office by the governing body.
- Removal of a provision contained in the School Governance regulations 2003, whereby foundation governors, trustees or diocesan authorities can request a direction from the Secretary of State, where there is a disagreement over the contents of an instrument of government.
- Requirements for the constitution and membership of governing bodies of trust schools (foundation schools with Foundations acquired under the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Where a trust appoints the majority of governors to a Trust School, there is a requirement for a parents' council to be established. These regulations set out the arrangements for the composition, role and support of such a Council. Other categories of schools are encouraged to set up such Councils, but will be free to determine their composition.

Localities for the Delivery of Preventative Children's Services

Following a decision by the Children and Young People's Strategic Executive on 12 April 2006, the Council's preventative services for children and young people will as far as possible be delivered locally, organised on the basis of the 5 new Constituencies of the district. The management of children's services is in the process of being restructured to reflect this new way of working. Education Bradford and other partner agencies are also committed to this approach.

This is in line with the "Big Idea" in the Children and Young People's Plan, to which all partners have signed up: "local joined-up services focussed on prevention."

These arrangements will facilitate access by schools to the services they need to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to improving Every Child Matters Outcomes and raising standards of educational achievement.

Services delivered locally are likely to include:

- Early Years
- Youth Service
- Extended schools
- Social Care
- Parental involvement/support
- Special Educational Needs
- Learning Support Services
- School improvement
- Attendance
- Behaviour

This list of services is expected to grow, subject to ongoing consultation with partners, including with Bradford and Airedale Primary Care Trust.

Following the consultation the district has been divided in to 14 Localities. There was evidence from the consultation that the extended school clusters are working well. However there are 25 of these across the district and specialist resources such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Social Care do not have the capacity to work directly with such a large number of groups. The Localities therefore have been achieved by grouping together these 25 extended school clusters, with children's centres, into 14 larger geographical areas. This should achieve economies of scale, make best use of scarce resources and improve inter agency working.

It must be stressed that the Localities are groupings for the delivery of preventative services. They do not replace the extended school clusters, established so that schools can work together to deliver the extended school programme and which are staffed and funded for this purpose.

The next steps in establishing preventative services is to reorganise services in line with the model. This work will be completed in September. Head teachers and governors will be kept up to date with developments and the timescale for implementation.

Governor training for pupil exclusions

The DfES recommend as good practice, that members of the Governing Body's Pupil Disciplinary Committee, should attend exclusion training.

A course has been arranged for Tuesday 16 October 2007, 7.15 - 9.15pm at Future House, Bolling Road, Bradford 4.

For further information contact Mick O'Brien, Inclusion Officer, Behaviour Support Service on (01274) 385610. To to book a place please ring School Governor Service on (01274) 385629.

Buckden House accessibility

It is a very positive step that so many pupils with special physical needs are now part of mainstream education. However, as we see an increasing need to promote a healthy and active life in our young -and growing- population; more schools are faced with the difficulty of finding a suitable venue for a whole class of whom one or more have mobility or other difficulties.

Until recently, Bradford schools could not visit outdoor centres fitted for dealing with pupils with moderate special needs while still making use of Bradford's own provision. This was clearly a disincentive to undertake such visits!

Buckden House has recently undergone some conversion work in this respect. It now offers the following:

- Accessible lavatory and shower in the changing area
- Ramped access to all ground floor areas of the building
- Ground floor bedroom with beds for a student and helper
- Shower and lavatory next door
- Visible, as well as audible, fire alarms in this area for hearing impaired pupils
- Minibuses with ramped wheelchair access

When dealing with an eighteenth century manor house, and a listed building, adjustments to make areas accessible can never run quickly. However, we hope to continue our progress towards inclusion in both the house, and the activities we offer, in the future.

New Duty on Governing Bodies to Promote Community Cohesion

Many schools are already working with their pupils, and with the wider community, to support community cohesion. The Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) wants to build on the best of that practice.

Guidance to support schools in implementing the duty has been published. The guidance defines what is meant by community cohesion and how this relates to the role of schools. It also outlines the work that many are already doing.

The guidance explains how schools contribute to community cohesion through their approach to:

- Teaching, learning and the curriculum: to promote discussion about common values and diversity
- Equity and excellence: to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils to succeed at the highest level possible, by removing barriers to access and participation
- Engagement and ethos: to provide opportunities to interact and build links with parents, communities and other schools locally, nationally and internationally.

School Governor Service are running a training session for school governors 'Promoting Equality and Community Cohesion' on either Wednesday 21 November 2007, 7.15 - 9.15pm at Future House, Bolling Road, Bradford 4 or Tuesday 27 November 2007, 7.15 - 9.15pm at Crossflatts Primary School, Bingley. See Prospectus for more details. To book a place ring on (01274) 385629, or e-mail school.governor@educationbradford.com

Certificate of Continuing Studies in School Governorship

In partnership with the University of Bradford we are able to offer a Certificate in School Governorship. Completion of the certificate will provide students with 60 credits which can be used towards an undergraduate degree. To gain the certificate students will be required to complete 3 modules worth 20

credits each. The modules can be chosen from the following: Understanding School; The Role of the Governor; The Role of the Clerk to the Governing Body; Learning from Experience in the Workplace. Training on The Role of the Governor and The Role of the Clerk is provided by the School Governor Service.

Governors who have attended training during their current term of office may be able to include these courses towards the certificate as may clerks who have attended the National Training Programme since September 2005. For further information contact the School Governor Service on (01274) 385629.

Education for sustainable development

The DfES is committed to embedding sustainable development in schools, the curriculum and the community and is working with partners and other Government departments to provide the necessary tools for this to happen.

The DfES has introduced guidance for governors that will help schools improve the sustainable operation of their school and ensure that young people are prepared with the knowledge, skills and experience to live a sustainable lifestyle. It identifies the questions that should be considered when developing and reviewing school improvement plans, and provides examples of good practice.

For more information, including an Action Plan, visit:
www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainable-schools

Behaviour and Attendance Collaboratives Go Live

September 2007 sees the start of a new approach to dealing with behaviour and attendance in secondary schools. Encouraged by the DfES - now DCSF, secondary schools have formed three Behaviour and Attendance Collaboratives (BACs) which will take greater responsibility for all pupils in a collaborative's schools, particularly those with behaviour and attendance difficulties. The BACs; Three Valleys, Central and South Bradford, will have control over agreed allocations of Secondary PRU places and the funding that Education Bradford currently uses to educate permanently excluded pupils who cannot return to mainstream schools. In the future BACs will be able to commission their own alternative

provision to support this group of pupils.

Schools have also agreed to make greater use of managed moves between a BAC's schools in order to avoid the need to permanently exclude pupils. A protocol has been agreed that will ensure that these managed moves are equitably shared across schools and that appropriate support is given to pupils and parents.

The time allocations and work of Education Bradford's support services: Educational Psychology Team, Education Social Work Service, Inclusion Officers and the Social Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties Team, have been reconfigured to support the BACs.

A Guide to the Law for School Governors 2007

The ninth edition of A Guide to the Law for School Governors has been issued both in the current online version and also in CD-Rom format. 15 copies of the CD-Rom were delivered to every school during July. The CD-ROM also contains information about Teachers TV and programmes which governors should find helpful. Extra copies are available to order from Prolog at dfes@prolog.uk.com or by telephoning 0845 602 226 quoting reference 00418-2007CDO-EN. If any school has spare copies please send them to the School Governor Service via the internal post so that we can redistribute them to new governors. The on-line version can be accessed via the governor section of www.educationbradford.com or the E-Learning Platform.

Reviewing behaviour policies

New Guidance on Behaviour & Discipline came into force at Easter. Within this it recognises the importance of rewarding good behaviour as well as punishing bad. This new guidance brings behaviour and discipline policy into line with the new provisions in the Education and Inspection Act 2006. These include powers to restrain pupils and confiscate items such as

mobile phones being used inappropriately. Although some of the provisions re-enact some of the existing provisions some are new and schools are advised to review their existing policies to take account of them. Governors are required to ensure their policy is designed to promote good behaviour and discipline on the part of pupils.

Governor of the Year award

The National Teaching Awards are an opportunity to celebrate those who tirelessly give of their time and help change the lives of others. We would like to congratulate two of our governors who were recognised at the Regional Teaching Awards Ceremony held recently in Harrogate:

Lynette Kirk – Chair of Belle Vue Girls' School as DfES Governor of the Year; and
Donna Pankhurst – Chair of Grange Technology College, DfES Governor of the Year runner-up distinction.
We wish them well when they go forward to the National Ceremony to be held in London in October.

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.

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