

Welcome to the latest edition of the North Yorkshire School Improvement Service update for governors. We are as excited as you to have all pupils back in school – let's hope that this situation remains stable. Once again, we thank you for your dedication and support for our schools – the pupils, the staff and the wider communities - in the most difficult and challenging of times. We hope, as I am sure you do, that some sort of 'normal' is on the horizon.

Please share this newsletter with others on your board in order that it reaches as many colleagues as possible.

SAFEGUARDING

URGENT REMINDER TO ALL BOARDS The North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) requires every school to complete the safeguarding audit tool by the 31st March 2021. This audit supports the strategic evaluation of your school's current safeguarding arrangements and it must be ratified by the school's board of governors prior to submission.



North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) undertakes the work of formerly, North Yorkshire Children's Trust and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board with the aim to ensure all children in North Yorkshire are safe, happy, healthy and achieving. The [NYSCP website](#) provides a wealth of information and support and their 'one minute guides' are particularly useful. For more information, [this one minute guide](#) highlights the role of the NYSCP and partnership arrangements, which is an aspect of safeguarding that governors should be aware of.

The Education Act 2002 states that "The Governing body of a school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school."

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of every governor, not just the person who is named as the link safeguarding governor. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda item for your meetings and governors should keep up-to-date with information and training.

KEEPING UP TO DATE WITH SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

There is so much information accessible to us via the internet that it can sometimes be difficult to filter what is useful and relevant. Some key updates that it is recommended that governors and staff sign up for are the:

[NYSCP e-bulletin](#)

[Andrew Hall free weekly safeguarding briefing](#)

[NSPCC CASPAR safeguarding child protection email newsletter](#)

A key document for all governors to read is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). There must be a record kept in school that every governor has read the latest version (January 2021).



NYCC Safeguarding Overview for Governors

We are running a one-hour webinar style session for governors which covers statutory responsibilities of the governing body, policies, training, monitoring and evaluation and Ofsted. Course booking is done via SLA online, or you can request a bespoke consultancy request for this session to be delivered to your full governing body.

NYCC Single Central Register (SCR) Update Training

This session, run by a senior HR adviser, will update those responsible for setting up, maintaining or monitoring the SCR with regard to recent changes to legislative requirements and consider good practice for maintaining single central records within schools.

Education Safeguarding – Single Central Record Training

- 22nd March 2.00pm to 3.30pm SI-0321-T049
- 23rd March 9.30am to 11.00am SI-0321-T050
- 25th March 2.00pm - 3.30pm SI-0321-T051

Governor visits to schools

At the present time, the DfE's guidance to governors and trustees has not changed, and that visits to schools should only be taking place if considered essential.

Psychological First Aid (PFA)

Public Health England is releasing a newly developed **free** online training course on [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) for supporting children and young people in emergency crisis situations](#)

The course takes about three hours to complete (split into three sessions) and offers training for school staff, volunteers, parents and caregivers on how to provide practical and emotional support to children and young people affected by emergencies or crisis situations. No previous qualifications are required.

Whilst children and young people can be very resilient, crises such as COVID-19 can severely impact our mental health. Getting the right support early on can help prevent problems occurring or worsening.

On completion, participants will have an understanding of what Psychological First Aid is, be able to identify who would benefit from support and how best to give help across the different age groups and also for those who might need extra support because of different needs.



Nominate your board or governance professional for an Outstanding Governance Award

Boards, clerks and lead governance professionals can gain recognition for excellent practice and significant achievements in the National Governance Association's Outstanding Governance Awards, which are now open for entry.

There are six categories available:

- outstanding governance in a single school
- outstanding governance in a multi academy trust
- outstanding governance in a federation
- outstanding clerk to a governing board
- outstanding lead governance professional
- outstanding vision and strategy

By entering the awards you are demonstrating the positive contribution that good governance makes to the school system and the education of children and young people. The deadline for entries is 9am on Monday 26 April, and it is open to all.

Visit the [awards page](#) on the NGA website for more information and for information on how to enter.

Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA)

Schools have been advised that NYCC will no longer be offering the following four insurance schemes to maintained schools from 1 April:

- Balance of Risks Insurance
- County Insurance Scheme
- Personal accident for pupils on site Insurance Scheme
- School Journey insurance Scheme

NYCC is recommending that schools join the Risk Protection Arrangement which is being offered by the DfE as an alternative. If schools wish to join the RPA they should do so by **31 March 2021**. NYCC cannot do this on behalf of a school. Details of the scheme and how to join can be found [here](#).

NYCC's Insurance and Risk Management Service will still be available to provide support to schools. An Insurance Claims and Risk Management SLA is available from 1 April 2021 to provide schools with support for advice and guidance, claims handling and arranging any insurances not offered by the RPA eg motor insurance. This package can be purchased in the usual way at [North Yorkshire Education Services](#).

Academies land and buildings valuation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-land-and-buildings-valuation>

Each year, the Department for Education (DfE) procures valuations of the land and buildings of all new academies that opened between 1 September of the previous year and 31 August of the current year, as well as re-valuations of academy land and buildings that were last valued 5 years ago. Where relevant, copies of their valuations will be available in the ESFA document exchange

Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF)

The DfE funded Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) is intended to provide healthy food and enriching activities to statutory school-age disadvantaged children. The programme is intended to cover at least four hours each day for one week at Easter, four weeks in the summer and one week at Christmas.

The programme, called **FEAST** (Food, Entertainment, Arts & Sports Together) is being delivered by the North Yorkshire partnership of NYCC, North Yorkshire Youth, North Yorkshire Sport and Rural Arts.

Due to current Covid-19 restrictions, children will receive activity packs at the end of the spring term, in time for the Easter holiday. There is also a dedicated website: www.northyorkshiretogether.co.uk which will be loaded with interesting content to complement the packs. The partnership is seeking help from schools and academies to distribute the packs and they will receive further information soon. Arrangements are also being made to provide appropriate activity packs for children with EHCPs in special schools.

It is important that schools are aware of the scheme for the summer term and will be invited to participate in or contribute to the programme. The North Yorkshire partnership will also review how this scheme operates alongside the recent announcement of summer schools.

REMOTE EDUCATION FOR PUPILS WITH SEND

On 2nd March 2021, [Ofsted published research into how remote education is working for children and young people with SEND](#).

Governors need to be aware of the negative impact that partial school closures and remote education may have had on pupils with identified special educational needs and disabilities in their schools. There need to be assurances from school leaders with regard to what provision is being put in place to support the most vulnerable pupils in the school community to continue to make progress, and to catch up and make accelerated progress where possible.

Governors do not need to know the detail for each pupil, but should have an awareness and oversight of the impact that the pandemic has had on vulnerable groups, what the school's plans are for improvement and evidence of impact of improvement for those identified groups.

SECONDARY SCHOOL EXAMS 2021

No doubt that you will be aware that GCSE, AS and A level exams will not take place this summer. Instead, key stage 4 and key stage 5 grades will be awarded through teacher assessment – there will be no use of algorithms. Teachers will assess pupils based on their performance and only consider a grade in relation to what they have been taught, using a wide range of evidence (i.e. coursework, mock exams, substantial class or homework). Some vocational and technical qualifications will continue to be assessed in person.

A board of governors should be assured of their school's plan for KS4 and KS5 teacher assessments.

- Does the plan ensure adequate support for the additional administrative requirements of school based teacher assessments?
- What support and training will teachers be accessing to prepare them for this process?
- How will governors know that grades are awarded fairly and consistently?
- Has the school adopted the DfE's guidance on internal quality assurance procedures?
- How are pupils and parents being supported with regard to possible concerns about teacher assessed grades? Are they aware of the appeals process?
- Is the plan being shared with all stakeholders?

PRIMARY SCHOOL STATUTORY ASSESSMENT

EYFS, key stage 1 and key stage 2 statutory assessments have been cancelled for summer 2021. There is no requirement for schools to submit data for any pupils in June 2021.

Wellbeing for Education Return: new webinar and supporting resources for all education staff

Governors and trustees are responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of the staff and pupils in their schools and academies is being supported. New and updated [Wellbeing for Education Return resources](#) are now available for education staff to supplement the project's locally adapted training and support offers.

These include a short, recorded webinar [Every interaction matters](#). It introduces a simple framework for promoting wellbeing, resilience and mental health. It is intended for use by education leaders with all staff, INSET sessions, or for education staff to work through individually.

This sits alongside the [original Wellbeing for Education Return resources](#) covering issues such as bereavement, loss, anxiety, stress and trauma and signposting to free [Mental health resources for children, parents, carers and school and college staff](#).



NYCC have produced a helpful guide for all staff detailing the different types of support and self-help that is available. This can be accessed on our cyps.info site [here](#).

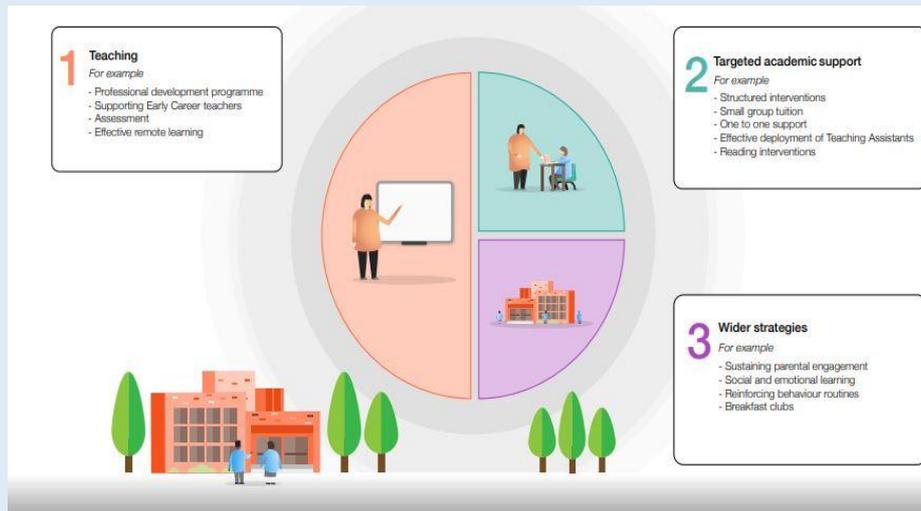
The NGA also has published a useful article [promoting positive mental health](#) which includes some questions that governors and trusts should be asking.

CATCH-UP PREMIUM

The government is providing funding to schools to cover a one-off universal catch-up premium for the 2020 to 2021 academic year. This funding aims to support pupils to catch up for lost learning in order that schools can meet the curriculum expectations for the next academic year.

It is for school leaders to decide the most effective way to spend the funding and NYCC recommend that head teachers consider the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) [guidance](#) and [planning guide](#) to support with the implementation of any planned catch-up strategies.

The EEF suggests a three tier approach: teaching and whole school strategies, targeted approach and wider strategies.



As with any additional funding, governors need to have a strategic oversight of the impact of the catch-up premium on pupils. The DfE's [information for schools](#) makes clear the expectation that governors and trustees should scrutinise school plans to use funding in line with their specific catch up priorities.

Boards should also ensure that there is appropriate transparency for parents and therefore there an expectation that [maintained schools](#) and [academies](#) will publish details on the school website of:

- how they plan to spend the grant
- how they will assess its impact on the educational attainment of pupils.
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PUPIL PREMIUM STRATEGY

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic it is highly recommended that governing boards review the school/trust strategy for using the pupil premium funding. Governors need to be assured that the plan continues to be targeted at the right pupils at this time. It may be that the distribution of funding will need to be reconsidered in order that it reflects the possible increase in social, emotional and mental health issues that could have an impact on children's learning.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Speaking at a recent Education Select Committee, the DfE director, Graham Archer, stated, in relation to catch-up premium, that "schools will be accountable to governors and Ofsted inspection". Governors need to be asking questions about any and all additional funding in order that the board can be assured that it is being used by school leaders to have a direct and positive impact on pupils.

2020-2021 School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The DfE announced recently that they are allowing local authorities a longer timescale to submit their 2020-2021 SFVS Assurance Statement. Schools have been informed that North Yorkshire has taken a local decision to extend the deadline for schools for their submission to the **30th April 2021** to allow some flexibility for sign off by governors.

Schools should also be aware that in line with DfE Transparency requirements for maintained schools, it is now a requirement to append a list of Related Party Transactions (RPTs) to the SFVS. Further information can be found [here](#).

Training for Governors

Governor training continues to be delivered remotely. The sessions in the table below are available for booking now. Please liaise with colleagues in your school office if you wish to reserve a place. It is helpful if your governor e-mail address is provided with the course booking, not a generic school e-mail account.

25 May 2021	6.00pm – 7.30pm	Governor School Improvement Meeting	SI-0521-T012
13 and 20 April 21	10.00am – 11.30am	Staff hearing and appeals: Governor panel parts 1 and 2	HR-0421-T001
30 April and 28 May 21	10.00am – 12 noon	An introduction to Governance parts 1 and 2	SI-0421-T012
6 May 21	5.00pm – 6.00pm	Safeguarding – an overview for all governors	SI-0521-T010
10 and 17 May 21	2.00pm - 3.30pm	Staff hearing and appeals: Governor panel parts 1 and 2	HR-0521-T002
13 May 21	4.00pm – 5.00pm	School complaints – an overview for all governors and staff	SI-0521-T006
19 May and 23 June 21	6.00pm – 8.00pm	An introduction to Governance parts 1 and 2	SI-0521-T007
20 May 21	11.00am – 12 noon	Pupil Premium Strategy for governors	SI-0521-T008
8 and 15 June 21	5:30pm – 7.00pm	Staff hearing and appeals: Governor panel parts 1 and 2	HR-0621-T001
10 June 21	6.00pm – 7.00pm	School Complaints – a focus on investigating complaints for HTs and governors	SI-0621-T015
29 June 21	4.00pm – 5.00pm	Pupil Premium Strategy for governors	SI-0621-T016
12 July 21	4.00pm – 6.00pm	Headteacher Performance Management training for governors	SI-0721-T005
14 July 21	9:30am – 11:30am	Headteacher Performance Management training for governors	SI-0721-T006

The sessions listed below are designed to be delivered to your whole board by a Senior Education Adviser at a mutually convenient date and time and are currently being delivered remotely. They can be booked by submitting a bespoke consultancy request

Governor Roles and Responsibilities - 1 hour

A refresh of a board's roles and responsibilities, which can be particularly helpful if you have had significant changes in membership recently. If it is appropriate, time can be included during the session for governors to start to consider a skills audit, which will support both current practice and succession planning.

Monitoring Training for Governors – 1 hour

This session focuses on the key role that governors hold in monitoring and holding your school to account for the educational performance of pupils. You will consider the school improvement cycle, tools to support governor monitoring, your policy and procedures for 'visiting' school.

Monitoring in Practice

This is a follow up to the session above and will be practical and bespoke to your school. Governors will consider the school improvement plan, head teacher reports, data, the curriculum, etc. with a senior education adviser.

Safeguarding Overview for Governors – 1 hour

As well as being delivered as a training course (see table above) this session can also be delivered to your full board. It will provide an overview with regard to safeguarding for all governors and will cover statutory responsibilities of the governing body, policies, training, monitoring and evaluation and Ofsted.

School Complaints – An Overview for All Governors and Staff – 1 hour

As well as being delivered as a training course (see table above) this session can also be delivered to your full board and staff. It focuses on school complaints and what everyone in school needs to know about the process, in line with the DfE model complaints policy and guidance. A further session which looks at investigating complaints is available as a training course.

Ofsted Overview for Governors – 2 hours

This session will consider the three core functions of effective governance and how they are rooted in the requirements and expectations of boards of governors during an Ofsted inspection

If you have identified other training needs please contact us at governor.support@northyorks.gov.uk or your school's named Senior Education Adviser (SEA) to discuss your specific requirements.



Have your say

Schools national funding formula: changes to the sparsity factor in 2022-23

In 2019 the government made a commitment to do more to support small remote schools. The level of funding through the sparsity factor was increased in 2021-22 and views are now being sought on proposals to continue to improve how the funding system supports schools through further changes to the sparsity factor from 2022-23.

The consultation is live until **9 April 2021** and can be found on the Department for Education consultation hub using [this link](#).

Engagement with Stakeholders is an important responsibility of a governing board and the NGA have updated their Covid resources for subscribers recently with a list of questions governors might consider asking parents.

Whilst boards are working remotely they can continue to consider how they can take account of the views of staff, pupils and parents and how best to communicate with stakeholders.

There are benefits of mixing your approach. Annual surveys allow the board to monitor trends over time and track progress. Boards can also seek feedback on any potential changes schools have made/ plan to make.

Appointment of Local Authority Governors

Following the local authority's nomination of a potential LA governor for your board, please could your clerk:

- respond that an appointment has been agreed and the date of this (*which will be the date of the meeting where this was approved*), or
- respond that *that the nomination was not approved, with brief details for this decision. We can then nominate the individual to another school as soon as possible.*

Under no circumstance should a board re-appoint a local authority governor without a re-nomination from the LA. *If a serving LA governor wishes to be considered for a second term of office the local authority should be made aware of this, preferably well in advance of the end of their current term. This request will then be processed and re-nominated, if appropriate, in good time to ensure continuity of service. Unless notified. it will be assumed that a LA governor steps down at the end of their term of office.*

In line with best practice guidance on keeping boards fresh and dynamic, a local authority governor would not be nominated to the same school for more than two terms of office, but where governors wish to continue, a nomination to a different school will be made.

If a local authority governor resigns from their role before the end of their term of office then please ensure the clerk informs the LA in order that a replacement can be nominated. If you are aware of a potential candidate for this role on your board please direct them to the NYCC website.

DfE guidance for schools: coronavirus (COVID-19)

This guidance continues to change regularly. Use [this link](#) to take you to the current documents.

Exclusions update

The DfE have issued a further update to the school suspension and expulsion process during the coronavirus outbreak, extending some of the temporary arrangements up to 24 September 2021. Full details can be found [here](#).

Coming Soon

The launch of our new Service Level Agreement for Governance Support has been delayed because of the current pandemic.

We are aiming to offer all boards a full and comprehensive service, to include a range of high quality packages including online learning for governors and a dedicated portal for news, support and clerking. Details of the SLA will be shared with you once this has been finalised.



Who we are

Antonia Praud – Governance Officer
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