

# Governor

## School Improvement Update

### Summer Term – July 2020

Welcome to the latest version of the North Yorkshire school improvement update for all governors.

We have tried to keep you all as up to date as possible over the past term and have debated as to whether this was the right time to send yet another newsletter. However, there is still much that we need to share with you as we prepare for the new school year – whatever it might look like.

We also wanted to pass on our sincere thanks for the amazing work that you have all done to support your head teachers, staff, pupils and families over the past few months. This has not gone unnoticed and is very much appreciated. LA advisers and the governance team have worked closely with schools over the past few months and have been impressed by the inventive ways in which schools have continued to provide education for those in school and those at home. As governors you have embraced virtual meetings, and whilst some have been more successful than others, this has certainly been a learning experience for us all.

May we also take this opportunity to wish you all a very healthy and peaceful summer.

*We would value your support in sharing this update with fellow governors in order that it reaches as many colleagues as possible.*

## Scenario planning

A number of head teachers across the county have been working closely with local authority advisers to produce a range of plans to support different school opening scenarios for September 2020. These can be accessed on the NYCC cyps.info page <https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/covid-19-working-towards-wider-re-opening-schools>

There is also an updated [risk assessment](#) for schools to use to plan for all pupils returning in autumn 2020 and the [frequently asked questions](#) document which was updated on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020.



## **RECEPTION BASELINE ASSESSMENT (RBA)**

Statutory implementation of the RBA was intended for September 2020 for all schools. The DfE have informed schools that due to the challenges that schools face as a result of COVID-19, this statutory implementation has been postponed until autumn 2021. Schools do have the option to sign up for the RBA Early Adopter year in autumn 2020, if they wish to familiarise themselves with the assessment materials. Any data gathered from the Early Adopter year will not be used for the purpose of the progress measure.

## **PERFORMANCE TABLES**

All performance tables are suspended for the 2019-20 academic year and no secondary school or college will be judged on data based on exams and assessments from 2020. There will be no statutory assessment data for primary schools at all for 2019-20.

All organisations that work with schools (DfE, Ofsted, local authority) should use data from previous years when assessing school and college performance. The DfE will continue to use 2019 data as a starting point for any conversation about support for schools with Ofsted judgements below 'good'.

Secondary schools and colleges should not use the 2020 exams data as part of their teacher performance management process.

## LEAVING NO CHILD BEHIND

The government have announced a one-off grant for schools to tackle the impact of lost teaching time as a result of COVID-19. £650 million will be shared across state primary and secondary schools over 2020-21. There is an expectation from the government that this funding will be spent on small group tuition for any pupil who needs it.

There will also be funding available for a National Tutoring Programme (NTP) to support the most disadvantaged children and young people over the 2020-21 academic year. You can access the NTP frequently asked questions [here](#).

The Education Endowment Foundation has [published a guide](#) which has been designed to support and inform school leaders' decisions about how they could use the catch-up funding. It offers an overview of relevant evidence and links to key resources.

Remote education will also continue to be important for pupils who are self-isolating. Governors need to be asking head teachers about the procedures that are in place to support every pupil in school to access a meaningful curriculum in order to be able to catch up, and in order to mitigate all risks of potential underachievement.



### Succession Planning Guidance for your Board

Good chairing is one of the eight elements of effective governance.

In order to support governing boards in developing and planning future leadership, the NGA has published some practical guidance on succession planning. Where boards do not consider succession planning, it can result in the appointment of a chair being a last minute decision, when the decision should be:

- carefully considered,
- should be someone who wants the role and
- should be someone that other board members have confidence in.

Ideally there would be some training or handover planned to ensure a smooth transition too. You can download a copy of the full guidance [here](#).

Governing bodies should also undertake exit interviews with all governors when their term of office ends. This supports self-evaluation - a reflective board will always consider ways in which they can continually improve their effectiveness.

### Do you need help to fill governor vacancies?



The Inspiring Governance programme is a DfE funded online service that connects prospective governors and trustees with schools that need them.

By accessing the service, you can view brief details of volunteers already registered and contact them if they are of interest to you; or you can publicise a vacancy on your governing board.

Inspiring Governance is affiliated to the NGA and any governors appointed through this programme will have access to NGA's [e-learning platform Learning Link](#) which covers a wide range of topics and are of varying lengths. Other support includes a monthly 'hot topics' email especially for new governors and trustees, a complimentary copy of one of NGA's induction guides and access to a dedicated email and telephone support service from a professional adviser to answer any queries new volunteers may have

Governing boards can sign up to use the service by visiting [www.inspiringgovernance.org/recruiting-governors](http://www.inspiringgovernance.org/recruiting-governors).

## NGA guidance on Governing in COVID-19 times: preparing for the next stages

NGA has updated its [COVID-19 guidance](#) for governing boards on business continuity with new content that looks forward to September when schools begin to gradually welcome back more pupils and governing boards will also be return to more normal business routines.

Governing boards should be considering how their annual schedule of business will work in practice, if the national guidance, which still advises against the governing board meeting in person, remain in place beyond September. NGA has also [updated its FAQs](#), which now cover a range of issues governing boards and schools are facing as a result of COVID-19.

## Keeping Children Safe in Education (KSCIE) update

On 17 June, the DfE published the latest version of the statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment. This comes into force from 1 September 2020 and can be found [here](#).

Governing Boards need to adopt the latest guidance at their first meeting of the Autumn term and ensure that all Governors have read it. They should also assure themselves that all Staff have read **at least** Part One of the guidance. We recommend that a record is kept confirming when this has been completed by each member of Staff and Governor. Helpfully, a summary of the changes can be found in Annex H.

*(Please note - Schools and Governors must continue to use the 2019 version until 31 August)*

In addition to the statutory guidance the DfE has also issued non-statutory interim guidance on safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers during the coronavirus outbreak. This guidance aims to support governing boards, proprietors, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads to continue to have appropriate regard to KCSIE and keep their children safe (under Covid-19). It suggests where schools and colleges might consider their safeguarding policy and processes differently when compared to business as usual. This can be found [here](#).

### OFSTED

Ofsted is planning to restart routine inspections from January 2021.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman's [commentary on the 6th July 2020](#) expresses growing concern about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on children and the unequal experiences that they will have had at home. During autumn 2020 Ofsted will carry out 'visits' to schools and colleges to evaluate, and support school leaders through collaborative conversations. The visits will not be graded but will result in a letter so that parents can understand what steps are being taken to help children back in to full-time education.

Visits will be piloted in early September and will start from the end of September 2020, with up to a day's notice. [The guidance](#) states that Ofsted 'will visit all inadequate schools and a sample of schools across other Ofsted grades' and the visits will focus on:

- identifying barriers;
- accessing the curriculum;
- routines and behaviours;
- health and well-being; and
- safeguarding.

The Education Inspection Framework and School Inspection Handbook will not be used in the visits – Ofsted will publish a brief operational note in September about how visits will be carried out. There will be no judgement with regard to how schools responded to COVID-19 during spring and summer 2020.



### *Virtual meetings guidance*

*The general expectation seems to be that governing body meetings will continue to be held virtually for the foreseeable future, given the current advice to schools on non-essential visitors.*

*The longer term view seems to be that many governing bodies will end up with a hybrid approach, perhaps full governing body meetings face to face with committee meetings being held virtually, however each governing board will need to adopt the format that works best for them. It is recommended that this becomes part of your standing orders.*

*The Key for School Governors has produced a guide to holding virtual meetings and a model policy document which you may find helpful. Both documents can be found [here](#).*

## Refreshing the Board



*It is best practice to limit the number of terms of office an individual serves at the same school – the DfE Governor handbook, the NGA and the charity sector all recommend no more than 8 or 9 years at one school or board.*

*With this in mind, the Local Authority will now be limiting the number of terms of office a Local Authority Governor will be nominated to the **same** school – as a maximum of two terms of four years (ie 8 years overall). We appreciate the experience and support our Governors have as they end their second term of office, therefore the LA would be delighted to nominate them to an alternative school if they are happy to continue and support education in North Yorkshire.*

*Boards are also asked to consider whether to agree a maximum number of terms served for their Co-Opted Governor roles, when reviewing their Standing Orders at the start of the year. This is a decision for each Governing Board.*

## Governors' annual self-assessment

There are a number of tools available to the Board when reviewing their effectiveness and how to improve:

**Skills Audit** – reviewing the skills and expertise of the individual Governors on the Board. This can highlight skills gaps that can be used in recruitment activities, can highlight training opportunities for the Board collectively, as well as individual training needs. It can also be reviewed against the competency framework from the DfE. Feedback also suggests that Boards learn more about the expertise that individual Governors, especially when they are modest or reserved.

**360° Feedback:** We recommend this exercise is completed for the role of Chair (and Chairs of Committees).

**Effectiveness of the Board:** It is also recommended that governors review their effectiveness as an item once a year – either by a discussion item on the agenda, completing questionnaires or asking Governors how well they could answer questions on specific topics including the broader curriculum, wellbeing, finance etc. To start, the questions included in these DfE documents can be used:

20 Questions for a maintained school or

21 Questions for academies.

This is a good time to take stock and look back at the year – and what has been learnt during Covid 19.

## REMINDER - Head Teacher Performance Management (HTPM) Online Training

A reminder to appraisal committee members that the LA will be running some online HTPM training in July and September 2020. If your school is part of the local authority SLA, two governors are able to attend at no cost, If you do not buy in to the SLA, or you wish for additional governors to attend, the cost per session will be £25 for each governor.

Sessions will take place on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> July and on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September. Your school administrator can book through SLA online - each governor will need to provide an email address in order to receive the meeting invitation.

## 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 they have been finalised.



## Who we are

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