

National Governors' Association

BULLETIN BOARD

BB 8/08

1 August 2008

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*Bulletin Board contains dates for your diary, details of consultations and other papers in and out of the NGA office, for information and action, and a digest of some of the activities of NGA on current issues. Circulation currently is to NGA Member Associations and the NGA Board. Distribution is by e-mail and post. **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: NGA DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NGA Annual General Meeting: Saturday, 8 November 2008, Cumberland Hotel, London

Autumn Regional Meetings: dates so far notified to NGA are posted on the NGA website

FOR INFORMATION

1 NGA News

NGA website: The members' area: **please note we are still lacking details of the executive members of some associations. Please remember to contact the NGA office with names, addresses and email addresses of your association's committee** so that they will be able to log into the members' area and receive copies of the NGA magazine *Matters Arising*.

NGA updates: Don't forget to look at *Updates* on the NGA website for information, as well as reading the Bulletin Board. The Bulletin Board and Updates can both be found in the briefing section of the website <http://www.nga.org.uk/updateandbulletin.aspx>

NGA Board Elections: The closing date for nominations to the NGA Board was 6pm on 31 July 2008. There are xx candidates standing for election for nine General Director places. The candidates are: Stephen Adamson, Vanessa Aris, Colleen Arnold, Judith Bennett, Mark Blois, Pat Colling, Clare Collins, Terry Douris, Duncan Haworth, Peter Martin, Paul Mason, Violet Rook, Paul Rosen, Richard Thompson, Joyce Woodham and Carol Woodhouse.

The candidates' 250 word statements will be placed on the About Us section of the NGA website once the NGA IT upgrade is completed – a message will be issued on assocs when they are available. The ballot paper will also be downloadable from the website or available via email from the office at governorhq@nga.org.uk. The closing date for receipt of ballot papers is 2pm Thursday 6 November 2008. <http://www.nga.org.uk/NGAElections2008.aspx>

NGA Association Subscriptions: Only a very small number of associations have not yet paid their subscriptions or been in touch with Gillian Windass at NGA about payment. Please address this as soon as possible. If you do not think you have been sent an invoice please contact Gillian at gillian.windass@nga.org.uk.

Please note: Associations who have not paid their subscriptions are not eligible to nominate candidates to the NGA Board or vote in the elections.

Associations with 'capped' subscriptions: because of the change in voting rights, most associations will be allocated votes in accordance with their subscription level, but 'capped'

associations must provide a list of their members, so that they can be allocated the correct number of votes. The number of members will not be enough: we need names, please.

2 DCSF News

Education and Skills Bill: This Bill is still progressing through Parliament. It includes the raising of the school leaving age, so should be one to keep an eye on. For details, including the debates concerning the Bill, go to <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2007-08/educationandskills.htm>

3 Meetings Digest

Ministerial Working Group on Governance (15.07.08): The meeting listened to four presentations about 'governance' in other sectors and possibilities of change in current governing bodies: corporate governance (by someone who is also a school governor); NHS Trusts and PCTs (acknowledgement of the democratic deficit in these); an Arts organisation with Trustees; and possible changes to governance in some schools and LAs sanctioned by the Innovation Unit. The first presentation, in particular, was very encouraging, with references to the need for induction for new governors and to the value of a good clerk to the governing body. There was mention in the presentations of the need for self-evaluation and that this should be rigorous. It was pointed out during the ensuing discussion that there are self-evaluation tools, of which governors make good use. There was some discussion of paid governors: the majority of contributors to the debate believed that this was not the way to go and that the spirit of volunteering and 'giving something back' was to be preserved. There was only a brief mention of a move to a smaller model: it was suggested (not by NGA) that this might make governance less attractive – an interesting point.

NCSL Primary Leadership Consultation Group (24.07.08): One important item on the agenda was the plan to create 'Professional Partners' to support new headteachers. This would ensure good support and provide someone with whom a new Head could be open about all aspects of this new role, without the judgement and accountability elements present with SIPs and LA officers. There was also a recognition that those serving Heads who took on the Professional Partner role would benefit as it was professional development for them – in training for the role and in its execution. As the plans become clearer it will be important for governing bodies to understand the value of this new role, both for new Heads and for those taking on the support role.

Partnerships for Schools (24.07.08): This was a good meeting, at which Ros Asher took on board the comments and concerns of NGA members. She will provide a detailed response to points made and when that is received a full report on the meeting will be circulated on nga-assocs.

Other July events or meetings attended by NGA representatives (or for which NGA provided chairs or speakers) included: Warrington Governors' Conference, Sturminster Newton High School Dorset, SW Regional meeting, National College for School Leadership NPQH Re-design Consultation Group, Training and Development Agency, DCSF New Relationships with Schools Sub Group, Centre for British Teachers (CfBT), Alarm Conference, Governor of the Year National Judging visits, North West COGS meeting, Becta, e-teach, NCSL/McKinsey's small primary school review.

4 The NGA First Certificate in Governance

This distance-learning programme is suitable for both new governors and existing governors who require a refresher or update. It consists of four modules with accompanying questionnaires. The questionnaires may be submitted for assessment and a score of 70% on each questionnaire is rewarded with a certificate to evidence the achievement. The pack can act as an introduction to governance for a new governor and give the confidence to attend training courses to further develop knowledge. The Programme is administered and run by EduCare, experts in distance learning. *The cost of the pack of four modules has now risen to £15 + VAT (£17.63). To purchase the package with external external assessment, feedback and a Certificate the price is £36.75 +VAT. A link to the EduCare website can be found on the front page of the NGA website. Alternatively, email the office for a hard copy of the form – governorhq@nga.org.uk.*

5 Teachers' TV

Become a Teachers' TV Associates and watch online previews of future programmes. Teachers' TV Associates are the channel's first point of contact at schools. By helping to promote the channel they get access to free previews, online discussion forums and invitations to special events, among other benefits. To learn more, go to www.teachers.tv/associates. Associates can access the previews through this web link.

Programme information can be found at: www.teachers.tv/programmeguide.

TTV can be found on Sky Guide 880, ntl 240, Telewest 240, Home choice 845 and Freeview 88. Freeview viewing time has changed; it is now from 11.00am until 1.00pm

CONSULTATIONS: NEWS and ACTION

6 OFSTED – A focus on improvement: proposals for maintained school inspections from September 2009

– Don't miss this one!

Ofsted's Strategic Plan sets out to ensure that inspection has more impact on outcomes for children and learners and to make inspection more coherent, rigorous and proportionate. The changes proposed in this document aim to drive improvement where it is most needed; takes greater account of the needs of those being inspected; targets resources where these will have most impact on outcomes; and uses resources as efficiently as possible.

The consultation can be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080075>

Responses should be made online at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080075>. Written responses may be sent to: Ofsted, Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SE

DCSF deadline 11 August 2008. Please copy comments to NGA

7 Delivering the Children's Plan – Strengthening Children's Trusts: legislative options

Following on from the recent consultation on the Statutory Guidance for Children's Trusts on the Duty to Cooperate, which closed on 26 June, this is a further call for views and advice from partners. This discussion document proposes a number of changes to the current framework for Children's Trusts. It includes requiring all areas to have a Children and Young People's Plan, with extended ownership of the plan to all statutory partners; proposals to strengthen the statutory framework for Children and Young People's Plans through secondary legislation and further clarifying the required content of plans; extending the 'duty to cooperate' to other key partners; and establishing a stronger basis for Children's Trusts Boards.

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

Responses may be made online to: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: ChildrensTrusts.LegislativeDiscussion@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk Written responses should be sent to: Gurdawar Jassi, Ground Floor, DCSF, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DCSF deadline 25 September 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 12 September 2008

8 Proposals for Revisions to Legislation for Schools Causing Concern

This consultation seeks views on proposed changes to the legislation on schools causing concern.

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

Responses may be made online to: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: scc.consultation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk Written responses should be sent to: Claire Ivie, National Challenge, DCSF, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DCSF deadline 25 September 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 12 September 2008

9 Schools' Role in Promoting Pupil Well-being – Draft Guidance for consultation

The 2006 Education and Inspections Act laid a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools (primary, secondary, special and Pupil Referral Units) in discharging their functions relating to the conduct of the school, to promote the well-being of pupils at the school. The duty came in to effect in September 2007. Since that date, an equivalent requirement has been placed on new academies through their funding agreements. This consultation draft offers guidance on schools' role in promoting well-being and on the support they can expect from their local authority and other partners in the Children's Trust.

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

Responses may be made online to: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: promotingpupil.well-being@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: Consultation Unit, Ground Floor, Area B, DCSF, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

DCSF deadline 25 September 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 12 September 2008

10 School Admissions 2008

In the Children's Plan, published in December 2007, Ministers committed to review the school application and allocation process. This consultation outlines proposed changes to make the admissions process for parents as fair, transparent and straightforward as possible. The consultation runs for 16 weeks and views are welcome on the proposed changes.

The full consultation and supporting documents can be found at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online to: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: review.admissions@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: Fair Access Division, DCSF, 3F-FA, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DCSF deadline 2 October 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 19 September 2008

Also see 'Zero Carbon School Buildings'. The DCSF has set out its ambition for new school buildings to be zero carbon from 2016, and has appointed a Task Force to advise on how this might be achieved. It is undertaking a Call for Evidence to gather ideas, information and experience to inform the Task Force's early work. Details are given at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/. Closing date: 10 October.

11 Publications available from NGA

Items available include:

- ◆ *Welcome to Governance 2007-08 Edition* - This popular guide for new governors provides an overview of, and introduction to, the role and responsibilities of a governing body, with sections on meetings, school budgets, policies, development planning, visiting the school and much more. Price: Single copies – £4.00 to members, £6.00 to non-members. Discounts for multiple copies: 5% for 2–29, 10% for 30–99, 20% for 100–499 and 25% for 500+.
- ◆ *Food Policy in Schools – A Strategic Policy Framework for Governing Bodies*. The revised publication was launched in September to take account of the new standards for school food. Available free from NGA. <http://www.nga.org.uk/gdncedocs.aspx>
- ◆ *NGA/Defra – A Strategic Policy Framework for Governing Bodies, Catering and Food Procurement Supplement*: The NGA in partnership with Defra has produced a supplement to the Food Policy Document, looking at issues surrounding food procurement and sustainability. The document is available to download from the NGA website via the attached link. <http://www.nga.org.uk/gdncedocs.aspx>
- ◆ *Papers*: The papers cover a wide range of topics providing detailed guidance and information on aspects of governance. The papers available currently are: *Governors and the Role of Inspection, Governors and the Curriculum, Financial Responsibilities of the Governing Body,*

Governing Bodies and Staffing, Governors who they are and what they do and Succession Planning. Other NGA papers are currently undergoing revision and will be available later in 2008. Watch the website for more information. Price for all Papers: £3 to members and £4 to non-members.

- ◆ *School improvement through ICT – guidance for governors.* Hard copies of this guidance are available from NGA. It is also downloadable free from the NGA website.

<http://www.nga.org.uk/gdncedocs.aspx>

12 Other useful publications.

Common Mental Health Problems: Supporting school staff by taking positive action: The DCSF has just published this short guidance document aimed at governing bodies, employers, line managers and school staff. It can be downloaded from the DCSF publications website

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/> or ordered in hard copy from DCSF Publications Tel: 0845 6022260 (Ref: 00380-2008BKT-EN)

Recruiting Headteachers and Senior Leaders: This publication outlines a seven-stage process, which provides a governing body with the practical guidance needed to find success in recruiting a headteacher. The publication can be downloaded free from the NCSL website:

www.ncsl.org.uk/publications

School Improvement Planning Framework: To find out more about this useful tool visit the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) website. The framework can be downloaded or ordered in hard copy. http://www.tda.gov.uk/leaders/schoolimprovement_framework.aspx

Extended Schools Toolkit for Governors: This can be downloaded from TeacherNet or ordered online from the Training and Development Agency at: publications@tda.gov.uk or by telephone on 0845 6060 323. (Reference no: TDA279/05.07/BEL/158)