

National Governors' Association

BULLETIN BOARD

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1 May 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 Conference – Whose curriculum is it anyway? – Unlocking the Curriculum (sponsored by the QCA): Saturday, 21 June 2008, Wolverhampton Racecourse Conference Facilities – download a booking form from the NGA website <http://www.nga.org.uk/events.aspx?cardid=35>

NGA/CSN/NCOGS Conference – Effective Governance in a Changing World: Monday, 2 June 2008, Woburn House Conference Centre, 20 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9HQ. Special rates for governors are available (£25) – to access the special rate contact your local governor services.

NGA Annual General Meeting: Saturday, 8 November 2008, 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 remember to contact the NGA office with names, addresses and email addresses of your association's executive committee** so that they will be able to log into the members' area and receive copies of the new NGA magazine *Matters Arising*. And don't forget, if your association hasn't its own website, there will be the opportunity to have an easy to manage microsite within the NGA site.

Governance issues – update: A Ministerial Stakeholder Group on Governance has been established. It will meet four times (in May, June, July and September) after which the long awaited consultation should be published.

NGA Association Subscriptions: A reminder that subscriptions are now due. Invoices and accompanying letters were sent out to Associations in the week beginning 7 April – if you have not received an invoice please contact the NGA office at governorhq@nga.org.uk.

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>

2 DCSF News

Education and Skills Bill: This remains on the Bulletin Board as a reminder. The Bill includes the raising of the school leaving age, and should be one to keep an eye on. For the Bill's timetable and the details go to <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2007-08/educationandskills.htm>.

3 Meetings Digest

General Teaching Council Accountability Seminar (22.04.08): The seminar took an overview of the New Relationship with Schools (NRwS) and of the current accountability framework and evidence gathering. Some issues were:

The accountability structures of individual schools would need to link to wider partnership commitments and a structure would need to be developed that links to shared commitments. There was a suggestion of a tension between the use of data for accountability and data for development – and widespread concern about the universal accuracy of data produced, e.g. Raiseonline. It was felt that it would be preferable for the SEF to be written for the benefit of the school and not for Ofsted, although it was pointed out that 'what gets inspected gets done'.

One question posed was 'Given the reduced time spent on an inspection, is there still sufficient time to identify and address any issues in the school?' to which the clear answer was 'No'. There seemed to be confusion over the role of the SIP – adviser, inspector or critical friend? And the School Profile had failed to improve communication with parents. An interesting suggestion made was that the most important school improvement measure that could be taken would be to even out social inequality – and this was a role for government.

Meeting with Jim Knight, Minister of State for Schools and 14–19 Learners (29.04.08): The meeting began with the Minister initiating a discussion on engaging parents in their children's education. The meeting then moved to the NGA's agenda items. There was discussion of the issues surrounding governance and NGA reiterated its views and the views of members and emphasized that the proposed Ministerial Stakeholder Group on Governance should include two places for NGA, not one as has been proposed so far. The next issue was the concern among some governors that LAs (and therefore governing bodies) were being pressurized into including an academy or the adoption of trust status for their schools in their BSF plans – there was the implicit threat that, without one of these 'options', the BSF project bid would fail. The Minister said that the judgement *should be* whether a project showed the transformation of education in the area not that a specific type of school should be included in the planning. NGA raised the current consultation about SEN Co-ordinators. There are two duties on governing bodies: to define the role of the SENCO and to monitor the SENCO's actions 'in relation to key areas of the role'. This appeared to require a governing body to take on an operational role rather than its proper strategic function. The final item was to suggest – again – that the School Profile was not proving a useful tool for parents. There was some feeling that the Minister did not disagree!

Other April events or meetings attended by NGA representatives (or for which NGA provided chairs or speakers) included: Stockport Governors' Conference, Lincolnshire Association AGM, Wakefield Association AGM, New Relationships with Schools Consultative Group, DCSF External Target Setting Group, NCPTA Awards Event, DCSF Bursars' Development Group, DCSF CRB Education Advisory Group, Home Access Task Force, DCSF Community Cohesion Unit and Learning Outside the Classroom.

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*

*pack of four modules is really good value at £9.50 + VAT (£11.16). **Please note this can rise to £36.75 + VAT to include external assessment, feedback and advice and a Certificate.** 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

Don't forget that governors who become Teachers' TV Associates can 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 The path to citizenship: next steps in reforming the immigration system.

This Home Office Green Paper invites responses on its proposals regarding immigration and citizenship. The document is available on the Home Office website in Word or pdf format. Click on 'quick links', then 'Have your say – contribute to a public consultation' and then 'The path to citizenship: next steps in reforming the immigration system'.

Responses may be made by email to: ImmigrationReform@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: Immigration Reform Consultation Responses, Border and Immigration Agency, 11th Floor, Apollo House, 36 Wellesley Road, Croydon, CR9 3RR.

Home Office deadline 14 May 2008. Please copy comments to NGA

7 Raising Expectations

This is a joint consultation between the DCSF and the DIUS on the transfer of planning and funding responsibilities for 16–19 year olds from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to Local Authorities and on proposals for reforming the post 19 skills landscape.

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: Raisingexpectations.ENABLINGTHESYSTEM@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: Consultation Unit, DCSF, Area 1A, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

DCSF deadline 9 June 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 19 May 2008

8 Education (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) (England) Regulations 2008

This consultation concerns draft regulations prescribing the qualifications and experience required of the person responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision for pupils – the SEN Co-ordinator or SENCO. The consultation also sets out associated functions in relation to governing bodies, and outlines work to develop national accredited training for all newly appointed SENCOs.

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: SENCO.CONULTATION@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: John Perryman, Special Educational Needs and Disability Division, DCSF, Area 2A, Caxton House, 6–12 Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA .

DCSF deadline 17 June 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 30 May 2008

9 Statutory Guidance for Children’s Trusts on the Duty to Co-operate

Views are invited on this guidance on inter-agency co-operation, issued under section 10 of the Children Act 2004. The guidance reflects the experience of developing Children’s Trust arrangements since the publication of *Every Child Matters*.

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: childrentrusts.consultation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: Gurdawar Jassi, Children’s Trusts Consultation, DCSF, Ground Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DCSF deadline 26 June 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 2 June 2008

10 The Management of Building Schools for the Future waves 7 to 15

This consultation seeks views on a range of proposals for how waves 7 to 15 of Building Schools for the Future are managed, taking account of developments in government policy since the programme was first launched, and also the lessons learned from the early waves.

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: BSFManagement.CONULTATION@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: Cheryl Hogarth, Schools Capital Strategy Unit, DCSF, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DCSF deadline 4 July 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 6 June 2008

11 The CAMHS Review – Next Steps to Improving the Emotional Well-Being and Mental Health of Children and Young People – Call for Evidence

The Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and the Secretary of State for Health have asked Jo Davidson (Chair) and Bob Jeppard (Vice-Chair) to lead an independent Review of CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). The Review will investigate how universal, targeted and specialist services can be improved to meet the needs of children and young people who are experiencing, or are at risk of, mental health problems. This consultation calls for evidence from all individuals, organisations and groups.

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: CAMHS.Review@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: CAMHS Review Secretariat, Children’s Mental Health Team, DCSF, Ground Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

DCSF deadline 7 July 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 14 June 2008

Please note also ‘Assessing the Impact of the Commercial World on Children’s Wellbeing – A Call for Evidence’. Details are given on the DCSF website: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/. Closing date: 30 June.

12 Publications available from NGA

Items available include:

- ◆ *Welcome to Governance*: New edition now available. 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>
- ◆ *Extended Schools – a Guide for Governors I* is available free from NGA.
- ◆ *Papers*: The papers cover a wide range of topics providing detailed guidance and information on aspects of governance. Two revised papers were published in December 2007: *Governors who they are and what they do* and *Governors and Staffing*. *Governors and the Curriculum* and *Governors and the Role of Inspection* (revised February 2007) are also available. The other NGA papers are currently undergoing revision and will be available 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>

13 Other useful publications.

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 ordered in hard copy from NGA (£7.50) and 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)