

TITLE	Review Of The Effectiveness Of Governing Bodies - Monitoring
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 October 2015
WARD	None Specific
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR	Judith Ramsden Director of Children's Services

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Strengthening effective school governance and leadership on school standards and outcomes for children and young people.

RECOMMENDATION

To confirm support for actions taken and recommend any future steps.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The report gives an account of the Wokingham governor support service, detailed in the annex. Matters covered include: Statutory support; traded service; national chairs' training programme; support for schools judged by Ofsted as "requiring improvement"; sharing good practice; vacancies and recruitment; Ofsted expectations; impact; next steps. Also attached is an example of the WBC "Digest for Governors" which gives comprehensive background information.

Background

Between May and July 2012, a Task and Finish Group of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny panel undertook a review of the work of school governing bodies and the services provided by the Local Authority in helping them undertake their responsibilities. There were eighteen recommendations put forward by the Task and Finish Group which were approved by the Executive in November 2012. Updates on those recommendations have been provided annually since then, although it was felt that more measurable outcomes should be provided in the future, as outlined in Appendix 1.

Analysis of Issues

See annex.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Cost neutral	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Cost neutral	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Cost neutral	Yes	Revenue

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
--

The cost of the governor services staff is funded entirely by the revenue from the traded service.
--

Cross-Council Implications

List of Background Papers

Contact Alan Stubbersfield	Service Children's Services
Telephone No. 0118 908 6121	Email alan.stubbersfield@wokingham.gov.uk
Date 20/10/2014	Version No.1

APPENDIX 1

Overview

Wokingham's governor support function is a successful operation providing key support to those bodies comprising skilled and committed volunteers who contribute significantly to education in the borough. Its success is seen in comments on school governance and LA support in inspection reports, in feedback surveys, attendance at events, and in income and financial viability. The report gives an account of current issues, and includes an example of the way in which we communicate with governors with the Digest for Governors.

The termly Governors Digest provides advice and guidance to all governors and highlights legal changes and procedural information for that term. Articles are provided from within the authority ie HR, Finance and Health and Safety. A copy of this term's Digest is attached as Appendix 2.

Statutory Support

Reconstitution – There was a legal requirement that all governing bodies had to reconstitute under the 2012 Constitutional Regulations by 1st September 2015. Advice and guidance was provided on this through Chairs' and Clerks' briefings and individually. All schools successfully reconstituted their governing bodies by 1st September 2015.

Traded Service

The Governor Services traded service for the financial year 2015/2016 has been subscribed to by all WBC schools including Academies/ Free Schools with the exception of Maiden Erlegh and Oakbank Schools. The current charge is £950 plus £18.00 per governor for maintained schools and £1400 plus £18.00 per governor per annum for academies/free schools. The costs to buy into the traded service increased last year to take into account that governing bodies would be reducing in size as a result of having to reconstitute. This continues to ensure that the income received from subscriptions make the service self-funding.

Those schools who do not subscribe are able to attend training on a pay as you go basis but the costs for these are high to ensure that it is more cost effective for schools to subscribe. Oakbank School have attended training on a pay as you go basis.

Within this traded service is the offer of a variety of relevant training courses, briefings and the bi-annual conference. Appendix 3 outlines the uptake of training, the evaluations from that training, together with the uptake of the GEL Online training that is also provided as part of the traded service.

The Governor Services team meets twice yearly with Development Governors, whose role it is to champion training, encouraging their governors to attend briefings/courses and find a governor mentor for new governors. At these meetings Development Governors are provided with statistics for the uptake of their governors training and the opportunity to review the courses being offered each year with suggestions being acted upon, where practical.

New governors are booked onto the next available New Governors Induction training and as a result of this we had 83% of new governors attending these very important sessions which inform governors of their role. Nationally Wokingham are above average with many local authorities following our process of automatic bookings to achieve higher attendance.

National Chairs Training Programme

The National Chairs Development Programme was put together by the National College for Teaching and Leadership at the request of central government with a view to offering specific training to support governors. This training has been offered since January 2013 and is through three modules taking several months to complete. Wokingham Borough hosted the training on behalf of Wokingham, Bracknell Forest and Reading and has offered the training twice. A third session was arranged but had to be cancelled due to lack of delegates. Those who were booked on were signposted to sessions being offered by Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council. Within Wokingham 13 chairs of governors have completed the programme.

Comments received on the difference that the delegates felt this training would make include:

- Confidence in my abilities.
- Think about how I can bring others along on the journey.
- A sense of focus on what I need to do next.
- Leadership Development, knowledge of how others operate.
- Ideas and strategies form good practice and shared information.
- Make changes when best for the school and not individuals.
- Explore collaboration and try to have standardisation with Wokingham schools.
- Confidence. Some individual ideas and an overall reminder to focus on what matters.
- Governor evaluation and necessity of some form of accountability.

Support for Requiring Improvement Schools

The School Improvement strategy - Signs of Success has now been updated and sent to Chairs of Governors. This outlines the support for those schools who are Ofsted Requiring Improvement, locally assessed as requires improvement or high priority schools. Within this is availability of up to 40 officer day's support from the school improvement team, of which governance is part of this and so additional full governing body training will be provided where required. In the past this has included training on:

- understanding data
- Ofsted expectations
- Effective governance
- How to support and challenge.

Governance reviews have also taken place and as a result from the learning from that review, specific measures of support and advice from the Governor Services Manager and School Improvement Officer has taken place to ensure the governing body are able to increase their knowledge and understanding to address areas of weakness.

Sharing of Good Practice

Chairs of Governors have an opportunity to join with their cluster Chairs at each Chairs Briefing and the local authority suggest a development item for discussion. These have included:

- Developing leadership talent
- Reconstitution
- Skills audits
- Partnership working, collaborations/federations and amalgamations
- Budgets in times of austerity and sharing of resources.

Governor Services have also provided mentors for new Chairs and Chairs of Committee where requested. Two new Chairs of Governors within one cluster were put in contact with a Chair in the same cluster who will continue to provide support for them in their new role. The governors of a free school have asked to see if it is possible that 'buddies' from other governing bodies are provided and this has been arranged accordingly.

Within the Borough we have one National Leader of Governance (NLG) who has joined a high priority school, as Chair of Governors, to provide support for the school and governing body. Within his role as an NLG he is also providing support to two new Chairs of Governors and has undertaken a review of governance and provides some ongoing training for that governing body. Governor Services are encouraging more Chairs of Governors to become NLG's by providing information on when it is open to apply, flyers about the role and a contact of who to approach for more information.

Vacancies and Recruitment

Governor Services provide posters and leaflets that governing bodies can use to assist with recruitment of governors, which some governing bodies have included on their website. In the past a strapline has been included on the Council Tax envelopes that are sent out to each home within the Borough. Governor Services also recommends that schools use the School Governors One Stop Shop or Inspiring Governors which are national organisations to support governor recruitment.

Vacancies within the Borough are relatively high at 15% which is because schools have reconstituted their governing body and have therefore had more resignations than they would normally expect. Historically the vacancy rate at the beginning of the Autumn Term has varied between 12% - 16% and is generally the highest within the year as staff and parent governor elections are taking place. Within the Borough the vacancy rate for local authority governors is 0.1% (which equates to 1 vacancy).

Ofsted

The Ofsted Inspection framework has expectations that governance will provide the appropriate support and challenge to school leaders and where this is good it will be reflected in the overall judgement of the school. In the academic year 2012/13, 16 inspections of WBC primary schools judged 80% of governing bodies to be at least

Good. In the academic year 13/14, 15 inspections of WBC Primary Schools judged 87% of governing bodies to be at least Good. In 2014/15, 6 inspections of WBC Primary Schools and 1 Secondary Academy judged 86% of governing bodies to be at least Good. The overall picture is that 87% of WBC schools have governance judged at least Good at the time of their last Ofsted inspection.

Where governance is good the following comments were outlined within the Ofsted inspection reports:

- The governing body makes a strong contribution to the quality of education the school provides. They have had relevant training about keeping the school under review and rigorously follow up on areas where the school could be doing better, with notable impact.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and they have allocated their roles to make sure that they use these skills effectively to support and challenge the school. They also attend training to improve their skills further.
- Governors have significantly improved their knowledge and skills since the previous inspection. They are now able to hold senior leaders to account highly effectively for the academic performance of different groups of pupils.
- The governing body is capable and organised. Governors monitor key aspects of the school's provision systematically and thoroughly.

Where governance was underperforming in a small number of cases, Ofsted identified the following causes:

- The GB relies too heavily on the Headteacher for information about the quality of teaching;
- The GB has undergone many changes and does not yet provide consistent challenge to school leaders about pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching;
- Governors have been trained in understanding assessment data, but have not always asked critical questions about why teaching is not leading to better pupil progress.
- While they question the headteacher over the content of the school's improvement plan, they are not closely involved in identifying priorities, setting targets and checking the impact on pupil progress.

As a result of these comments governors have received and been encouraged to attend specific training to increase their knowledge and understanding. Governor to Governor support has been arranged by using the NLG or other effective governing bodies and where required School Improvement Boards (SIB) have been put in place to challenge and support the leadership team.

Impact Statement

Governor Services are currently undertaking a questionnaire asking governing bodies for feedback on the service provided. Feedback from this will be provided to Development Governors at their meeting in December and via the Governors Newsletter at the end of this term. From the results received to date 100% are rating the overall support provided by Governor Services as good or better.

Next Steps

- The bi-annual conference is being organised for 2016.
- Continuing support providing mentors for new chairs and governors, when required.
- Encouraging Chairs of Governors to become National Leaders of Governance.
- Support for new academies will be provided when required.
- Governor Services continue to work closely with the School Improvement team.
- Following the retirement of the Governor Services Manager the Governor Services Officer has been promoted into this role following a national recruitment process, co-incidentally ensuring a smooth transition and ongoing continuity. The resulting vacant Governor Services Officer post has also been successfully filled.

DIGEST

for Governors



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Autumn 2015

Dear Governors

Summer has come and gone, the 2015 pupil outcomes have been crunched, and we all start another school year, with a wild surmise... My wife and I used to refer to our infant child as our wild surmise, which is actually a reference to the poet Keats' sense of excitement on sitting down to read a new and thrilling translation of ancient Greek poetry. It takes all sorts... for my part I still miss the feeling of what it's like in school at the beginning of September, with that new paint smell, and the sense of potential to be realised through the year... I hope we all share that feeling of creative power balanced with crisp-edged ambition, and the commitment to all our pupils that I see reflected in the 2015 results.

Those results have seen some fantastic successes, some risks taken, and overall improvements at all levels of Wokingham schools and Early Years settings. I'm delighted that our foundation stage outcomes have shot up, that writing has improved, and Wokingham's A levels were better when nationally they weren't. I'm really pleased too that we have a borough-level analysis for our looked-after pupils' results at every age group. That's been achieved by the partnership between your schools, where those pupils are, and the new "Virtual School" which provides back-up and focus on vulnerable pupils' progress. I look forward to continued success of every school in Wokingham, and particularly the virtual school, which is my personal wild surmise to support vulnerable pupils and especially those looked after by the local authority.

My work here will continue for the new school year, so I'll be able to watch all that growth, and hopefully to meet as many of you as I can through the year.

Best wishes

Alan Stubbersfield
Interim Head of Learning and Achievement.
Wokingham Children's Services

CONTENTS	Page
1. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE	
Constitutional Regulation changes	2
Election of Chair and Vice Chair	2
Review of Committees and Delegation	2
Parent Governor Representative Elections	3
Timeline of Changes	3
2. PERSONNEL	
School Teachers' Pay 2015/16	3
New Law on Ballot Voting thresholds for Unions to take Strike Action	4
Fit for Work	4
3. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	
School Improvement	5
Data Packs	5
4. FINANCE	
Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools Delegated Budgets	5
5. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS	
School Admissions Arrangements 2017/18	5
6. SCHOOLS HEALTH AND SAFETY SEEING ASSURANCE PROGRAMME	6
7. TERM DATES 2016-2017	7
8. E-LEARNING FOR GOVERNORS	7
9. CHILD PROTECTION LEVEL 1 TRAINING	7
10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOF GOVERNORS	8
TERM DATES 2016-17	10
INFORMATION FROM THE DfE	11

1. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Changes to Constitutional Regulations

Updated Constitutional Regulations have been published and come into effect from 1st September 2015. The changes within these Regulations are:

- Encouraging governing bodies to interview, discuss and take up references for appointed governors ie co-opted category.
- A paragraph has been added on ensuring diversity and different opinion within the governing body and that the governing body should be alert to the risk of becoming dominated by one particular mind-set or strand of opinion.
- If someone is already a governor elsewhere and looking to become a governor at a second or third school, they are suggesting that the Chair of Governors checks with the Chair from the other school to ensure that time and commitment will not be a problem.
- Includes the information that governing bodies must now publish on their website details of their governors, category of governance, business interests (including if related to staff of the school) and attendance and this also includes Associate members.
- Includes that on the Instrument of Government it can now state that an individual's term of office will be between 1-4 years.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Except where governors have already decided to appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs for terms of office of more than a year, both these positions will be elected to at the first meetings of this term. As previously, any governor not employed at the school is eligible to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair.

If it has not already done so, the governing body may wish to explore any variation to its arrangements for appointing the Chair and Vice-Chair (their term of office can be set at between one and four years). Any change should be decided during the course of the year, well ahead of the next round of elections.

The governing body also decides other details for these elections – it remains good practice for nominations to be sought in advance of the meeting, published with the agenda, and voted on by secret ballot, although the regulations are no longer prescriptive about these details.

Review of Committees and Delegation

The governing body must review its committees at least annually, including both membership and terms of reference. The governing body must appoint a clerk to each committee (the regulations do not prevent a governor being allocated this role).

The governing body can choose whether to appoint committee chairs or leave this for the committees themselves to decide.

The governing body must also review at least annually its delegation of functions to the headteacher, committees or individual governors. There are a number of points to bear in mind under the current regulations:

Firstly, almost any function can potentially be delegated to a committee, although there remain restrictions on what can be delegated to an individual.

Secondly, governors are reminded they must consider delegating non-strategic aspects of the governing body’s duties to the headteacher.

Thirdly, governors may need to amend committee terms of reference to reflect policy changes.

Parent Governor Representative Elections

There is an opportunity for parent governors to put themselves to stand as the parent governor representatives to sit on the Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Information will be available on our website at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools/governors/> from 21st September and if any parent governor is interested they will have until 19th October to apply.

Timeline of Changes

The DfE have produced a timeline document to help Headteachers and governing bodies plan ahead, prepare for and apply mandatory legal requirements which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-timeline-maintained-schools>

Contact: Vicky Lewendon on 974 6131

2. PERSONNEL

INFORMATION

School Teachers’ Pay 2015/16

The following are the key changes to the STPCD 2015:

Main Pay Range

- An uplift of 1% to the minima of the range
- An uplift of 2% to the maxima of the range

Upper Pay Range, Leading Practitioner Range, Unqualified Teachers Range

- An uplift of 1% to the minima and maxima of the range

Allowances in the national framework i.e. Teaching and Learning Responsibility Payments (TLRs) and Special Education Needs (SEN) allowances

- An uplift of 1% to the minima and maxima of the TLR payment and SEN allowance ranges

Leadership group range

- An uplift of 1% to the minima of the overall leadership group range
- No uplift to the maxima of the overall leadership group range
- An uplift of 1% to the minima of each of the eight head teacher group pay ranges
- No uplift to the maxima of each of the eight head teacher group pay ranges

It will be down to individual schools, in accordance with their pay policies, to determine how to adjust the salaries and allowances payable to individual teachers (within the bounds of the national framework) and that these decisions must take account of the individual’s performance.

All payraises will be notified to Selima directly from the schools via spreadsheets,

confirming the individual salaries of each teacher as there will now be so many different pay points across the various Wokingham Borough Schools.

New law on ballot voting thresholds for unions to take strike action

The Trade Union Bill reforms the rules on trade union ballots for taking industrial action. The implementation date is yet to be confirmed, but the main elements of the Bill are:

- increasing to 50% the voting threshold for union ballots turnouts (while retaining the requirement for there to be a simple majority of votes in favour of industrial action);
- introducing an additional requirement that 40% of all those entitled to vote in the ballot must vote in favour of industrial action in certain public services such as health, education, fire and transport;
- introducing measures to restrict picketing;
- introducing changes to the role of the certification officer;
- introducing a new requirement that members must opt in to the political fund element of trade unions subscriptions; and
- restricting the mandate for industrial action post ballot by introducing time limits on the mandate.

Fit for Work

Fit for Work is a Government-funded service providing advice for employers, employees and GPs on matters relating to health and work. It also provides occupational health assessments on referral from the employee's GP or employer, where an employee is absent from work for at least four weeks.

Where an employee is referred to the service, an adviser from the Fit for Work service will carry out an occupational health assessment, usually over the phone. The employee will be provided with a return-to-work plan, with recommendations for steps that could help him or her to return to work. The return-to-work plan will be shared with the employer, unless the employee does not consent to this.

The roll out of GPs being able to make referrals to the Fit for Work service is complete. Employers in England and Wales will be able to make referrals to the Fit for Work service from autumn 2015.

Once employers can refer employees, the Fit for Work service is more likely to be used by small and medium sized employers. However, employees can be referred to the Fit for Work service by their GP, so a large employer with an occupational health function may be contacted by Fit for Work about an employee, even if it has not made the referral itself. A large employer's existing occupational health services could be incorporated into the formation of the return-to-work plan by the Fit for Work service and could be involved in facilitating the recommendations under the plan.

Advice for Employers

Employers can take a return-to-work plan from the Fit for Work service as evidence equivalent to a fit note for the purposes of statutory sick pay entitlement. An employee needs to provide a fit note to the employer if he or she is discharged from the Fit for Work service before returning to work, or if the employee does not consent to the return-to-work plan being disclosed to the employer.

Employers should be aware that, if the employee's condition amounts to a disability under the Equality Act 2010, a refusal without reason on the employer's part to accommodate an adjustment recommended by the Fit for Work service could form the basis of a complaint

to an employment tribunal that the employer failed in its duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Future developments

The Government announced on 22 July 2015 that the roll out of GPs being able to make referrals to the Fit for Work service was complete. Employers in England and Wales can make referrals to the Fit for Work service from autumn 2015.

Guidance for Employers can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408274/fit-for-work-employers-guide-feb-2015.pdf

Contact: Nicky Barlow, Schools Personnel Consultant on 07789 744878

3. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

INFORMATION

School Categorisation and School Improvement Support

Individual letters outlining what your school has been categorised as for school improvement support will be sent to the Headteacher shortly with copies being emailed to the Chairs of Governors. The support being offered for each category will be outlined within the new School Improvement Strategy document that will be available shortly.

Contact: Gill Walker

Data Packs

Local Authority data analysis packs for Early Years, KS1 and KS2 have been sent into schools. RAISE Online data will be available by the end of October for Primary Schools.

Contact: Performance Data Team 0118 974 6075

4. FINANCE

Maintained Secondary and Primary Schools Delegated Budget

We are bringing forward the issuing of **Indicative** schools delegated budgets for 2016/17 financial year which will be issued in early November. Governing Bodies will need to be using this budget information in budget planning preparation for the new financial year.

Contact: Donna Munday, Schools Finance Manager 0118 974 6114

5. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

School Admissions Arrangements 2017-18

Proposed admission arrangements for 2017-2018 will go to the forum for advice. Consultation on Admissions Arrangements for September 2017 must last for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between **1 October 2015 and 31 January 2016**.

INFORMATION

Community and Controlled schools. Please let us know if you wish the local authority to consider any changes to current arrangements relating to your school individually.

Whilst there is no requirement now to consult on keeping or increasing the school admission number, there is still a requirement to consult on any decreases. Please notify if you wish us to consider any changes to your school admission number. You should

contact us by 28 September to allow sufficient time for consideration of any proposed changes.

Voluntary Aided schools and Academies. Own admission authority schools are reminded that if there are proposals to make any changes to the 2017/18 determined admission policy that consultation should take place for at least six weeks between 1 October 2015 and 31 January 2016. If the school is not proposing to make any changes, please advise Sue Riddick for information. If the proposed arrangements are ready for consideration by the School Admissions Forum, the next meeting will be held on 1 December 2015. Paperwork for this meeting is usually prepared two weeks in advance of the meeting. The following meeting is scheduled for 27 January 2016. Please forward any paperwork to Sue Riddick.

As in previous years, if you wish us to include your school’s consultation documentation on the council’s website for wider coverage, please forward to us by 10 December 2015. There is still a requirement to post your consultation documentation to your school’s website, notify your relevant area that consultation is underway, give details of the person in the admission authority to whom comments may be sent, and allow consultees at least six weeks to respond between 1 October and 31 January.

If you do not consult on any changes; schools are still required to determine 2017/18 admission arrangements by 28 February 2016 and send a copy of their full, determined arrangements to the local authority by 15th March 2016. The determined arrangements for 2017/18 must also be available on your schools website by 15th March 2016.

Contact: Sue Riddick (0118) 974 6113

6. SCHOOLS’ HEALTH AND SAFETY SEEKING ASSURANCE PROGRAMME

INFORMATION

Next Steps

The pilot phase has been completed – we have expressed our thanks to those schools who volunteered to participate, all of whom stated that they felt it was a beneficial experience. We have now evaluated the results and finalised the documentation in order to commence the full programme with the remainder of the Council’s maintained schools from the start of this new term.

To confirm the approach:

- the first step in the process is for each school to undertake a self-evaluation of their health and safety management locally using an easy to follow checklist which outlines the standards required to meet and secure health and safety compliance; a template action plan is included in the checklist pack.
- step two is in the form of a visit from one of the Council’s Health and Safety Advisors to review with the Headteacher (or member of the school’s management team delegated as the lead for health and safety) the findings on selected key health and safety topic areas and to provide advice and guidance on any other aspect of health and safety that the school may wish to raise following their self-evaluation exercise in step one.
- self-assessment action plan: owned by the Headteacher, recommendations arising from the review meeting should also be added to the school’s health and safety action plan. General trends and patterns will be identified centrally in order to inform future

health and safety strategies for maintained schools.

The final version of the self-assessment checklist has now been shared more widely with all Headteachers (you may wish to view it by clicking on [this link](#)) with remaining schools invited to book their health and safety seeking assurance review meeting from October onwards; it is important to stress that their commitment to completing the step one self-evaluation is critical to the review meeting going ahead. The involvement of the School Governor Health and Safety Champion in the review process stage is welcomed.

Should you have any questions or require further information please speak with your Headteacher in the first instance. Matthew Stringer from Corporate Health and Safety can be contacted via email address HREnquiries@wokingham.gov.uk for all further enquiries.

7. TERM DATES 2016-2017

INFORMATION

The agreed terms dates for 2016-2017 are attached to this Governors Digest.

8. E-LEARNING FOR GOVERNORS

For governors of schools who subscribe to our traded service, you are able to register and then log on to the GEL (Governor E-Learning) website and undertake training in your own home. Modules include:

- Governors Visits to Schools
- Equality and Diversity
- Roles and Responsibilities of Governors
- Management of Academy Finances
- Monitoring Performance Data and Targets
- Pupil Premium
- Monitoring and Evaluation – The Governing Body's Role

9. CHILD PROTECTION LEVEL 1 TRAINING

Child Protection Level training courses are run by our Corporate Learning and Development team. Each session is a 3 hour course. To book onto these sessions you now need to do this yourselves and details are outlined below.

Please register yourself at the following address

www.learningpool.com/wokingham

USERNAME: your email address

PASSWORD: welcome

You will then receive an email to enable you to complete your registration (it just takes a couple of mins) then you need to change your password. The instructions of how to do this are in the user guide. Any problems please use the FAQ button or email hrenquiries@wokingham.gov.uk. If you have a technical issue you will need to use the telephone number/email address in the 'Contact us Button'.

An e-learning refresher training course on Safeguarding children is also available through the Local Safeguarding Children's Board by going to

www.kwango.com

username: wblscb4
password: wbksafech

10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR GOVERNORS

Briefing Dates

This term's briefings will be held on:

Chairs' Briefing

Wednesday 21st October 2015, 7:00 - 9:00 pm Shute End, Council Offices

Health and Safety Governor Forum

Thursday 5th November 2015, 7.30 – 9.30 pm Shute End, Council Offices

SEN Governors Forum

Wednesday 26th November 2015, 7.30 – 9.30 pm Shute End, Council Offices

Development Governors Forum

Tuesday 1st December 2015, 7.00 – 9.00 pm Shute End, Council Offices

All briefings, forums and meetings are free of charge to subscribing schools. There is a charge of £65 per governor from non subscribing schools.

Please book on, as for courses, if we know you are coming, it will help us to plan numbers.

Outlined below are the Autumn Term 2015 courses.

Course	Date	Time	Location
Update on the Ofsted Framework	Tuesday 13 th Oct	7.00 – 9.00 pm	Council Offices, Shute End
The Role of the Governor Reviewer for Headteacher Appraisal	Thurs 15 th Oct	7.00 – 9.30 pm	Council Offices, Shute End
Financial Training for Governors	Wed 11 th Nov and Wed 18 th Nov	7.00 – 9.00 pm	Council Offices, Shute End
Governors' Pupil Discipline Committees	Tuesday 17 th Nov	7.00 – 9.00 pm	Council Offices, Shute End
Taking the Chair (Part 1)	Thurs 26 th Nov	7.00 – 9.30 pm	Council Offices, Shute End
How to Support and Challenge Your School	Mon 23 rd Nov	7.00 – 9.00 pm	Council Offices, Shute End
Implementing the School's Pay Policy	Tues 24 th Nov	7.00 – 9.00 pm	Council Offices, Shute End
Financial Training for	Wed 2 nd Dec	7.00 – 9.00 pm	Council Offices,

Governors of Academies/
Free Schools

Shute End

If you wish to book onto any briefing or course contact Maria Gibbs on 0118 974 6955 or email maria.gibbs@wokingham.gov.uk

TERM DATES 2016-2017

Autumn Term 2016

Monday 5th September – Tuesday 20th December

Half Term – 24th – 28th October

Spring Term 2017

Wednesday 4th January – Friday 31st March

Half Term – 13th - 17th February

Summer Term 2017

Tuesday 18th April to Tuesday 25th July

Half Term 29th May – 2nd June

Information from Department for Education (DfE)

Summer born children – proposed change to the School Admissions Code

Nick Gibbs, Minister of State for Schools, wrote an open letter on 8th September. The letter states that the government has “decided that it is necessary to amend the School Admissions Code further to ensure that summer born children can be admitted to the reception class at the age of five if it is in line with their parents’ wishes, and to ensure that those children are able to remain with that cohort as they progress through school, including through to secondary school.”

The accompanying press release says that parents know their children best and the government wants to make sure summer born children can start reception at the age of 5, if their parents think it is in their best interests. The government is going to make changes to admission rules - but **wants councils and academies to take immediate action**.

The letter can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-nick-gibbs-letter-about-school-admissions>

Need to know timelines and myths and facts document - Autumn term 2015

The DfE recently updated their Need to Know timeline and their Myths and Facts documents. Timelines include forthcoming mandatory legal requirements to be implemented to help headteachers, principals and governors plan for the forthcoming academic year and beyond. Other useful dates are included in separate information timelines.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mandatory-and-useful-timelines-information-for-schools>

Myths and facts for schools: This document addresses some common misconceptions about the activities schools are required to carry out. It covers both recurring myths and new myths on changes for the 2015 to 2016 academic year.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/458392/myths_and_facts_autumn_2015.pdf

Changes to 2016 tests and assessments - new video published

A video outlining key changes to tests and assessments for 2016 has been produced for all schools. It outlines the main changes to the tests that will affect schools and details where to go for further information. The video includes a downloadable PowerPoint presentation which can be used for additional training purposes. The video can be found at

https://registration.livegroup.co.uk/efa/ContentTabs/Embed.aspx?dfid=15057&utm_source=EFA%20e-bulletin&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=e-bulletin&mxmroi=2305-21601-30381-0

To help schools prepare for the tests, 2016 sample test materials for key stages 1 and 2 are available already, along with test frameworks for each subject and information about the introduction of scaled scores. These can be found at

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-2016-sample-materials?utm_source=EFA%20e-bulletin&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=e-bulletin&mxmroi=2305-21601-30383-0

DfE review into longer working life and pensions for teachers

Following discussions in the series of talks between the DfE and teacher trade unions on policy implementation, the Secretary of State for Education commissioned a review into the health and deployment implications of teachers working longer as a result of the increase in normal pension age (NPA) in the Teachers’ Pension Scheme.

The aims of the review are to gather evidence which can be used to examine the impact on teachers of working longer and identify potential mitigating actions. Evidence gathered may also be used to feed into future reviews of the link between State Pension Age (SPA) and NPA, as well as reviews of the SPA itself.

More information can be found at <https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/EmployerEvidence>

Advice on “Prevent” duty

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-extremism-in-schools-and-childrens-services> This updated advice about the ‘prevent duty’ in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies in all local-authority-maintained schools, academies and free schools as well as proprietors, governors and staff in all independent schools. It will be of particular interest to safeguarding leads.

The guide ‘The use of social media for online radicalisation’ is also available to help schools. On 2 September 2015, the DfE shared links to more advice and resources that schools can use to protect their pupils from radicalisation at <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/tackling-extremism-in-schools-11105440>. You will need to register with the TES website to access these resources.

Risk Protection Arrangement for academies

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/456731/RPA_membership_rules_church_academies_September_2015.pdf. The Department for Education’s (DfE’s) Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) is a voluntary arrangement for academies and free schools effective from 1 September 2014.

The RPA is not an insurance scheme but is a mechanism through which the cost of risks that materialise from 1 September 2014 will be covered by government funds.

All academy trusts and multi-academy trusts can opt in to the RPA. This includes free schools, schools designated with a religious character that are academies, special academies, alternative provision academies, UTCs, studio and PFI schools.

Progress 8

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>. This document explains how “Progress 8” and Attainment 8” will be calculated in 2016 (and in 2015 for schools that choose to adopt the new measures a year early). It also includes changes that will apply from 2017.

Pupil Premium model form and letter

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-pupil-premium-model-document-and-letter-for-parents> This gives a model form and letter to help providers of early years education identify which children are eligible for the early years pupil premium.

Information from Ofsted

i) New Inspection framework

Letter from Sir Michael Wilshaw

During August, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, wrote to schools outlining forthcoming 'radical changes to the way Ofsted inspects.' He introduces the new framework and the three new judgements which will accompany the existing leadership and management. Inspection providers will not be external companies, but will be under the remit of Ofsted, with many inspections being led by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). Complaints against Ofsted will now be handled by scrutiny panels, and their findings binding.

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-inspection-changes-from-september-2015-ofsted-letter-to-providers>

The school inspection handbook (2015)

The handbook will be used as the basis for all inspections from September 2015. The book sets out how schools will be judged, including grade descriptors. Key changes in this new common inspection framework (CIF) emphasises the importance of leaders' vision in driving progress, in particular for disadvantaged learners. The areas judged will be 'effectiveness of leadership and management', 'quality of teaching, learning and assessment', 'personal development, behaviour and welfare', and 'outcomes for children and learners.'

The document clarifies Ofsted's expectations of planning and evidence; lessons will not be individually judged, but will contribute towards the overall bank of evidence which the team will build up during the inspection.

'Good' schools are subject to new, one day inspections led by an HMI, every 3 years. The starting assumption is that the school remains good, where the focus will be on safeguarding and the quality of leadership and the schools' own self evaluations, and this will be tested during the inspection. There will not be a full set of graded judgements; however, if there are indications that the school is no longer good, or that they may be 'outstanding', then this will trigger a full inspection. Pupil performance in schools previously judged as 'outstanding' in their previous inspection will be risk assessed, and if there are no concerns the school will not be informed. See

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015>

The early years inspection handbook (2015)

This document explains how early years settings will be judged, whether in schools or in small home settings. Ofsted inspections will be carried out by specialist early years inspectors, and judgements will be in line with the CIF (above) although these will be professional judgements, informed by the individual needs of the children concerned. The aim is to ensure children are given the very best start to their learning, and development, and there is now a new judgement on 'teaching, learning and assessment', focusing on progress from their individual starting points. However, the document emphasises that this does not imply a formal method of working, but reflects interactions, including child initiated play, modelling, exploring and quality questioning.

Inspections may occasionally be carried out with no notice, particularly in the case of 'priority' inspections where concerns have been raised, but usually there will be a half day notice.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/458588/Early_years_inspection_handbook.pdf

The school inspection update (September 2015)

This is a useful publication for inspectors, which provides information and updates which are of interest to all involved in education.

Changes made recently to the inspection framework highlighted in the update include **Governance** – Ofsted received a number of comments saying that they had over-summarised the section in the ‘School inspection handbook’ about governance in the leadership and management judgement. Ofsted believes “Governors have a pivotal role in schools and providers” and this section has now been expanded to reflect this.

The inspection of academy converter

Enquiries were received asking if an academy converter that had not received an inspection following its conversion, could qualify for a short inspection on the basis of its predecessor school having been judged good at its last inspection. Regulations are being introduced to enable Ofsted to conduct short inspections for these academy converters, in line with the arrangements for other schools judged good at their last inspection.

Timing of re-inspections for schools judged requires improvement

“When a school has been judged as requires improvement, including for its leadership and management, HMI will normally conduct monitoring visits to see how well the school is addressing the concerns raised during the inspection. From September, the initial monitoring inspection can take place at any time during the two-year period following the publication of the section 5 inspection report. Following the initial monitoring inspection, the lead monitoring HMI will recommend whether or not further monitoring and/or other activity should occur to encourage the school’s improvement.”

Where the HMI considers that a school is ready for re-inspection because it has made good progress, she or he may recommend that the next section 5 inspection be brought forward. Conversely, when the HMI feels that the school would benefit from further time to improve to recommend that the school is re-inspected later in the two-year monitoring period.”

Useful documents and frequently asked questions

September’s document signposts governors to ‘What governing bodies can expect from school leaders and what school leaders can expect from governing bodies.’ It highlights key publications which are still relevant, and summarises some of the frequently asked questions on the inspection process raised by schools including the risk assessment process for outstanding schools.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/459161/School_inspection_update_September_2015.pdf

ii) “Key Stage 3: the wasted years?”

Ofsted has published a report criticising key stage 3 (KS3) provision. The report draws on evidence from nearly 2000 inspections, interviews with senior leaders, questionnaire responses from pupils in Years 7 to 9 and good practice visits. Researchers found that, between September 2014 and March 2015, one in five inspection reports identified KS3 as an area for improvement and pupil achievement was particularly weak in modern foreign languages, history and geography. Ofsted raised concerns that this could have a negative impact on the government’s plans for all children starting secondary school this September to take the EBacc in 2020 (which will require pupils to study a language and humanities subject). Ofsted reported that 85% of the senior leaders interviewed said that they prioritise KS4 and KS5 over KS3 when allocating staff and resources. Progress and assessment tracking were also found to be weaker in KS3. Governing boards have a responsibility to monitor the progress of all pupils and should therefore include the headteacher’s plans for KS3 pupils. This will become even more important when progress becomes the main accountability measure from 2016.

Amendment to Governance Regulations

We are conducting a target consultation with members of the Advisory Group on Governance (AGOG) on two changes to the regulatory framework for the governance of maintained schools. These are to introduce mandatory enhanced DBS checks for all governors, and to amend the requirements for parent governors on the governing bodies of federations. The consultation will run for a period of eight weeks and will last from 8 September to 6 November 2015.

We propose amending the 2012 Constitution Regulations to require all governors, including all new governors, to receive an enhanced check by the Disclosure and Barring Service where they have not already been checked.

The proposed changes are:

- a) To require, from 1 April 2016, all new governors at maintained schools to be DBS checked before appointment or as soon as practical thereafter.
- b) To require that by 1 September 2016 all existing governors must have a DBS check.

Rationale for Change

Current regulations stipulate that clerks to governing bodies may request that a prospective governor makes an application for an enhanced DBS check. This check will show any criminal convictions that the person has and any other information the police think is relevant. If the person refuses they are then disqualified from being a governor. However, DBS checks are not currently mandatory for maintained school governors. The current system of disqualification relies on self-disclosure – with individuals certifying that none of the disqualifications set out in regulations apply to them when they are appointed or elected.

We therefore think regulations should place a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools to ensure that a check be undertaken on all their governors. The check will provide reassurance to the governing body that an individual is not disqualified from holding office as governor due to criminal convictions. This will bring the maintained sector into line with the requirements in place for trustees in academies and free schools.

Where a person has already received a DBS check because they are a governor on another governing body or a trustee of an academy, a new DBS check would not be required.

We propose to amend regulations on the constitution of federations to give governing bodies more flexibility over their membership. We intend to do this by:

- a) removing the requirement that the governing body includes a parent governor from each of the schools in the federation; and
- b) replacing it with a requirement that the governing body of the federation includes two, and only two, parent governors.

Rationale for Change

Governors govern in the interests of pupils, not to represent any particular constituency. While the governors of a federation may be drawn from an individual school they are not on the governing body to represent the interests of 'their' particular school, but instead to govern in the interests of all schools and pupils in the federation. The membership of the governing body is required under regulations and statutory guidance to be focused on individuals with the necessary skills. As set out in statutory guidance to the Constitution Regulations, effective

parental engagement is vital and the governing body should ensure separate and specific arrangements are in place.

The current arrangements can lead to federations having a governing body which is far larger than they need or want – particularly in larger federations and VA federations where foundation governors must outnumber all other governors by a majority of two. We therefore propose to amend the regulations to remove the requirement that the governing body includes a parent governor from each school. We propose to replace this with a requirement that the governing body has two, and only two, parent governors. These governors should be elected through a single election taking place across all parents of children in schools within the federation. Elections should be conducted in line with the statutory guidance on the Constitution Regulations with parents well informed about the skills the governing needs and about the candidates standing. The electorate should be made aware that parent governors' role is not to represent 'their' school, but to bring relevant skills to the governing body. They should therefore be encouraged to vote on the basis of skills and not simply support the parent standing from 'their' school.

This proposal is not about preventing parents from serving as governors or creating barriers to skilled parents serving as governors. It only affects the formal category of parent governor. It does not affect any other category of governor, even if those governors are also parents of children at a school in the federation. Many parents have valuable skills to bring to governing bodies, and we expect that many of them will continue to serve as either parent or other appropriate categories of governor.

Constitution Reform

On 27 June, in her speech to the NGA summer conference the SoS signalled an intention to look at how to move away over the course of this Parliament from a model of governance based on prescribed categories. This would create greater freedom for governing boards to be made up of people with the skills and expertise to govern the school.

Current constitution requirements for maintained schools are defined in primary legislation and explained further in statutory guidance. The constitution of the board of an academy trust is defined in its articles of association. Both regulations and guidance make clear that skills should be the primary consideration in the make-up of all boards. But primary legislation, and to a lesser extent model academy articles, still prescribe certain categories of governor. We want to start a discussion about moving away from prescribed categories of governor to give governing boards more freedom to constitute a board as they see fit to best deliver their non-executive strategic leadership role. This matter is to be discussed at a special meeting of the department's Advisory Group on Governance (AGOG).

Governors Handbook

We are currently in the process of updating the Governors' Handbook. The revised Handbook will be published during the autumn term. The Handbook will also be renamed the 'Governance Handbook' to better reflect its intended audience.

NCTL

NCTL – Communications

NCTL offer school to school support and leadership development programmes, designed to support schools, local authorities and others to improve the quality of governance, leading to school improvement.

We would be grateful for the support of Local Authorities in sharing information about our offer with your schools. For example, NCTL regularly tweet from @the_college with more information about the support we offer – please do follow us and retweet if you are able. The information provided in this briefing is suitable to share through your regular communication channels if you are willing to do so.

For further information about any of the below, please contact

governors.mailbox@education.gsi.gov.uk

National Leaders of Governance – Designation round

The next National Leaders of Governance (NLG) designation round will open on 5 October and close on 6 November. NCTL are looking for high quality, experienced Chairs who have the capacity and expertise to support other Chairs to improve their governing bodies. If you know of a Chair, with at least 2 years' experience successful leadership of a governing body, and with a track record of school improvement, we'd appreciate your help asking them to register their interest at Governors.MAILBOX@education.gsi.gov.uk.

They are particularly keen to recruit more NLGs:

- from **areas of the country [see website for details]** where there aren't enough, and,
- with experience of chairing MAT boards and/or with significant business experience.

National Leaders of Governance – advocates

NCTL have appointed 15 regional NLG advocates – advocates work with Local Authorities, Dioceses, Teaching School Alliances and Regional School Commissioners to promote the role of NLGs and support local and regional brokerage of NLG support. Each Local Authority will have an Advocate assigned to them and a list of NLG advocates and the areas they cover is below.

Chairs programme

The Chairs of Governors' Leadership Development Programme is for aspiring chairs of governors, new chairs or existing chairs who would like to develop their skills further.

The programme is delivered through workshops and school-based activities and includes the support of a mentor. It focuses on the role of the chair, leading the governing body, and leading change and continuous improvement.

The programme is delivered through NCTL approved licensees. We offer scholarships of £320 for small schools and £200 for all other maintained schools towards the cost.

For full details: <https://www.gov.uk/school-governors-professional-development>

Clerks programme

Scholarships available for NCTL Clerks' Development Programme

NCTL has developed a programme for clerks to governing bodies, enabling new and experienced clerks to develop their skills.

The programme is underpinned by a competency framework and a self-diagnostic tool, and has a strong focus on mentoring. There are 5 essential units and participants can choose an elective unit on a topic relevant to their context, such as academies or multi-school settings.

The RRP for the programme is £399 and is delivered through NCTL approved licensees. We offer scholarships of £320 for small schools and £200 for all other maintained schools towards the cost of the programme.

Publication of KS2 Results - Amendment to the School Information (England) Regulations 2008 Regulations

An amendment to the regulations came into force on 1 September. This anticipates changes to performance measures as a result of 2016 changes to assessment and the introduction of scaled scores, and now refers to reading, writing and mathematics. As schools did last year, they should provide information for 2014/15 on key measures published in performance tables i.e. attainment at level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths; attainment at level 5 or above in each of these subjects; and the proportion of pupils making expected progress in each subject.

The Education and Adoption Bill

The Education and Adoption Bill delivers on the manifesto commitments to improve school standards across the country by tackling failing and coasting schools. The measures within the Bill are designed to speed up the process by which the worst schools are transformed in order to bring about rapid and sustained improvement.

The Bill gives the Secretary of State additional powers to intervene in underperforming schools and in almost all cases it will be the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) who will exercise these powers.

The Education and Adoption Bill will:

- make a new group of “coasting” schools. RSCs will be able to identify schools which may be coasting along at ‘just good enough’ and not fulfilling the potential of their pupils. Where these schools do not have the capacity to improve sufficiently the RSC will have the power to intervene.
- give the Secretary of State the same power as local authorities to issue warning notices where a maintained school is causing concern. This brings greater consistency by allowing RSCs to now take action where LAs don't by providing consistent challenge to underperformance in every area.
- place a duty on the Secretary of State to make an academy order when a school is judged inadequate by Ofsted. This removes any doubt about how we will improve failing schools: they must become sponsored academies.
- remove the requirement to consult on academy conversion for schools causing concern. We want transformation to take place from day one and do not want the process to be delayed or blocked by bureaucracy and ongoing ideological debates. However, in order to protect the ethos of Church schools, there is a requirement to consult the relevant diocese on the best sponsor for an inadequate Church school.
- give the Secretary of State power to direct a local authority about the appointment of interim executive members to replace a governing body, including a power to take over responsibility from the local authority for these interim executive members.
- place a duty on a governing body and local authority to facilitate academy conversion where an academy order is made by the Secretary of State under the new duty or because a school is eligible for intervention.

The revised Schools Causing Concern guidance will reflect the new and strengthened powers in the Bill, and describe how they will work in practice. It will also set out how Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) will exercise their discretion, for example in deciding which schools that have met the coasting definition will require intervention, and what that intervention should be.

We will launch a public consultation, to run through the autumn alongside consideration of the Bill in the Lords, to include the coasting definition and the revised statutory Schools Causing Concern guidance.

The consultation will also seek views on whether and how to identify alternative provision and special schools which are coasting.

Coasting Schools (Academies)

We have now published amended model funding agreements to include provision for coasting schools, which will apply to mainstream academies, free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools. This brings intervention in academies into line with that proposed for maintained schools. Where academies do not have this specific clause the RSC will still assess them against the coasting definition and their capacity to improve sufficiently in just the same way as for maintained schools - supporting and challenging them to improve and intervening where necessary.

Appendix 3

Title	Sessions Offered	Total Governor Attendance	% of Evaluation Good or better
New Governors Induction	4	111	100
New Clerks to Governors Induction	7	9	100
The Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework	1	18	100
Update on the Ofsted Framework	2	47	100
School Improvement Planning	1	8	100
Introduction to Personnel	1	14	90
Assessing Pupil Progress – The Whole Picture	1	26	100
How to Support and Challenge your School	1	28	100
Schools Financial Value Standard	1	13	100
Appraisal and capability – the role of the governor reviewer in Headteacher Appraisal	1	26	100
Financial Training for Governors	1	21	100
Taking the Chair	1	16	100
Working with Gifted and Talented Pupils	1	16	100
Managing health and safety for School Governors	1	20	100
Safeguarding of Pupils – E-safety in your school	1	17	100
Governor Conference 2014	1	91	100
Full Governing Body Training Sessions	11	117	100
GEL Online Training (modules completed – 30 available)	-----	108	-----
Briefings			
Chair's Briefing	3	118	-----
SEN Governors Forum	2	51	-----
Development Governors Meeting	2	48	-----
Health & Safety Forum	2	53	-----
Clerk's Briefing	6	98	-----
Looked After Children Governor Forum	1	21	-----
Safeguarding Forum	2	45	-----
Total	55	1140	

This page is intentionally left blank