

THE WILTSHIRE GOVERNOR

Newsletter

March 2019

Wiltshire School Governance Team – helping governors and trustees become more effective

New EEF guide to support school governors and trustees

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has produced a [free guide](#) which will help those governing get the most out of this important toolkit. The guide is designed to offer a quick way into the high-quality evidence the EEF makes freely available to all schools and signposts those governing to other important resources.

One vital resource which will help schools to make the right decisions is the EEF toolkit. This free resource is designed to provide an indication of “what works” to raise outcomes for pupils based on robust research and to give an indication of the expected impact of different initiatives schools can implement and their associated costs.

Those governing play a crucial role in supporting disadvantaged pupils in schools and, as part of this, governing boards must work with the senior leadership team to make evidence-informed decisions about how the pupil premium should be spent.

The guide offers practical next steps and tips for further reading framed around three key questions for governors to ask:

- How well are pupils achieving in your school?
- How effectively is your school spending its money?
- How does your school support effective teaching and learning?

It also includes key questions to ask before schools think about buying in a programme plus 4 tips on making the most of your Pupil Premium.

To support Governors, briefings are run by the School Governance Team – the next one will be held on 1 May at Braeside in Devizes. Booking is available on the Right Choice website. These briefings provide your PP governor with everything they need to know about fulfilling their role and supporting their school to achieve better outcomes for disadvantaged learners.

For further details, please log on to Right Choice and click here:

<http://rightchoice.wiltshire.gov.uk/T87438>

EEF website: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>

Department for Education releases guidance on Relationships, Health and Sex Education

The Department for Education (DfE) has published its [consultation response](#) on new Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education in England guidance. The consultation received over 11,000 responses online and through email and received 29,000 signatures in response to two petitions.

The new guidance, which is to be implemented in schools from September 2020, highlights some of the content that will be taught in schools to pupils. This includes, but is not limited to:

- mental health
- physical wellbeing
- online safety
- LGBT+ issues
- respectful relationships
- consent

It is expected that all content should be delivered in an age appropriate manner and that appropriate content, reflecting British values and society, should be included.

Separating Roles

Governors'/Trustees professional and voluntary role

Professionals who are governors or trustees are not expected to give professional advice, but their knowledge will enable them to ask relevant questions. For example, a qualified accountant is not expected to audit the school's accounts, but will have an understanding to be able to ask if the necessary work is being done.

A solicitor/lawyer would not give legal advice but would be able to advise a school/academy when it was needed and perhaps where to get it.

Yes, there is the expectation that boards will appoint based on professional expertise, experience etc. however it is also important that a governor/trustee should not use their professional expertise in certain contexts such as complaints or disciplinary panels. To do so might cause confusion among parents or staff over a person's role on the board and his/her professional role.

It is appropriate for professional expertise to be used in discussions during a board meeting or a meeting with the Headteacher/Principal and in these cases, advice should be focused on the leadership and management of the school.

Role as a Governor/Trustee and the role of Parent

It can be hard to separate the two roles but can be helped by clarity being given to a governor/trustee during their induction; that their responsibility is to the board and to the school. Contribution at meetings will not be from the point of view of their child but from the point of view of a governor/trustee in the best interests of the school. A governor/trustee should declare an interest and remove him/herself from any issue being discussed that is directly related to their child.

From time-to-time a governor/trustee will need to act on a concern about his/her child's progress without compromising his/her role. This is a potentially sensitive situation and throughout it must be made clear as to whether they are acting as a parent or as a governor/trustee.

As a parent they should follow the same process as any other parent in raising concerns with the class teacher initially, it should not matter that they are a governor/trustee, making it clear that they are acting as a parent. Taking a partner to the meeting might also help with clarification in their role as a parent rather than as a governor/trustee. If the concern needs to be escalated to the Headteacher, the governor/trustee must again confirm they are acting as a parent.

Board meetings should not discuss individual pupils or members of staff, but a governor/trustee that has concerns about his/her child's progress could take action if there is a general problem with the progress in the child's year group or class. It would be appropriate to ask questions in regard to performance management or what support is in place to help children falling behind. These questions should not be raised if there isn't a general problem; the governor/trustee shouldn't raise them in relation to his/her child alone.

The designated teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children

Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities February 2018

The designated teacher has lead responsibility within the school to promote and raise the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children. The governing body must ensure that the designated teacher is appropriately qualified, experienced and able to undertake any training required to carry out their duty.

Governing bodies should hold the school to account on how it supports looked after and previously looked after children including monitoring how Pupil Premium is spent and their level of progress.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

For more information please contact Karen Tremayne, Virtual School Officer
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Updates to the DfE's Governance Handbook

The Department for Education (DfE) has released an update to the [Governance Handbook](#). This document is a crucial resource for governors and trustees as it gives a detailed breakdown of their roles, responsibilities and legal duties, with signposting to useful resources.

The list of updates in this edition can be found on pages six to eight of the handbook. The new guide includes, amongst other things, greater emphasis on parental engagement, updated signposting to resources – including the new DfE workload reduction toolkit, updated information on Analyse School Performance, and a new subsection on executive pay.

Woodland Trust: A million saplings to be given to schools



WOODLAND
TRUST

More than a million saplings have been sent out to schools and communities as part of the Woodland Trust's free trees initiative.

The charity has suggested that there has been a huge increase in the "passion for planting" recently and, whilst the charity has been close to the one million mark for a few year, to achieve this number has been a real milestone. Since the initiative began, over 5.8 million trees have been sent to schools and communities.

Schools can apply now for trees to be delivered in November 2019 [here](#) and frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).

Simon, Sandra, Debra, Julia, Ruth and Gill
The Governor Services Team

Right Choice
For your school.

[Right Choice for Your School](#)