

THE WILTSHIRE GOVERNOR

Newsletter

January 2020

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

Growing our Service

Welcome to a new and exciting year with the School Governance Service team.

As a team we are committed to developing the service we offer you. We are currently working on our Governor Service offer and are looking to build on the strong foundations that already exist within Wiltshire. You will start to see changes happening to Right Choice and the development of that landing page and the ease of navigability and toolkits available. Also, more training opportunities are being developed throughout this year and next.

I need to consult with you a lot more before I look to make any big changes and develop the offer further. The School Governance Service team's aim and drive is to engage with all schools from all educational environments and build strong collaborative relationships with all schools/agencies, so collectively supporting and growing good governance and driving forward school improvement. To do this, I am out and about trying to meet as many governors as I can. Also, if you attend courses I will be collecting paper feedback at the end as we get a higher level of returns which is important to me as we look to develop. Please contact me if you or any member of the School Governance Service if you have any queries.

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You may remember that in the last newsletter I talked about my ethics being very much aligned with the 7 principles of public life set out by Lord Nolan, but I especially like the NGA take on them about governors who are committed, curious, confident, challenging, collaborative, critical and creative. Being a **Curious** governor is the principle I would like to look at in this edition and what this looks like and feels for us as governors in the ever-changing educational environment.

Curious Governor

What does a curious governor look like, and why is it important for school improvement that we are curious? A curious governor is someone that looks at the National, County and local picture to understand their educational context within the ever-changing educational environment. The reason for this is that more effective and informed discussions can be had around strategic direction and thinking for their school. When discussions around Education occur, it is important that a commonality of language is used and understood so that there is a consistency and clear understanding across the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Within the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) the language of choice linking to the curriculum is Intent, Implement and Impact and at a subject level it is deep dives. Remember, no question is a bad question if it starts at a more strategic level, e.g. What is the purpose of this? What was the outcome of that? What is the impact and how can we show it?

A few courses available to support your growth:

- **Ofsted Preparation Training for Governors** – led by Steve Wigley and AJ Cripps, this course will build on the excellent training provided by Jacqui Goodall and in addition give governors a chance to network and quiz a governor who has been through the new Ofsted process.
- **The Role of the Governor in Strategically Planning School Structure and Organisation (Primary Schools)** – led by Kate Wilkins and AJ Cripps. This will provide an opportunity for governors to understand the operational process and activities required by a school when reviewing structure and organisation – and the strategic role of governors in this process.

To book any courses or to find additional information about other courses please go to **Right Choice**.



Be better informed to ask key strategic questions by looking at additional research. A good place to go to look up further research can be the EEF. They have lots of topics to review – here is one example:

Improving Behaviour in Schools

Proactive				Reactive
<p>1</p> <p>Know and understand your pupils and their influences</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil behaviour has multiple influences, some of which teachers can manage directly • Understanding a pupil's context will inform effective responses to misbehaviour • Every pupil should have a supportive relationship with a member of school staff 	<p>2</p> <p>Teach learning behaviours alongside managing misbehaviour</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching learning behaviours will reduce the need to manage misbehaviour • Teachers can provide the conditions for learning behaviours to develop by ensuring pupils can access the curriculum, engage with lesson content and participate in their learning • Teachers should encourage pupils to be self-reflective of their own behaviours 	<p>3</p> <p>Use classroom management strategies to support good classroom behaviour</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective classroom management can reduce challenging behaviour, pupil disengagement, bullying and aggression • Improving classroom management usually involves intensive training with teachers reflecting on their classroom management, trying a new approach and reviewing their progress over time • Reward systems can be effective when part of a broader classroom management strategy 	<p>4</p> <p>Use simple approaches as part of your regular routine</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some strategies that don't require complex pedagogical changes have been shown to be promising • Breakfast clubs, use of specific behaviour-related praise and working with parents can all support good behaviour • School leaders should ensure the school behaviour policy is clear and consistently applied 	<p>5</p> <p>Use targeted approaches to meet the needs of individuals in your school</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal behaviour systems are unlikely to meet the needs of all your students • For pupils with more challenging behaviour, the approach should be adapted to individual needs • Teachers should be trained in specific strategies if supporting pupils with high behaviour needs
Implementation				
<p>6</p> <p>Consistency is key</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency and coherence at a whole-school level are paramount • Whole-school changes usually take longer to embed than individually tailored or single-classroom approaches • However, behaviour programmes are more likely to have an impact on attainment outcomes if implemented at a whole-school level 			

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/improving-behaviour-in-schools>

TSC South West - Governance support in the South West including Wiltshire by Jackie Eason

The Department for Education have commissioned Teaching Schools across the country to broker and support governance. The aims of the DfE commissions are to:

1. Provide a brokerage service for National Leaders of Governance (NLGs) to be able to support schools where need is identified.

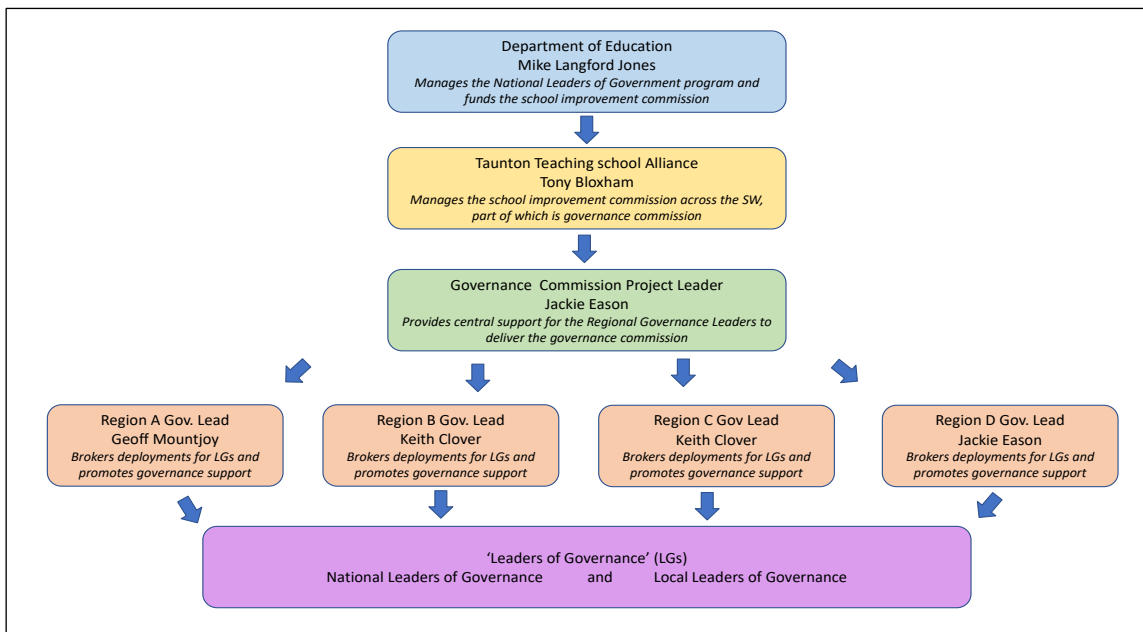
Need can be identified through:

- a. Schools receiving 2 or 3 consecutive RI judgements identified as tier 2 or tier 3 schools
- b. Direct from the schools themselves
- c. Through LAs, Diocese, RSC office or MATs

2. Ensure that the NLGs with the right skills and knowledge are deployed to the right schools.

3. To raise awareness of DfE training and recruitment initiatives.

In the South West, we have raised the profile of governance over the past few years so that demand for support began to outstrip supply, so we ran a highly successful process to recruit Local Leaders of Governance to add further capacity to the system. We now have 64 'Leaders of Governance, LGs', many of whom are deployed mentoring chairs, charring boards and providing general governance support. We have also delivered training in undertaking external review of governance to 68 people across the region.



For 2019/20 we aim to continue to develop our team of Leaders of Governance by recruiting more skilled governors and providing professional development to our current team. We aim to continue to identify where governance is in need of support and deploy LGs with the skills and knowledge to deliver that support. Our final aim is to ensure that all system leaders in education continue to recognise the importance of strong governance and to work with us in facilitating this support.

Anyone who is interested in becoming an LLG and feels they have the experience and time capacity, please contact - Jackie Eason - Project Leader Jeason.sw@tscouncil.org.uk

Wiltshire's New LLGs

We're proud to announce that Wiltshire has two new Local Leaders of Governance, designated through a robust selection and system leadership training process. Congratulations to Stella Fowler (Fynamore School, Calne) and Clare Farrow (St John's Catholic Primary School, Trowbridge) on their appointment.

Leaders of Governance have proven skills and experience in school improvement. They are a crucial part of the self-improving and sustainable school-led system, improving the quality and capacity of governance by responding to specific needs.

Stella explains:

“Working within the National Leaders of Governance network in the South West, we are experienced governors who support schools to enable governors to help themselves. The support of someone who will work alongside a board and take an objective view can help the board to move forward.”

Leaders of Governance can help in many ways, for example:

- Support for new chairs through ongoing mentoring or with specific advice
- Support for experienced chairs dealing with a particular issue
- Temporary membership of a governing board of a school in need of support
- Advice and guidance following a recommendation made by a Local Leader of Education
- Advice and guidance following a 'good with concerns' Ofsted judgement
- Providing a fresh pair of eyes: even the best practitioners can improve

In return for this free support, schools are asked to agree to pay reasonable travel/subsistence expenses which will be discussed in advance of a deployment.

About Stella

I have lots of experience of the education sector and of governance and strategic planning. My background is in primary governance, which I have been involved with for a dozen or so years. I've been Chair for about half of this time. For my day job I work in higher education policy and research as the Executive to the Engineering Professors' Council. I've worked in and across many universities managing strategic planning, data analysis and reporting. Education policy is at the heart of everything I do, so I have knowledge, as well as experience.

About Clare

I began my journey as a school governor like many others as a parent governor at my children's primary school. 13 years later I am still a governor and have been the Chair of Governors for the last 5 years. I often ask myself, why did I become a governor and just as importantly why have I continued even though my children have long since finished primary school? The answer is simple, I feel passionate about education and supporting schools to help children reach their full potential.

Before giving up work in 2013, I worked in the banking and the financial services sector in a variety of roles including management, training, compliance and HR. These skills have transferred well to school governance, although the education sector is quite unique in some of its ways! I have invested in my own development having completed both the Governorspace - governance leadership programme and the Best Practice network governor leadership programme.

How to access this support – Log on to CPD portal <https://www.cpdportal-sw.org/> and follow the links for governance, or let me know at amanda.cripps@wiltshire.gov.uk - I can fill in the deployment form for you.

Wiltshire Governors Association (WGA)

We are very lucky in Wiltshire to have a lot of opportunities to support and grow good governance and the LA and WGA work collaboratively together to make sure all governors' events are well planned and communicated. Please find details of future events led by the WGA listed below. The WGA are also asking for support from any governors who feel they have the ability and capacity to support their board.

Networking Events

The WGA is delighted to announce the dates of its Governor Networking Events for 2020 as follows:

25th April, 4th July, and (28th November - advertised shortly)

These events enable governors to meet with their opposite number from a wide range of schools in the County to discuss, share and learn from each other. At these events we also highlight current developments and research in education as well as focussing on any 'sticky issues'. At the first event of the year Grant Davis will be joining us to brief us on preparing for submitting the budget and answer any budget related queries you may have.

Booking can be made via Right Choice for subscribing schools, or by emailing chair@wiltshirega.org.uk

Open Meetings

The WGA is delighted to announce the dates of its Open Meetings for 2020 as follows:

23rd March and 12th October

These events enable governors to hear from both national and local speakers on key topics which are relevant to governance and how we can best support our own schools. The meetings are held at Rowdeford School, near Devizes and are always a popular event. For their meeting in March they have secured a speaker from NASEN (www.nasen.org.uk)

Initial enquiries about the event can be made by emailing chair@wiltshirega.org.uk. A link to the booking website will be made available shortly.

Helping to Make a Difference Across the Wiltshire Landscape

WGA is seeking two volunteers from the Governance Community to support in roles WGA members are asked to fill. We are needing to fill two roles at the Wiltshire Council Schools' Forum (one primary and one special needs). These are key roles because as the Wiltshire Schools' Forum is a statutory body, you will be contributing to the discussions on such matters as School Funding Formula, contracts and other financial issues. If this is something that interests, you please email chair@wiltshirega.org.uk

Wiltshire Governor Conference – 10th November 2020

I am very excited to announce, due to the success of November's conference and the positive and constructive feedback, we have booked the next governor conference and the team are just firming up the details with an inspirational keynote speaker. I am also in the process of setting up a working party with a few governors who will help develop the focus of the conference so that we get the day able to meet your collective needs.

Thank you to those governors who are supporting this process.

Information about accountability of Trusts from the DfE

It is important that we remember that all governors are responsible ultimately to the DfE, and letters from the DfE have been sent out recently to some academy trusts about poor performance. In the DfE letters to academy trusts it highlights poor or inadequate performance or weaknesses in safeguarding, governance or financial management. It is really important that we understand the bigger picture of education and the educational context we find ourselves in, that we see that the governance strand is so important in all educational establishments – therefore keeping a clear and deep understanding is vital. This is part of being curious governors and informing and shaping our future decisions.

[Letters to academy trusts about poor performance](#)

Ofsted's Annual Report and SEND

Ofsted launched their [Annual Report](#) this week, with Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman describing Ofsted as a "force for improvement", which occasionally means giving "difficult messages to hard-working, hard-pressed professionals".

The annual report finds that overall, the quality of education and social care in England is improving, however, further action is required to support pupils that are being left behind.

The report reflects the impact that the new framework appears to be making, such as increasing the visibility of pupils with SEND, improving teaching workload, and well-being and monitoring behaviour in schools.

Amanda Spielman's speech reflected on many of the key findings in the report such as off-rolling, supporting pupils with SEND, social care, illegal schools, multi academy trusts, early years and much more. To view the full speech, click [here](#).

The report findings suggests the quality of education over the year has developed a positive picture whereby analysis had found:

86% of schools are judged to be good or outstanding;

96% of early years are judged to be good or outstanding and;

81% of inspected further education and skills providers are judged to be good or outstanding.

How does this fit in with Wiltshire's picture?

Due to some constructive feedback about SEND in our School Governance courses, we are to review how we can keep the SEND thread clear in all courses offered. Aiming to keep governors current in their thinking and questioning as they are holding their schools to account and driving forward school improvement - whilst making sure that all students achieve the best outcomes and life chances.

DfE Update for all schools and Ofsted consultation

Important news and communications from the Department for Education (DfE) relating to governance in maintained schools and academy trusts in England. [School governance update](#)

A new year welcome from Lord Agnew, Under Secretary of State for Schools Systems. Also there is a chance for governors to input into a consultation on the removal of the outstanding exemption.

The DfE announced last autumn proposals to lift the exemption from routine inspection for outstanding schools. This will help to give parents a clearer picture of the standard of schools in their area, and support

these schools to continue improving. The consultation on lifting the exemption on outstanding school inspections is now live and we are keen to hear from those on governing and trust boards.

DfE Consultation

Launch date: 10 January 2020

Respond by: 24 February 2020

DfE proposal is that the exemption should be removed

Currently, 3,600 outstanding schools judged outstanding by Ofsted at their last inspection are legally exempt from any further routine inspection.

Around 1,000 exempt schools have not been inspected by Ofsted for >10 years, some not since 2006/7.

Subject to this consultation and approval, intention to lift the exemption would be from September 2020.

You can [take part in the consultation](#).

Training by the NGA

Also, from the DfE, find out what training is available for school governors and clerks to governing boards, and how to apply.

This training is being funded by the DfE and Wiltshire has already started on the training programmes supported by the NGA. 15 of our governors are currently completing Leadership online training plus attending 3 face to face meetings to support their own growth and development and that of their board. I was very fortunate to attend the 1st session led by Paul Kehoe and felt very privileged to be part of such an inspirational group of governors. Click on the link below to find out more.

[Academy and school governance: professional development](#)

Thank you for taking the time to read our Newsletter.

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Right Choice

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