

*Enabling all young people of Kent to receive a first class education  
with outstanding governance strengthening school improvement.*

The government has set out a challenging agenda for schools and Local Authorities in raising standards and improving schools. Governing bodies have a vital role to play in ensuring that happens.

**The Kent Governance** Team is your dedicated team who will work with you to meet the needs of individual governors and governing bodies of all the county's schools, in the light of national legislation and guidance. We are:

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**Thank you for your continued feedback and welcome to our Term 6 Update!**

### [National Key Stage 2 results published](#)

This month national key stage 2 test (SATs) results have been published for the new tougher primary school assessment system in maths and English.

Nationally 53% of pupils were deemed to have met the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Governing boards need to take time to reflect on their school's results, taking into account the fact that these results are not comparable with previous years. Teachers, parents and pupils may well be feeling demoralised by the fact that 47% of children are not considered to have met the expected standard and that this will be a challenge for governing boards to deal with.

NGA and the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) issued a joint statement on Friday urging school leaders and governing boards to take their time to reflect on their school's results and take into account the fact that the results are not comparable with previous years. NGA Members can [Click here](#) to read the full statement

### [DfE publishes research report on Education Health Care plans](#)

The [research report](#) presents the findings from a small-scale qualitative study commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE). The research examines user satisfaction with the Education, Health and Care (EHC) process for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Governing boards should ensure that they ask for and receive information about the progress of children with SEND, whether or not they have EHC plans. Governing boards should also ensure that their schools are meeting the requirements for publication of information on SEND provision.

### [Funding](#)

Much of the recent press around school funding has centred on the consultation for a new national funding formula, but this week schools began to raise the question of the parlous state of their existing budgets – and not all of these schools are in 'low' funded authorities.

Headteachers are pointing out that, while the Government has made much of the protection that the school budget has had compared to some other sectors (and notably local authorities) in real terms, budgets have shrunk. At the same time there have been increasing cost pressures, particularly the impact of changes to national insurance and pensions contributions and, more recently, the living wage. These have impacted on school budgets significantly. Added to these cost pressures, the recently updated Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), which

many local authorities use as a factor in their local formulas, adversely affected a number of school's budgets. IDACI is only updated every five years and since the last dataset was published there has been a significant shift, which has caused some schools to experience multiple tens of thousands in funding change. As with any change, this is particularly difficult to manage in short-timescales.

### [School Funding Reform – delayed until 2018](#)

The Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening has announced that the eagerly anticipated second stage of the school funding reform consultation would not now be published until after Parliament's summer recess, with decisions on the future for school funding published in early 2017.

As a result of the delay, any funding reforms will not now be implemented until 2018-19. For 2017-18 no local authority will receive less funding than it did for schools and high-needs blocks in 2016-17. Schools will also continue to have funding "protected" by the minimum funding guarantee of -1.5%.

### [Evidence on the impact of marking](#)

NGA has previously written about teachers' workload and, following the reports of the review groups looking into the three key areas identified as being burdensome to teachers, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and University of Oxford (UoO) have [reviewed](#) the evidence on written marking by teachers.

The review looked at seven different aspects of current marking practices and their impact on staff time, effort and pupil progress. The review grouped its findings into seven areas: grading, corrections, thoroughness, pupil responses, creating a dialogue, targets, frequency and speed.

The review has identified significant gaps in the quality of existing evidence about the value of written marking. The EEF has called for research communities to join forces in order to investigate this further and has earmarked £2 million of funding for this. The review did identify some initial findings:

- careless mistakes should be marked differently to errors resulting from misunderstanding
- awarding grades for every piece of work may reduce the impact of marking, particularly if pupils become preoccupied with grades at the expense of a consideration of teachers' formative comments
- the use of targets to make marking as specific and actionable as possible is likely to increase pupil progress
- pupils are unlikely to benefit from marking unless some time is set aside to enable pupils to consider and respond to marking
- some forms of marking, including acknowledgement marking, are unlikely to enhance pupil progress

As a result EEF/UoO has coined the phrase "schools should mark less in terms of the number of pieces of work marked, but mark better."

Such policies should be drawn up by school staff, but this review provides a useful basis for consideration when governing boards are reviewing their own school's marking policies and the impact on pupil progress.

### [Annual report on the perceptions of reading amongst school children](#)

The National Literacy Trust has produced its [annual report](#) on the perception of reading amongst primary and secondary school pupils, based on a survey of 32,569 children. The report found that there was a significant "gulf" in reading for enjoyment between secondary and primary school children. Whereas 71% of KS2 pupils aged children said that they enjoyed reading "very much" or "quite a lot", only 40% of Key Stage (KS) 4 children said the same thing. In addition, children in KS2 were also more likely to associate reading well with future employability (71% of KS2 children compared to 36% of KS4). Nevertheless, there was less of a gap in actual reading outside of school, with 41% of KS4 aged pupils and 46% of KS2 aged pupils doing extracurricular reading.

On a more positive note, the report did find that the levels of reading and enjoyment associated with reading had increased once again this year. The report also found that young people spent over double the amount of time reading online than from books.

Importantly, the “research shows a clear correlation between attainment and reading enjoyment, frequency and attitudes. Children and young people who enjoy reading very much are three times as likely to read above the level expected for their age as young people who do not enjoy reading at all (32.7% versus 10.1%)”. Governors may want to consider asking the headteacher about how the school encourages a positive ethos around reading and whether there is anything the school can do to encourage more children to read for pleasure.

### [FFT Aspire](#)

Free resources for School Governors in England and Wales:

Did you know that data experts FFT Education provide a range of free support to school governors? FFT supports governors in the following ways:

#### The FFT Governor Dashboard

The FFT Governor Dashboard, developed in partnership with the National Governors’ Association and the Wellcome Trust, provides a range of information to help governors support and challenge their school leadership team. The Governor Dashboard clearly displays information about results and pupil progress, subject performance, progress of pupil groups, school context, attendance and highlights some of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, making it the ideal overview for planning towards inspections too.

#### FFT’s free e-learning modules for governors

FFT’s free, user-friendly, e-learning tool consists of modules designed to help you make the most out of your Governor Dashboard – visit [elearning.fft.org.uk](http://elearning.fft.org.uk) to register.

#### Free e-bulletins

Sign up to FFT’s Governor half termly e-bulletins by emailing [hello@fft.org.uk](mailto:hello@fft.org.uk).

#### Free Webinars

FFT regularly hold free online webinars, including ones specifically for governors. The next ones will be held on Thursday 29 September at 3pm and 8pm. To find out more or to register please visit the FFT website, [www.fft.org.uk](http://www.fft.org.uk) – choose ‘Events’ and then ‘Webinars’ from the main menu.

#### Downloadable resources

Training guides and overview presentation are available to download from the FFT website.

#### Social media

FFT has active Twitter and LinkedIn sites that will keep you up to date with education news, data releases and FFT research. Please follow us @FFTEdu

### [New guidance on effective pupil premium reviews](#)

An [updated guide](#) to spending the pupil premium has been produced by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and the Teaching School Council (TSC). The guide outlines six stages of a pupil premium review in a school. Although it focuses on what schools can expect from an external review of the pupil premium, it does give some guidance on how schools can conduct a self-evaluation themselves, providing some useful tools and templates for free.

The NGA is currently producing a document specifically for governors on how to measure the

impact of the pupil premium in their school(s). In the meantime, if you are a member of the NGA please visit the [Guidance Centre](#) for more information on the pupil premium.

### Success in supporting disadvantaged pupils

A new report by the Education Policy Institute - [Divergent Pathways: the disadvantage gap, accountability and the pupil premium](#) - focuses on the “progress gap” between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates.

Around 40% of the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is present at age five but this then widens as pupils move through the key stages. The report found considerable variability between schools with differing pupil intake characteristics when it comes to trends in the progress gaps, with schools with the highest concentration of disadvantaged pupils seeing the gap decrease more than those with the fewest disadvantaged pupils.

The authors recommend a number of measures for government and suggest that “school governors should increase their scrutiny of performance for disadvantaged pupils and ensure that peer support is called in where needed, from schools with a strong track record”.

Responding to the report, the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has [called for](#) pupils to be automatically registered for the pupil premium to ensure funding reaches the 11% of eligible children across England who are currently missing out.

### SGOSS – new service

Please find [a link to a letter](#) which will update you about important developments at SGOSS concerning the provision of school governor search services and our future.

From 31 August the Department for Education (“DFE”) funding for SGOSS will be come to an end. It will be re-directed to an expanded Education and Employers Taskforce (“Taskforce”) which will pick up responsibility for providing the school system with the governor search services that have been delivered by SGOSS. Our charity will therefore be unable to provide these services after 31 August 2016.

The Taskforce operates the Inspiring Governors service [www.inspiringgovernors.org](http://www.inspiringgovernors.org).

The letter will provide you with the background to this change and explain what this means to you. We will complete all current active search assignments for schools by 31 August and work with the Taskforce to deliver a smooth transfer of our search activities. In this regard it would help us if you would grant your consent for SGOSS to transfer the personal details we have from you to the Taskforce so we may complete a smooth handover of activities and serve you well. These details will be used for the purposes of matching volunteers with governor vacancies in schools and may be shared with schools and local authorities. In short, the same purpose and protocols as is the case in your dealings with SGOSS. To do this please click on this link and confirm your consent [sgossinfo@sgoss.org.uk](mailto:sgossinfo@sgoss.org.uk).

Please take a look at the YouTube clip with regards to the new Inspiring Governors website:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSYPmokEGRo&list=PL1uhJVf-tUlhI0avL7xfZ-sXXD75cSkKQ&index=1>

<http://www.inspiringgovernors.org/governing-bodies/>

### Updated Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance

A clearer expectation for governing boards to have a nominated governor who is responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements;

- This does not absolve the rest of the governing board of responsibility for safeguarding and you should ensure that regular reports are received and discussed by the governing board about safeguarding.
- Ensuring the safeguarding and child protection policies account for peer-on-peer abuse, additional safeguarding challenges for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and honour-based violence;
- Providing opportunities for staff to contribute to the development of such policies based on their safeguarding experiences;
- The fact that the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) must be a member of the senior leadership team and cannot delegate this responsibility;
- Ensuring (rather than considering how) safeguarding is taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum;
- Checking for section 128 directions (these will be flagged in a DBS check) which prohibit or restrict a person from taking part in the management of an independent school (including academies and free schools) including in a management position as an employee, as a trustee, as a member or local governor;
- Inclusion of the requirement for maintained school governors to provide enhanced DBS certificates.

As a result of the updated guidance governing boards should now review their safeguarding policies and procedures, and the content and policies for staff safeguarding training. The NGA is also producing a suite of safeguarding guidance which will be available to NGA members in their Guidance Centre.

### Clerking Matters

The new Clerking Matters section of the NGA website has now gone live and can be accessed [here](#) by members.

A brand new feature for Clerking Matters is a free clerks resource section – Clerk to Governors.

NGA is very much looking forward to developing its Clerking Matters service to clerks promoting good practice and, in particular, in raising the profile of clerks. Within the new Clerking Matters section of our website you will find easy access to a wide range of relevant resources and topics including clerking best practice, statutory guidance and legislation, clerks news, information on clerking as a career and regular updates on the NGA Clerks Advisory Group.

NGA has relaunched Clerking Matters with four main aims:

- to increase the understanding of the importance of the work of clerks and what can be expected of a well-trained clerk
- to help governing boards find good clerks where there is difficulty in doing this
- to help clerks know where continuing professional development can be found
- to encourage appropriate remuneration of clerks

Explore Clerking Matters today and feel free to contact us directly at [clerkingmatters@nga.org.uk](mailto:clerkingmatters@nga.org.uk).



### [Former Minister of Schools issues letter to all headteachers on term-time holidays](#)

The former Schools Minister Nick Gibb has [written to all state schools](#) concerning the recent high court ruling on term-time holidays. He outlined that the ruling should not open the gate for unchallenged term-time absence and that “no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances. Schools should consider each instance on a case-by-case basis”.

As reported in the [20/05/2016 Newsletter](#), the high court overturned a fine issued by the Isle of Wight Council for a parent who took his child out of school for a family holiday. In his letter, Nick Gibb wrote that:

1. “The High Court’s judgment did not establish a hard and fast rule that a pupil’s attendance above 90% is regarded as ‘regular’ attendance. Instead a decision will have to depend on the individual facts of each case. In the Isle of Wight case, for example, the magistrates thought it was a pertinent fact that the school itself had described 90% attendance as ‘satisfactory’”.
2. “We understand that some parents who have already been given penalty notices and have paid the penalty are asking local authorities to withdraw the notices under regulation 8 of the Education (Penalty notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and refund their payments. However, the view of the Department is that the decision in the Isle of Wight case does not require local authorities to do this, and I would expect applications of this kind to be refused in the ordinary course of events. We will set out any additional steps necessary to secure children’s attendance at school in due course”.

### [SchoolDash analysis sheds light on attainment gap](#)

Analysis by SchoolDash, an independent website set up by a London-based academic, has revealed the effect of different factors on the attainment gap which are reported in a [blog post](#). In the context of this analysis, the attainment gap refers to the gap between the highest and lowest performing pupils, rather than the socioeconomic attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. This is important because the gap is “potentially corrosive, not least because it establishes inequality of opportunity early in young people’s lives”. The blog examines the types of schools which tend to cause this gap to shrink and those which allow it to widen, based on GCSE attainment judged against prior attainment. This found that:

1. Schools that do the most to close the attainment gap in good ways (i.e. raising attainment of all pupils) are:
  - Schools in many London boroughs
  - Ofsted ‘Outstanding’ schools
  - Boys’ schools
2. Schools that generally perform well but tend to *increase* the attainment gap include:
  - Schools with small proportions of low-attainers
  - Rural schools
  - Schools in the East of England as well as Herefordshire, Worcestershire and York (among other are
3. Schools that reduce the attainment gap but do so in unhelpful ways (i.e. by holding back high attainers) include:
  - Schools with high levels of deprivation
  - Schools with large proportions of low-attainers
  - Schools in Torbay, Kent, Salford and Blackpool (among other areas)

4. Schools that combine low attainment with an increase in the attainment gap include:

- Ofsted 'Inadequate' schools
- Schools in Yorkshire and The Humber, the East Midlands and the North West
- Schools in Knowsley, Barnsley, Stoke-on-Trent and Brighton (among other areas)

These findings are of course generalisations, and there will be schools within each group which buck the trend. However, they do raise interesting questions for governing boards and it may be useful to look at where your school's characteristics fit in the analysis. What does the attainment gap look like in your school? Do you invest time and resources in supporting your high-attainers or are they overlooked? Do your schools support all able pupil premium children in Year 6 to have the same opportunity to access grammar education if that is what would be right for them?

### [Working group to develop Competency Framework for governors](#)

This week the Department for Education (DfE) has provided further information about the competency framework for governance promised in [March's white paper](#). The National Schools Commissioner, Sir David Carter, has convened a working group of experienced chairs of governors and one clerk to support the production of the framework, which will set out the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for effective governance.

A first draft will be produced by early July and will be put out to consultation with stakeholders. As part of the [Advisory Group on Governance \(AGOG\)](#), NGA will be providing comment on the framework as it develops.

It is the DfE's intention that the final framework will be published in the Autumn term. The framework will be used as a basis from which to make recommendations about the content of the National College of Teaching and Leadership's professional development programmes for chairs and clerks from September 2017. It will also be used to produce a national standard for governor induction training.

### [National Database of Governors and Trustees](#)

As outlined in the government's White Paper published in March - [Educational Excellence Everywhere](#) – the Department for Education (DfE) has [announced](#) that from September 2016, details about those governing in maintained schools and academies must be uploaded to [Edubase](#) (the DfE's database of all schools in the country).

For academies, this requirement is stipulated in the updated [Academies Financial Handbook 2016](#) but the DfE has pre-populated Edubase with the current information they hold about those governing in academy trusts. However, trusts will need to check the details held on Edubase for accuracy, make any updates, and complete any empty fields. Going forward, trusts will be required to update Edubase as the vacancies arise and new appointments are made.

For maintained schools, the DfE is using [section 538 of the Education Act 1996](#), which requires governing bodies to submit such information to the Secretary of State as s/he requests. As the DfE does not currently hold information about those governing in maintained schools, this information will need to be filled in from scratch. As with academies, Edubase must be updated regularly where information about those governing changes.

Information regarding the exact details that will be collected and published on Edubase is outlined in the [DfE's press release](#). Governing boards will still have to publish details on their websites.

### [Academies Financial Handbook 2016](#)

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) has published the 2016 [Academies Financial Handbook \(AFH\)](#). This replaces the 2015 version from 1 September 2016.

A summary of the key changes from the previous version can be found on page 5 of the document. Many of the changes clarify or emphasise existing parts of the academies financial framework, while seeking to align these more firmly with terminology in the Governance Handbook, in particular it now makes absolutely clear that trusts must publish their scheme of delegation for governance functions. The 2016 edition features an enhanced focus on identifying skills needed on the board, both at trust board level, and for local governing committees, and includes further drives to promote increased transparency and openness.

### Cash Savings for Schools

DfE offers schools the chance to save thousands on energy, ICT and multi-functional devices.

Ahead of the new academic year, schools are being urged to take advantage of special deals negotiated by the government that could save them thousands of pounds on their energy, ICT equipment and printers and photocopiers.

All publicly funded schools are free to make use of these pre-existing contracts, and on average they could save up to 10% on energy and over 40% for printers and photocopiers, also known as 'multi-functional devices' (MFDs).

More details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cash-savings-for-schools>

### Chairs Actions

To ensure that the Local Authority can offer Governing Bodies support, we would ask that Chairs make contact with their Senior Improvement Adviser in the following circumstances:-

- If a Head is off sick for more than 7 days
- A Head tenders their resignation

The LA will then be able to offer swift advice regarding interim support and recruitment processes and ensure the school is not left in a vulnerable position.

### Executive Headships – Who takes the Headteacher Governor position?

The NGA's advice is that the Headteacher Governor position should be taken by the person who *is responsible for taking decisions on exclusions, staffing etc.*

For NGA members there is an extract from Governing Matters May/June 2015 that explains the situation. There is also recent information which can be accessed at:

<http://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/May-Sept-2016/New-research-sees-rapid-growth-of-Executive-Headte.aspx>

The Leadership and Governance team would like to wish all Governors and Clerks a restful summer break and thank you for everything you do in supporting young people in Kent schools.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT LINKS TO COURSES ON SOME OF THE TOPICS MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE FOUND IN THE SIGNPOSTS TO LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT BELOW:**

#### Signposts

- [Kent Governors CPD Online](#)
- [The Governor Magazine](#)
- [Leadership and Governance training and development](#)
- [Leadership - kelsi.org.uk](#)



# Governor Services

## Term 6 Update July 2016



- **External Links**
- [Kent Governors Association](#)
- [National Governors' Association](#)
- [SGOSS](#)