



GST Newsletter

Issue 5 – January 2024

Introduction

Welcome to 2024 and the new term. Hopefully governors and school leaders have taken the Christmas break as a chance to spend time with family and friends and recharge batteries.

News/updates

As well as the Department for Education's (DfE) **School Governance** update, below are further items which may be of interest:

Managing asbestos in your school or college

Guidance for school leaders, governors, local authorities and academy trusts about managing asbestos in schools and colleges, specifically what to do if things go wrong – Updated link to the Health and Safety Executive's asbestos management checklist for schools.

School teachers' pay and conditions: guidance

Guidance to help schools and governance boards develop their approach to teachers' and school leaders' pay. Replaced 'Implementing your school's approach to pay' document with 2023 updated version.

Pupil premium

The Pupil premium strategy should be on the school website by 31 December, governors have you got yours up?

If it is not yet in place, you may find the updated the 'Pupil premium strategy statement template', 'Example pupil premium strategy statement (primary)', 'Example pupil premium strategy statement (secondary)' and 'Example pupil premium strategy statement (special)' helpful, to update the content in the Outcomes sections and reflect the information schools can publish about pupil outcomes.



School resource management

Information, tools, training and guidance to help schools and trusts save money on day-to-day costs. Building school and trust business professional capability report has been added to the impact, evaluation, and research findings.

OFSTED

Statement from His Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman

A statement on conclusion of the Coroner's inquest from Ofsted's Chief Inspector.

Changes to Ofsted's post-inspection arrangements and complaints handling: proposals 2023

This is a consultation on proposed changes to our post-inspection arrangements, including how we handle complaints about our work.

School inspection handbook

Ofsted guidance on inspecting maintained schools and academies in England under the education inspection framework.

Early years inspection handbook

Ofsted guidance on inspecting registered early years and childcare providers under the education inspection framework.

How OFSTED Inspects Safeguarding

Ofsted have recently published an update to their safeguarding inspection handbook, explaining how they inspect safeguarding. Ofsted have stated they are looking for a culture of safeguarding and have updated the definition to state, that they 'expect all schools to have an open and positive culture around safeguarding that put pupils' interests first' (School Inspection Handbook, paragraph 367).

Ofsted has also produced a webinar on '**How they inspect safeguarding**' and a **Single Central Record Frequently asked questions**, which may be of interest.

Sir Martyn Oliver begins term at Ofsted with mental health awareness training for inspectors

The new His Majesty's Chief Inspector begins with an immediate package of training for inspectors, a response to the Ruth Perry inquest and a Big Listen.

Safeguarding and Data Sharing: New Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Guidance

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has recently published a 10 step guide to sharing information, to safeguard children. The guidance is designed to bolster the ability to protect, data in educational establishments. Farrer & Co have recently published an **article** aimed at interrogating the new guidelines, highlighting the key lessons to be integrated into your establishments, which you may be of interest.

Working together to safeguard children: changes to statutory guidance

A summary of the government's response to the consultation and next steps including the updated **Working together to safeguard children statutory guidance**.

Gender questioning children: draft schools and colleges guidance

The Department for Education has published comprehensive guidance for teachers on how best to support pupils questioning their gender in schools.

The government is seeking **views** on the draft non-statutory guidance for schools and colleges about children questioning their gender.

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework

The standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5.

Added summaries of changes from the September 2023 guidance to the January 2024 guidance.

Development/Training

National Governance Association (NGA) Learning Link

Westmorland and Furness Council have provided free access to the NGA Learning Link e-learning platform for all schools. NGA has announced some new modules which may be of interest as follows:

Safer Recruitment is a statutory duty for all schools to undertake when recruiting new members of staff. It is in place to ensure the welfare of children and should be a continual process of improvement.

Its function is to ensure that anyone who works with children is not a risk and that those who are barred from working with children are deterred from applying or rejected from the process.

This module is designed to fulfil the compliance obligations of governors and trustees who have been asked to appear on a recruitment panel.

Interactive NGA Skills Audit module. It is seen as best practice for all boards undertake a skills audit annually. NGA has designed an interactive version to complete as a group in under an hour. It comprises a series of discussion questions to which you can assign a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) rating and some notes.

You can then download your final audit as a Word document, which includes some additional resources to help progress.

Environmental sustainability: the governance role has been designed to provide an overview of environmental sustainability and why it matters for schools and trusts, this new bitesize module will outline the Greener Governance campaign, the DfE's climate change and sustainability strategy, as well as some helpful case studies.

The module will also enable you to determine some practical next steps for your board, and will provide you with a helpful strategy document, alongside some key questions to ask your board and leaders.

Governance workload balancing efficient and effectiveness

Governors may be interested in the planned webinar from NGA on the 23/01/2024, 12:30 to 13:15. The webinar will explore:

- Understanding the role and remaining strategic
- The impact of board culture
- How boards can become more efficient
- Making governance training work.

Governance – Role of the Chair, Developing Leadership

The GST are delivering the above session (virtually). This session provides delegates with a greater understanding of the role of the chair in leading the governing board to fulfil its strategic responsibility in delivering effective governance.

It will also consider ways in which to strengthen the team to lead to effective succession planning.

The event will consist of a presentation followed by an opportunity to ask questions.

The dates are:

- 27 February 2024
- 11 June 2024

All sessions will run from 6.00pm – 7.30pm. Bookings are made via the **Westmorland and Furness SLA online.**



Music in Schools

The power of music to change lives: A National Plan for Music Education (NPME) published in June 2022, sets out Government's expectations of high-quality music in schools.

Here is a brief overview of the requirements for music in schools, why music is so important, and how governors can influence and support the musical life of their school. In addition please see **Read the Arts Council England Guides for Governors** including suggestions of some questions governors may want to ask.

The Government recognises that governing boards play an important role in ensuring every child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Arts and culture form a key part of this, allowing young people to develop their creative skills alongside their personal development, giving them the tools, they need to succeed in life. Ofsted may do a 'Deep Dive' in Music as part of their inspection.

Music is proven to be good for children and young people – and good for schools. When taught well, music education can enhance aspiration and ambition, develop communication and team working skills, strengthen creative and critical thinking skills, and build discipline and confidence in young people. It can enrich teaching and learning across the curriculum, encourage parental engagement with pupils' learning, open-up career pathways and has a profound effect on the ethos of a school.

"Music is a cornerstone of the broad and balanced education that every child should receive. It touches hearts and minds, it celebrates and challenges, and it connects us and moves us." NPME.

NPME Key Features of High-Quality School Music Provision

- Timetabled curriculum music of at least 1 hour each week of the school year for KS 1-3
- Access to lessons across a range of instruments, and voice
- A school choir and/or vocal ensemble
- A school ensemble/band/group
- Space for rehearsals and individual practice
- A termly school performance
- Opportunity to enjoy live performance at least once a year



The Cumbria Music Education Hub (CMEH) is collaborative partnership led by Westmorland & Furness Music Service. Working with the Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Music Services, schools and educational settings within our two unitary council areas, and several local, regional and national partners we deliver the vision and three goals of the National Plan for Music Education:

1. To support schools and other education settings to deliver high-quality music education
2. To support all children and young people to engage with a range of musical opportunities in and out of school
3. To support young people to develop their musical interests and talent further, including into employment.

How can Westmorland and Furness Music Service help?

- Continual Professional Development: join the annual conference **Together we make a Difference** for an inspirational day of workshops and networking to help you get more out of music for the children and young people
- High quality **music programmes for schools**: including whole class instrumental learning, specialist small group teaching, curriculum support, after school groups and ensembles and live music opportunities
- **Help with your School Music Development Plan**
- Music Advocacy: **find resources** to help you support music in your school

Contact us: musicservice@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk or visit the **Cumbria Music Education Hub**.

School to school support

Further to our previous article 'School to School Support', the GST wish to remind any governors/trustees and clerks (governance professionals) who feel they may be in a position to provide governance support to other boards on a voluntary basis, to contact the GST for an informal conversation.

Please contact either your Governor Support Assistant or drop an email to GST.mailbox.WAF@cumbria.gov.uk to discuss further or if you would just like a little more detail.

GST Contact Details

The GST continues to offer advice, support, and guidance, specific to your boards needs and can be contacted as follows:

Jane Lees

Governor Support Assistant

E: jane.lees@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk or GST.mailbox.WAF@cumbria.gov.uk

T: 01228 226925 M: 07768 027 244