

SUMMER 2 2024

NCOGS NEWSLETTER

Newsletter for the National Co-ordinators of Governor Services



WELCOME TO THE SUMMER TERM NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the final newsletter for this academic year.

It's hard to believe we are already in the second half of the summer term and heading at what feels like breakneck speed towards the end of the academic year. This is a term packed with big (and new) experiences for our children and young people, from SATs and GCSE's, A-levels, T-Levels; transition from a familiar preschool, primary, secondary, sixth form or special school to another setting at the end of a key stage; leavers services, performances and school proms; sports days and residential. For boards it is a time to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past year and look forward to what September will bring.

Thank you for your responses to our proposal to extend the membership of the NCOGS board by having two regional reps for each region. This suggestion has met a positive reception with the regions and will be decided on at the NCOGS meeting next month.

Work has begun on a new website for the organisation to better reflect the vibrant and diverse membership across the regions and showcase some of the things we are working on. There will be pages for each region to share information about their priorities and a home for resources, such as the clerking handbook. If your region has any ideas for things they would like to see included please let us know! We hope to launch the website in time for the conference in October, John will share more information as things evolve.

As always, thank you for everything you do to support your boards, we hope you get to enjoy a break over the summer, with at least a little sunshine!



Fiona Collier
Chair



John Ashworth
Vice-Chair

CONTACT

BEC DAVEY - NCOGS CO-ORDINATOR & CLERK

Email: bdaveyclerk@outlook.com

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General Election on 4 July



During the 'period of sensitivity' leading up to the election the governments ministers and civil servants will exercise caution in making announcements or decisions that might have an effect on the election campaign. Ministers, whether in the UK Government or in the devolved administrations, remain in office and in charge of their departments but it is customary for them to observe discretion in announcing initiatives that are new or of a long-term character in their capacity as a minister. This has implications for some of the consultations and initiatives which we were expecting to hear about or see published.

Areas possibly impacted include:

- Performance related pay. We were expecting to hear about the replacement for PRP, due to be in place for September 2024
- The decision on teachers pay will not be published until after the election
- The September 2024 Academy Trust Handbook, which was due to be published early to allow academies time to prepare for the changes, will be held until after the election
- Plans for the Advanced British Standard (consultation closed in March)
- SEND reforms, currently being trialled, will fall to the next government to decide whether to roll out nationally
- Consultations on proposals to lift the 50% cap on faith schools, statutory RSHE guidance and gender questioning children – responses will likely be delayed
- Ofsted Big Listen – response likely to be delayed
- Non-statutory elective home education changes which would ask councils to maintain voluntary registers on children not in school is awaiting a response following consultation.



Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)



The draft statutory guidance for September 2024 has been published. There are no major changes, these have been deferred to next year, pending the responses to the [call for evidence](#) on safeguarding, which closes on 20 June. The Safeguarding Network has published a useful [summary of the changes](#) in the 2024 guidance.



2024 Academy Trust Handbook

The ESFA has written to trusts, explaining that the Sep 2024 handbook will not be published until after the general election as any updates to the handbook will require ministerial approval. Previously allocated funding will continue to be delivered during the election period. The deadline for the budget forecast return (BFR) has been extended to 29 Aug to allow trusts the opportunity to factor any post-election announcements into their return.

[Letter from the ESFA](#)



Falling pupil numbers



Many schools are facing the prospect of some challenging years ahead, as pupil numbers are dropping in primary schools (which will naturally impact on secondary schools in the future.) Experienced board members will recognise that they have seen ‘blips’ in pupil numbers before, with the board and the organisation riding out the storm for a year or so until numbers pick up again. This time the downturn looks to be more serious, and sadly does not show any signs of improving, so the hope that numbers will return to their previous ‘norm’ may be unfounded. The government [national pupil projection figures](#) (October 2023) forecast that by 2028 there will be a 412,000 reduction in pupil numbers in primary schools across the country, with some regions being affected more than others. Naturally any projection is not an exact forecast, the analysis explains:

- The population attending primary and nursery schools peaked in 2019 and the figures have been dropping since then. This is primarily due to the continued reductions in the birth numbers since 2013, although there was a larger drop in the population in 2021 which may have been connected to the pandemic. Figures have been stable for the two years since then but are expected to drop from 2024 onwards
- The peak in the secondary school population is projected to be in 2024 - 2025, followed by a drop throughout the rest of the projection period
- The population in special schools has been increasing, and is also projected to peak around 2025 before starting to slowly drop. This is primarily driven by the decrease in the overall population from the same point.

The board will want to investigate what the expected admissions numbers are for the setting over the coming years, to help inform longer-term planning and budgeting. There may be opportunities to extend the age range of the setting, to accept younger children and take advantage of additional childcare funding which is available to working families. Collaboration and partnership working will also be important areas for the board to consider.



School website information

The DfE has made amendments to what maintained and academy schools must, or should publish online. Before the start of the academic year 2024/25 schools are expected to publish details of their music development plan as part of the music curriculum information. An example template has been provided by the DfE, but use of this template is not mandatory. Schools should already have a music development plan in place, the summary of this plan on the school website should set out how the school will deliver high-quality music provision in curriculum music, co-curricular music and musical experiences, taking into account the key features in the [national plan for music education](#):

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

The summary should reflect the school's music provision for the given school year and their plans for subsequent years. It should also refer to any existing partnership with the local music hub or other music education organisations that supports the school with music provision.

Also introduced within the section on curriculum information there is an expectation that schools will publish information for parents about removing their child from RE lessons.

Other changes include the removal of suggested wording relating to test and exam results due to the lack of national published results due to Covid-19 and new suggested content for schools around gender pay gap reporting, including for schools with fewer than 250 employees, from which point mandatory reporting is required.

Cyber security standards for schools updated



These standards are for all schools and colleges to help build their cyber resilience. They address the core principles of cyber governance, processes and strategy.

[Cyber security standards](#)



Sustainability support for education - new website launching this month

The DfE has updated the [sustainability guidance for schools](#), which now includes a link to a new website offering ideas and resources for schools, relevant to their setting. The sustainability and climate change strategy for education states: 'By 2025, all education settings will have nominated a sustainability lead and put in place a climate action plan'. This includes early years settings, schools, multi-academy trusts, colleges, and universities.

The guidance states that, as senior decision makers, SLT and governors should support and drive the school's sustainable activity. They should:

- Provide the authority and support to drive and embed culture change
- Ensure climate change and sustainability feature on the agenda at key meetings
- Be responsible for succession planning, so that commitment to sustainability endures in the setting.

Support is available to schools through [Climate Action Advisers](#), independent experts, who offer free support for schools, colleges, and nurseries across England. They will support schools to understand their carbon impact, make effective plans, and find funding and resources. They work with schools of any size, even those that are just starting their sustainability journey and also spotlight local opportunities for how schools can work together.

In depth daily attendance data tool



The DfE have published a new tool to support schools and boards spot trends in pupil attendance. From August there is an additional new responsibility for the board to monitor their school's attendance data with that of other schools.

[Press release](#) and access the [Data tool](#)



Children's Society new resource

A 'behaviour policy checklist' to support schools to develop inclusive behaviour policies, created by a group of young people who have experienced school exclusion and now advocate for other young people facing school exclusion.

[Behaviour policy checklist](#)



RSHE statutory guidance consultation



The DfE is seeking views on the proposed statutory guidance for relationships, sex and health education. Proposals include minimum ages at which some topics may be taught and offering advice on how topics might be sequenced.

Within the proposed statutory guidance the role of governors and trustees is set out to explain that as well as fulfilling their legal obligations, governing boards should also make sure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes
- Teaching is accessible to all pupils with SEND
- Curriculum content and teaching materials are aligned with the statutory guidance
- Clear information is provided for parents on the subject content, teaching materials and external providers, and on the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education.

Additionally foundation governors and trustees will also have wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the religious ethos of the schools.

The [consultation](#) closes on 11 July.





Ofsted changes



From September, inspectors will no longer conduct subject deep dives during ungraded inspections, which are designed to check on standards in schools that already carry a good or outstanding grade. Instead, school leaders will have the opportunity to discuss their school's strengths and areas for development with inspectors. Ofsted states that the changes are designed to reduce the burden on school leaders and allow more time and flexibility for inspectors to get to know the school, including its context and priorities.

The lead inspector's initial phone call will focus on getting to know the school, its context, priorities and progress since the previous inspection. There will then be more space for school leaders to help shape the inspection plan and ensure it is focused on the right things.

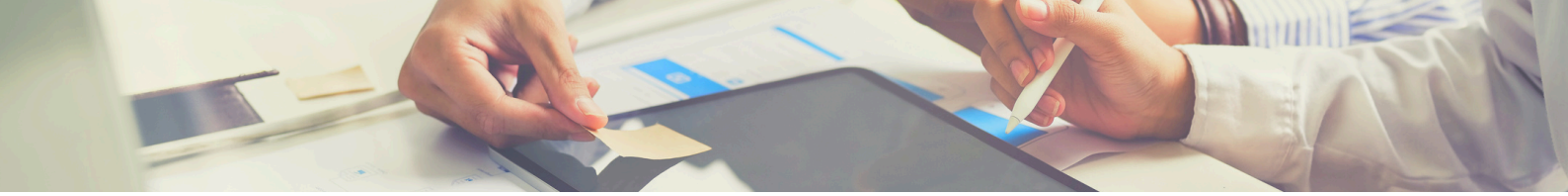
The inspection framework will remain unchanged, but in place of the deep dives, inspectors will typically use extended learning walks to consider the impact of the curriculum and pupils' personal development. Safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance will continue to be evaluated in the same way.

The changes have come about mainly as a result of feedback from small primary schools, many of whom feel the deep dive methodology is particularly challenging. However, the changes will benefit all schools – nearly 3,000 ungraded inspections planned for next year will now benefit from a more flexible and collaborative approach. That represents more than 40% of all planned school inspections.

Additionally from May of this year Ofsted began displaying each of the sub-judgements awarded to an individual school alongside its overall effectiveness grade at the top of its inspection report webpage.

Responses to the Big Listen, which closed on 31 May, will be assessed over the summer, with further measures due to be announced in the autumn.





NCOGS CONFERENCE

INSPIRE, INNOVATE &
EXPLORE TOGETHER

Come and listen to keynote
speakers and have
the opportunity to network with
colleagues

Feedback from the 2023 Conference

'It was really beneficial meeting face to face and I feel far more was gained from the speakers than it being online'

'Thank you it was a great day. All the speakers especially in the morning were brilliant and I'm really glad I took the day out of usual work to come'



10th October 2024 *



Stadium MK, Milton Keynes,
MK1 1ST

* There will be a networking opportunity on the evening of 9th October 2024

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATORS OF GOVERNOR SERVICES

With the release of the [National Crime Agency alert](#) last month, financially motivated sexual extortion is a growing concern across the UK. With many individuals being targeted regardless of age or gender, the need for support is more essential than ever. Schools in particular need to be well versed in how to respond effectively to a sextortion incident and be on hand to support the young person in their care. For parents and carers, supporting their child through a distressing incident can be overwhelming, but having knowledge of how to effectively communicate and take action is key to protecting them online.

In response to this, the UK Safer Internet Centre has prepared a brand new online issue page to guide professionals, parents, carers, and young people through what to do if they are ever faced with a sextortion incident. Included is information on what financially motivated sexual extortion is, best practices including how to effectively communicate about sextortion, and how to report and escalate the issue.

The page includes a series of resources and tools that have been designed specifically to help individuals navigate and respond to incidents and outlined the correct places to go if a young person or adult needs to report anything online, and where the best line of support is.

[Online issues page](#)



Lunch & Learn



NCOGS CPD and networking sessions

The next networking event will be held virtually (via Teams) on Friday 5 July from 12.30 – 2.00pm.

Bookings can be made via [GovernorHub](#).

The session will be an open forum for COGS to raise issues or topics on which they wish to seek the views of others, as the results of the general election should be known there's certain to be a lot to talk about! We will have a few 'starters for 10', but want this session to be focused on the areas of importance to you.

If you have any particular questions, or topics you would like included, please email the NCOGS clerk, Bec Davey, by 4.00pm on Thursday 4 July bdaveyclerk@outlook.com

We look forward to welcoming you!