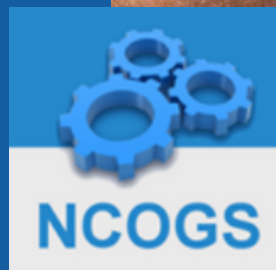


AUTUMN 1 2024

NCOGS NEWSLETTER

Newsletter for the National Co-ordinators of Governor Services



WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN TERM NEWSLETTER

A new academic year has begun, and it already feels as if the summer break was a long time ago! The summer term is always full of the opportunity for a new start and filled with promise for what lies ahead, with new pupils joining our schools, the annual election of the chair and vice, new board members joining and a regroup, ready for the year ahead. The change in Government and the response to the Ofsted Big Listen will bring more change ahead, not all of it with much detail as yet behind the headlines.

The proposal to expand the membership of the NCOGS committee to allow for up to two representatives from each region has been approved, so do make sure your regional agenda includes an item to appoint or elect an additional person from your group; we look forward to welcoming new representatives at our meetings this term.

Work is continuing on the new NAGAS website, due to be unveiled at the October conference. The website will feature a page for each of the regional groups, to act as a 'shop window' where you can tell the world about your membership and the work you do, and publicise all the great things that happen in the regions. Conference bookings are going really well – our apologies the booking form failed us during the summer, and thank you for persevering – it's back up and running properly now. If you haven't yet booked your place please do so, as we have to cap numbers due to the size of the venue.

[BOOKING FORM](#)



Fiona Collier
Chair



John Ashworth
Vice-Chair

CONTACT

BEC DAVEY - NCOGS CO-ORDINATOR & CLERK

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The [conference programme](#) contains information about the fantastic speakers we have lined up for the day, plus time for you to meet and network with colleagues from across the country. We will also be plying you with breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea, thanks to our conference sponsors, GovernorHub. 😊 Don't miss this once a year opportunity to meet up with like-minded individuals from LA's, Diocese, Multi-academy trusts, traded services and governing board support organisations – it's great to be in a room with other people who 'get it!' (see pages 11 & 12 for more information).

Bookings are also open for the free online networking and themed discussion events, with the first one taking place on Friday 29 November (see page 13) – if you have any burning issues you would like to add to the agenda for any of these sessions just let us know. Thank you, as always, for everything you do to support the boards you work with.



National School Trust Report, September 2024

For the third year running, the Confederation of School Trusts has partnered with Edurio to conduct the National School Trust Survey. Responses were gathered from more than 400 Trusts of varying sizes, from SATs to large MATs, during June and July this year. The responses have been analysed and published in the report, highlighting the key priorities and challenges identified by Trusts. The report is divided into key areas, which align with the CST's 'Building Strong Trusts' framework:

- Expert, ethical leadership
- High quality, inclusive education
- School improvement at scale
- Strategic governance
- Workforce resilience and wellbeing
- Finance and operations
- Public benefit and civic duty.

Financial sustainability came out as a key strategic priority for 66% of the Trusts who responded to the survey, with budget constraints identified by 85% as being a potential barrier to achieving priorities. Within the section on governance succession planning, recruitment of local governors and recruitment of trustees/directors were all identified as a challenge. Training for board and local body members, succession planning and enabling a more diverse membership were identified as priorities for many Trusts.

[Download the report](#)

Education at a Glance report 2024



The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Education at a Glance annual report has been published. The report looks at the current state of education internationally. The indicators they use provide information on areas such as the human and financial resources invested in education, how education and learning systems operate and evolve, and the returns to investments in education. [Education at a Glance report](#)



Working together to improve school attendance

This updated DfE guidance became statutory on 19 August 2024. As part of the guidance a summary table of responsibilities is published, setting out what parents, the school, governing boards and the Local Authority are expected to do. For **governing boards** this includes:

- Taking an active role in improving attendance
- Supporting their school(s) to prioritise attendance
- Working together with leaders to set whole school cultures on attendance
- Ensure school leaders fulfil what is expected of them regarding attendance and that statutory duties are being met
- Use data to understand patterns of attendance within the school(s)
- Compare data with other local schools to help identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed
- Ensure that staff receive training on attendance
- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus on support for the pupils who need it.

Within the guidance the expectations for schools have been expanded to now include:

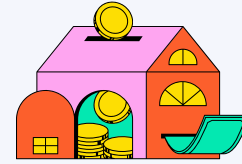
- Update the section on pupils who are prevented from attending school due to physical or mental ill health to be clear where schools' role starts and ends, provide further clarification around medical evidence, additional support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and part-time timetables.
- Explain the new requirements for schools on data sharing introduced through the Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- Provide clarification of the expectations of schools' senior attendance champions.
- Expect schools to inform a pupil's youth offending team worker of any unexplained absences.

[Working together to improve school attendance](#)



TEACH THE FUTURE

Fund the future



Teach the Future is running a project called 'fund the future', calling for more funding for schools to address issues with buildings, create environmentally friendly buildings and decarbonise our schools. Backed by Let's Go Zero, the organisers are asking that parents, pupils and staff submit photos online of showing the problems within their school buildings.

[Campaigning for Safe, Climate-Friendly Schools | Teach the Future](#)



Removal of performance related pay

Pay decisions for the 2023/24 academic year, which will be taken in September/October 2024, will continue to be based on the requirements for performance related progression as set out in the September 2023 School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.

From the 2024/25 academic year, the requirement for objectives and the appraisal process to lead to performance-related pay outcomes for teachers and leaders has been removed. The statutory requirement to make a pay decision following the completion of the appraisal process remains, so the governing board will still need a committee for this purpose. We are awaiting the publication of the September 2024 School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), which is due to be published by the DfE in October, and will be backdated to 1 September 2024.

The DfE has issued guidance, which includes:

- Schools can choose whether or not to retain some or all elements of performance related pay, but a school's pay policy should minimise the impact on workload for individual teachers, line managers, school leaders and governing boards.
- Schools should review their pay policies annually, involving union representatives as appropriate, to clarify their approach to making pay decisions and consult on any changes as appropriate.
- Pay policies should clearly set out how pay progression will be awarded and, for those schools wishing to retain performance related pay, this should be clear in the policy, along with the criteria that will be used to assess performance.
- Schools who have chosen to remove the performance related pay requirement are under no obligation to increase an individual's pay where a teacher is in formal capability procedures. Schools who have retained performance related pay should only withhold pay progression in the event of poor performance as set out in their pay policy. Schools should ensure that teachers whose performance is unsatisfactory are supported appropriately.
- The process for making pay decisions must mitigate against discriminatory outcomes.

You can read the guidance in full on the [GOV.UK website](#).



Academy support grant for converting schools



From 1 September the £25,000 academy support grant will only be paid to schools approved to convert as part of a group of three or more schools joining the same Trust. Special schools and alternative provision/pupil referral units will continue to receive the grant as part of a single school conversion process.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-support-grant>

Ofsted



Single headline grades have been scrapped for Ofsted inspections taking place from this term, the four grades across the existing sub-categories will remain in place for current inspections, pending the development of the new 'score card'. The four sub-categories are 'quality of education', 'behaviour and attitudes', 'personal development', and 'leadership & management' (which includes governance). Inspections which were carried out last term, which are being published now, will still feature an overall effectiveness grade.

- Graded inspections (section 5 inspections) will not resume until 23 September 2024 and will include deep dives. Ungraded inspections (section 8) will not commence until 5 October 2024 and will no longer include deep dives. During the period prior to inspection resuming there will be training for inspectors.
- Formal consultation is due to take place in January 2025, looking at the new report card format and content, which is due to be introduced in September 2025 alongside a new Inspection Framework. The new framework will be trialled through inspections during the summer term 2025, with inspectors receiving training during that term.
- From this term schools will receive 'the phone call', notifying them of an inspection on a Monday, with the inspection taking place on the Tuesday and Wednesday of that week.
- Schools which have received two 'requires improvement' judgements will receive support, but will not automatically be expected to join an academy trust (with the exception of schools already due to convert this term).

Safeguarding

Ofsted will pilot a new approach for graded inspections when inspection resumes later this month. Where they consider that leaders are capable of resolving identified safeguarding issues within three months, Ofsted will withhold their judgement and revisit the school within 3 months to complete the inspection. There are also plans to clarify what inspectors will look for within the school's single central record.

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New Inspection Framework and school improvement

There are plans to ensure the inspection process is appropriate to the school phase and type, such as a primary school or a special school. A consultation on the proposed new framework is due to take place later this academic year. The government will also be introducing new Regional Improvement Teams, to work with 'struggling' schools. We await further information on a definition for 'struggling schools' and how the improvement teams will be assigned to schools.

Report cards

Whilst there is no clear detail regarding the new report card content, Sir Martyn Oliver has mentioned areas which are likely to be included. These include 'area insights', providing the context of a school within their geographical area, showing how children's experiences vary across the country, criteria relating to inclusion, attendance, and the quality of support for disadvantaged and vulnerable children. The report card will feature a separate safeguarding criterion (a suggestion which received positive support from the Big Listen).

You can read more about the [response to the Big Listen](#) and the announcements from the DfE regarding the changes [to single headline grades](#) which are taking place this term.

Within the response to the 'Big Listen' Sir Martyn Oliver, HMCI, has set out that the inspectorate will work with the government on upcoming legislation to allow Ofsted to inspect MATs and Local Authorities. Martyn states: 'We strongly believe this should be expanded to cover all school groups, so we can inspect the quality of groups and chains of state-funded schools (MATs and local authorities)

and independent schools at the level of the responsible body. This would help to improve standards across the system. It would also make sure accountability reflects decision-making, separating schools

from the trusts in which they sit. Inspection should align with the governance structures of schools and the bodies responsible for supporting leaders.'

Inspection handbooks updated

Updates include a new 'suspend and return' policy enabling inspectors to suspend an inspection to allow a school to resolve issues with safeguarding, where that is the only issue in the school, depending on the school's wider context. Clarity about the different Single Central Record requirements for maintained schools and academies and to reflect what inspectors will check during inspection.

Schools with one or more judgements of requires improvement, but not placed in a formal category of concern, may be subject to monitoring. Schools where any key judgement is graded inadequate and/or safeguarding is judged to be ineffective, will be placed in a formal category of concern.

Notification for graded and ungraded inspections will be carried out from 9.30am on the Monday of the week of inspection. [Handbook and changes in full.](#)



Digital technology



The Department for Education (DfE) has launched a new tool to help schools plan and use digital technology to improve outcomes for pupils, save money and reduce workload. Schools will need to answer questions relating to different areas of technology and leadership which will generate recommendations to support the school. The new tool compliments the existing guidelines from the DfE on 'meeting digital and technology standards for schools'.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-technology-for-your-school>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges>

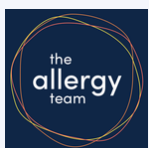


New staffing guidance from the DfE

To provide consistency in the information available to all schools in support of their handling of staffing and employment matters, the departments statutory Guidance on 'Managing Staff Employment in Schools' has been withdrawn. Governors and headteachers of maintained schools, and local authorities no longer need to have regard to this guidance. Instead, DfE expect employers in all schools to make use of this new non-statutory guidance, and the sources of help it identifies, when carrying out staffing and employment duties.

The DfE guidance document currently includes links to the previous Governance Handbook, which has been withdrawn and replaced with the Governance Guides for [maintained](#) schools and [academy](#) schools.

[Staffing and employment advice for schools, non-statutory guidance](#)



DfE allergy guidance for schools



Updated guidance on food standards including a link to the Schools Allergy Code, which schools can sign up to. [Allergy guidance for schools](#) [Schools Allergy Code](#)



Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to close



The ESFA's Schools Financial Support and Oversight (SFSO) teams will move to Regions Group from 1 October. The DfE states that this will support the launch of Regional Improvement Teams by January 2025. Other functions currently fulfilled by the ESFA will be moved elsewhere within the DfE. The DfE explains that *'Establishing Regional Improvement Teams is a key element of the government's plan for raising school standards – a single regulator model with governance and accountability sitting in one place. These teams will, from early 2025, work with struggling schools to quickly and directly address areas of weakness'*.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/esfa-functions-to-move-to-the-department-for-education>

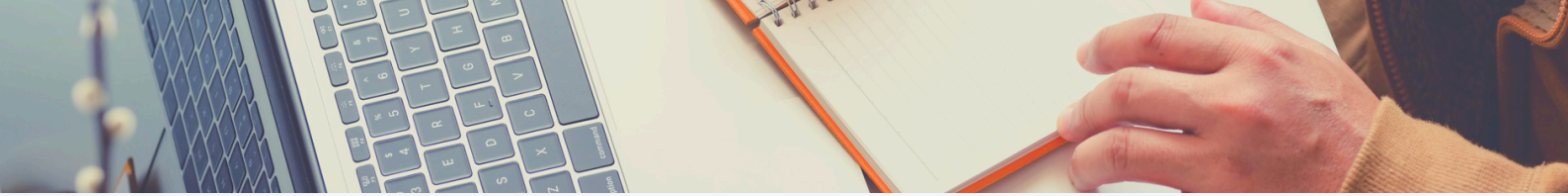


Fixing the foundations of opportunity: Education Secretary speech



Bridget Phillipson spoke at the launch event for the OECD Education at a Glance report (see item on page 3 of this newsletter) where she commented on the additional challenges pupils, parents and staff are facing through the impact of child poverty, and the knock-on effect this is having on pupil outcomes. She spoke of the importance of equity in education for all children, schools and areas of the country; the vital role that teachers play and the opportunity to get early education and childcare 'right to give all children the best start in life. Bridget also referred to the forthcoming curriculum review, mentioning that a foundation in reading, writing and maths needs to be built upon with access to music, sport, art and drama in a curriculum *'that reflects the issues and diversities of our society, ensuring that every child is represented'*.

[Read the speech in full](#)



Music development plan



One of the key recommendations of the revised National Plan for Music Education (published June 2022) is that all schools should have a Music Development Plan. While this guidance is not new, DfE have recently reiterated and strengthened the wording, and now expects all schools to include a summary of their Music Development Plan on their website by this month. A [suggested template](#) is available – the template is not mandatory, and schools should feel free to adapt it.



The School Survey 2024



Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner, has launched a mandatory survey in schools which aims to 'better understand the role schools play in children's development' and help to shape the Commissioner's recommendations to the government. The Commissioner has used her statutory powers to require schools to provide the data requested. The deadline for submission is 20 December 2024. The survey asks about the support schools offer to pupils and their families, with questions around:

- Staff roles and responsibilities across the school and/or MAT
- Resources available to the school and how they are funded
- Barriers to providing support to pupils in the school
- Support for children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Policing in schools
- School mobile phone policies
- The number of pupils in the school with various characteristics
- Key issues of concern in your school and local area
- The staff roles who contributed.

Within the topics above schools will be asked about areas such as foodbanks, breakfast clubs and wrap-around childcare, including how these services are funded. Results from the survey will be published in 2025, but school names will not be published, however schools will be able to see how they compare to others across the country. Each school should only complete the survey once, in multi-academy trusts and federations each school should complete the survey individually.

[The School Survey 2024](#)

PREVENT

New Prevent training available (free to attend)

This training package from the DfE has been designed for school governors and trustees to understand their responsibilities and the importance of the Prevent duty.

Objectives of the session include:

- Increase your understanding of your role in Prevent
- Increase your knowledge of what Prevent is and your school's duty
- Provide advice about how you can support your school in safeguarding learners from radicalisation

The session will cover:

- CONTEST structure
- National threat
- Purpose of Prevent
- What the Prevent duty means for schools
- Tools that can be used to support schools
- Risk assessment
- Governor oversight
- Ofsted
- Case study

Dates are available from October 2024 to January 2025, with many sessions available after the working day.

[Further information and register to attend](#) (Scroll down to the 'training for governors and trustees')



Climate ambassadors

[Climate Ambassadors](#) offers every education setting in England free access to volunteer support to develop and deliver impactful climate action plans. If you are a school or Trust that feels they would benefit from external support the Ambassador programme can link you to a local expert. The education system and the nurseries, schools and colleges within it play a critical role in driving action to address climate change and nature decline. As part of the Department for Education [sustainability and climate change strategy](#), all education settings are expected to have a [climate action plan and a sustainability lead](#) in place by the end of 2025.

CLIMATE AMBASSADORS
In association with EAUC, STEM Learning and the University of Reading

Conference Information



The day delegate rate is **£100** per person. To book your place please complete the **MSForm**.

Light breakfast, a two-course lunch, refreshments and light snacks will be provided on the day. Access and dietary requirements are requested at the time of booking.

NAGAS will charge each region collectively for the total number of delegates booked from the region. Each regional group will then manage the recharges to each LA/organisation through locally agreed arrangements.

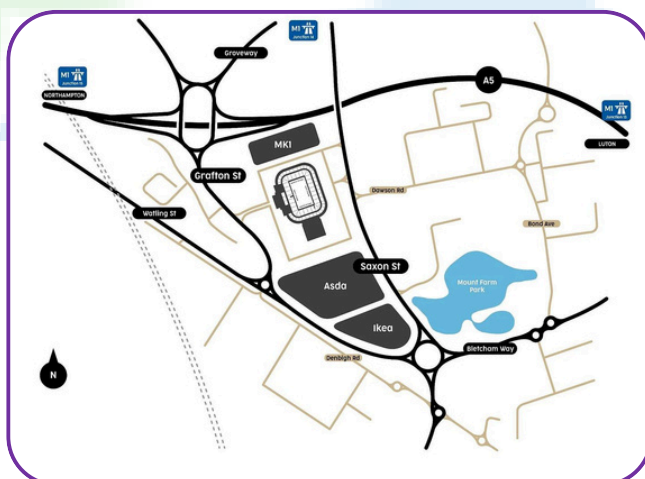
The conference is open to all NAGAS regional members and as places are limited, bookings will be made on a first come, first served basis.

You may cancel your place on the conference by emailing bdaveyclerk@outlook.com no later than 7 days prior to the conference date. The full charge will apply for non-attendance or cancellation by the delegate within 7 working days of the conference date.

To guarantee your place on the conference, please make your booking by no later than Friday 27 September 2024

Conference location

<https://w3w.co/heat.motion.sector>



NAGAS CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

9:30	Welcome & Coffee	
10:15	Introduction <i>Fiona Collier - NAGAS Chair</i>	
10:25	The Future is Not What it Used to be - AI & Technology in Education <i>Abdul Chohan</i>	
11:25	Coffee Break & Networking	
11:45	The Fusion of Education and AI for Smarter Governance <i>Isabella Byrne</i>	
12:45	Lunch (including networking)	
13:45	Insights from NGA research: reflecting on the recruitment, retention and wellbeing of those who govern <i>Emma Balchin - NGA</i>	
14:45	National School Governors' Awareness Day <i>Steve Barker - Strictly Education</i>	
15:00	NAGAS Website Launch <i>John Ashworth - NAGAS Vice-Chair</i>	
15:15	Reflections on the day so far and introduction of networking topics <i>Fiona Collier - NAGAS Chair</i>	
15:20	Coffee/Networking	
16:45	Conference ends	



Lunch & Learn



NCOGS CPD and networking sessions

The next networking event will be held virtually (via Teams) on Friday 29th November 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. 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 28th November bdaveyclerk@outlook.com

We look forward to welcoming you!

Dates for your diary

The future sessions are on the following dates (booking is already open on GovernorHub):

Friday 7th February 2025 from 12:30 - 2:00pm [BOOK](#)

Friday 21st March 2025 from 12:30 - 2:00pm [BOOK](#)

Friday 5th June 2025 from 12:30 - 2:00pm [BOOK](#)