

SPRING 1 2025

NAGAS NEWSLETTER

Newsletter for the National Association of Governance
Advisory Services



WELCOME TO THE SPRING TERM 1 NEWSLETTER



NAGAS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNANCE ADVISORY SERVICES

One of the many great things about working with schools is the fact that schools do not have a 'winter' – so here we are in spring, even if it still feels rather inclement outside and the nights are not yet light enough for gardening at 7.00pm (unless you have decent lighting!) This spring term heralds changes for schools and governing boards, with the curriculum consultation drawing to a close and the consultations on the Ofsted Inspection Framework and Report Cards due to launch any moment. We were heartened to hear Sir Martyn's comments to the Education Select Committee that *'Perhaps on a report card we would start with leadership and governance. That should be reviewed. How well are the governors supporting leaders? How well are leaders supporting staff? How well are all of them supporting the children in their setting?'*

The development of AI within the education sector is another theme getting lots of airtime currently, those of you who attended our conference last term will have heard about some of the opportunities already available. The team is currently working on the planning for this year's event – we will be sharing details with you soon.

The next networking and CPD event is scheduled for Friday 7 February, do please join us online for this popular session if you can, we love being able to meet with the membership and hear your views – we can all learn so much from each other!



Fiona Collier
Chair



John Ashworth
Vice-Chair

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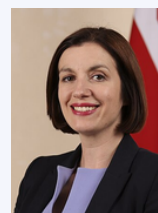
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Message from Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education



On Tuesday Bridget Phillipson emailed school staff and governing boards with her New Year message. She celebrates the investment in breakfast clubs and opening new school-based nurseries, alongside proposals in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill to limit branded items of school clothing, measures claimed to save parents over £500 per child per year. She refers to the removal of the Ofsted headline judgments and the launch of the curriculum and assessment review. Bridget sets out that priorities for this year include attendance and SEND reform. You can read the full message here: [Happy New Year and welcome back from the Education Secretary](#)



Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill



The Bill was introduced on 17 December 2024, had its second reading on 8 January 2025 and is currently passing through Parliament. The Bill is set out in two parts, with the first section covering proposals relating to children's social care and the second part relating to schools. The measures within part two of the bill would:

Breakfast clubs and school food standards

- Require state-funded primary schools to provide free breakfast clubs
- Clarify the law on the application of school food standards to academies, including at breakfast

School uniforms

- Place statutory limits on the number of branded items of uniform state funded schools can require

Children not in school

- Introduce a local authority consent mechanism for the withdrawal of certain children from school, including those at special schools
- Introduce a requirement for local authorities to maintain a register of children not in school, with duties for parents and related requirements for school attendance orders to be issued in some cases

Independent educational institutions

- Expand the regulation of independent educational institutions that provide all or most of a child's education
- Strengthen Ofsted's powers to investigate unregistered, and therefore illegal, independent schools
- Amend Ofsted's requirements to report on independent school inspectorates, and clarify information sharing powers

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Teacher misconduct

- Broaden the teacher misconduct and prohibition regime to include teachers in more settings, regardless of their current teaching status or when the alleged misconduct or offence occurred

Changes relating to academies

- Require new teachers in academies and free schools to have or be in the process of achieving, qualified teacher status (QTS), and to go through statutory induction processes
- Require academies to teach a revised national curriculum
- Allow the Education Secretary to direct an academy trust to do (or not do) something if it isn't discharging its powers or meeting its duties properly
- Remove the existing duty of the Education Secretary to make an academy order (beginning the process of converting a maintained school to an academy) if a maintained school is in special measures or has serious weaknesses
- Bring teachers in academies within the statutory national framework for pay and conditions, which currently only applies directly to maintained schools

School admission arrangements

- Require schools and local authorities to cooperate to manage school admissions, and the supply of local school places; give local authorities powers to direct academy schools to admit pupils; and give an independent body (the Schools Adjudicator) new powers around maximum admission numbers

Opening new schools

- Remove the requirement for most new schools to be academies, and restore local authorities' and other bodies' powers to propose opening new maintained schools and pupil referral units (PRUs).

The Public Bill Committee is now able to receive written evidence. Amendments tabled to the Bill, and information regarding the order in which amendments will be taken in Committee, will be available in due course on the Bill's [publications page](#) (under 'Amendment paper' and 'Selection of amendments'). Once the Committee has dealt with an amendment it will not revisit it. The Public Bill Committee on the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill will meet for the first time on Tuesday 21 January 2025 and will report by 5pm on Tuesday 11 February. There is a useful summary available on the Education Blog with further information and background on the measures within the Bill which you may find helpful:

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/12/the-childrens-wellbeing-bill-what-parents-need-to-know>



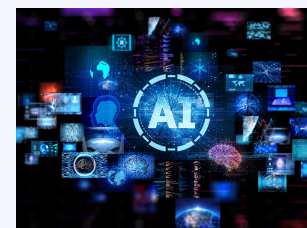
Wraparound childcare funding extended

The DfE have awarded the extension of the wraparound Childcare funding to March 2026. This means any school or private provider which opens a new childcare provision before March 2026, could receive at least one year's funding.

The full core offer is for childcare from 8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Friday, for children from reception to year 6. If a setting is already running childcare, but may not be offering the full core offer, they can apply for funding to support the expansion of hours, for example if they already have a breakfast club, the school could apply to open an after school provision, extend hours to meet the full core offer, or expand the number of childcare places they can take.



DfE press release on artificial intelligence (AI) intentions for schools



£1 million has been set aside for 16 developers to create AI tools to help with marking and generating detailed, tailored feedback for individual students in a fraction of the time, so teachers can focus on delivering lessons. Part of a wider commitment to embrace AI technology and 'mainline AI into the fabric of society, helping turbocharge our Plan for Change and breaking down barriers of opportunity'. Each of the tools will be targeted at a specific age and subject, helping teachers with everything from marking handwritten English and modern language work to providing feedback on maps and diagrams drawn by geography students. Developers estimate some tools could save up to 50% of the time teachers currently spend on marking and assessment. [Read the full press release.](#)

You may also be interested in the 'AI Opportunities Action Plan' which sets out the Governments wider ambitions for changing lives through being a global leader on AI. [AI Opportunities Action Plan - GOV.UK](#)



Education Committee SEND inquiry



The Education Committee has launched a major new inquiry focused on finding solutions to the crisis in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision. Education Committee Chair Helen Hayes MP said:

“In recent years, report after report has documented the failures of the SEND system to deliver the support children and their families need. Despite the best efforts of professionals in schools and local authorities, across the country, children are being let down. As a Committee we now want to move beyond simply pointing out the problems and focus on finding solutions that are realistic and practical for the Government to implement.

“This crisis has many symptoms that bleed into the rest of the education system: from attrition in the teaching workforce to soaring levels of pupil absence. There are also symptoms which blight local councils’ budgets – ever increasing spending on transporting pupils to settings far from where they live, and the chaos of money being poured into tribunals that parents are expected to win. It’s widely accepted that many more councils could face effective bankruptcy if change doesn’t come soon.

“There is absolute clarity that as a country we can’t continue with this endless cycle of failure. Turning this ship around will likely take years of careful reform, but the cross-party Education Committee will play our part by making evidence-based recommendations that the government can implement.”

Mindful of previous reviews that have taken place in this area, and the evidence that already exists about the nature and scale of the problem, the Committee would welcome evidence primarily focused on solutions.

The terms of reference cover the following themes:

- Support for children and young people with SEND
- Current and future SEND need
- Current and future model of SEND provision
- Accountability and inspection of SEND provision
- Finance, funding and capacity of SEND provision

[Further information and call for evidence](#)



Recycling for schools



New regulations require schools to separate recyclable materials and food waste from your general waste. From the 31 March 2025, schools, along with businesses, hospitals and other non-household premises will be required to separate dry recyclable waste such as paper, card, glass, metals and plastic, from food waste and black bin waste.

Many schools already have recycling and food waste collections in place, but if your school hasn't, they should contact their waste collection provider to discuss their options. Even if they have a recycling system in place, it would be a good idea to review collection arrangements and make sure the school will comply with the new legislation.

[Simpler recycling: workplace recycling in England - GOV.UK](#)



Governors for schools free webinar

SEND – How governance ensures pupils' needs are being met. Broadcast on 23 January, 8.00am - 9.00am, a recording will be available on their website shortly. Governing boards are responsible for ensuring that the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are being met. This session explores the specific role of governance in relation to SEND and how governance structures and procedures should be designed to ensure both compliance with statutory responsibilities of schools, and good practice in establishing effective strategic governance overview of SEND provision and its impact in settings.

[Webinars - Governors for Schools](#)

Children's mental health week



Children's Mental Health Week, organised by the children's mental health charity Place2Be, takes place from 3 to 9 February. The theme for 2025 is 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself', which aims to encourage children to embrace self-awareness and explore what it means for them.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>



School uniforms: proposed limit on branded items

As part of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill there is a measure to create a limit on the number of branded items of school uniform and PE kit that schools can require pupils to have over the course of the school year. The limit is three items in primary schools and four items (one being a tie) in secondary and middle schools.

Where schools choose to have a uniform, they must have regard to statutory cost of school uniforms guidance (published in 2021) which was designed to ensure the cost of school uniforms is reasonable and secures the best value for money. It states that schools should ensure their uniform is affordable. The Government states that, whilst more schools are ensuring uniform items can be purchased from a range of retailers, or have put second hand uniform schemes in place, too many schools still require pupils to have an excessive number of branded items which can only be purchased from specific suppliers.

Under the proposals schools will be able to decide which of their compulsory uniform and PE kit items they want to require are branded, up to the limit. An item of branded uniform will be considered compulsory if a pupil is required to have it to participate in any lesson, club, activity or event facilitated by the school during that school year – so includes items required for PE and sport. This applies whether the lesson, club, event or activity is compulsory or optional. The definition of branded items includes items with a school name or logo on or attached to it (including items where sew on badges are used - whether by manufacturers or by parents sewing them onto a generic item of clothing) - and items that have a non-standard design, for example a blazer with coloured piping, which means it is only available from a small number of suppliers.

The limit will apply to all clothing items listed as compulsory in the school's uniform policy and include any bags (such as bookbags or rucksacks) and footwear required. The limit covers the total uniform that pupils are required to have over the school year and includes any items that may only be worn for part of the year (for example, summer dresses). This means that a secondary school pupil could not be required to have, for example, a branded skirt for the winter and a branded dress for the summer where they are also required to buy a branded blazer, tie and PE top because the total number of branded items required for the school year would be five.

The limit is expected to come into force in September 2026, in time for the 2026/27 school year and to give time for schools to make the necessary changes to their uniform policies and renegotiate contracts with uniform suppliers as may be required. This would mean that from September 2026 parents would only be expected to provide a maximum of **three** items of branded uniform and PE kit for their child (or a maximum of **four** items for any child in secondary school or middle school if one of those items is a tie).



Ofsted report cards



Sir Martyn Oliver appeared before the Education Select Committee on 7 January, where he responded to a range of questions from Committee members, including one asking about how report cards will be developed and what consultation work will be undertaken. Sir Martyn responded that consultation would be extensive and meaningful, probably extending to a 12-week period, with a focus on hearing not only from schools and providers, but also from children and parents. He went on to say:

'We want to move from low information and high accountability to high-quality information with proportionate accountability. The biggest challenge is how you take into context the work of schools and settings. You have to have high levels of accountability, but you want to recognise that people are doing difficult work.'

Whilst not wishing to commit to anything which might pre-empt the consultation Sir Martyn explained that any report card would be likely to include a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children, educational performance, standards of behaviour, attendance and mental health and wellbeing.

He also mentioned the importance of governance *'Would we all agree that it always starts with leadership and governance, and you should look at leadership and governance in a setting? Perhaps on a report card we would start with leadership and governance. That should be reviewed. How well are the governors supporting leaders? How well are leaders supporting staff? How well are all of them supporting the children in their setting?'*

Sir Martyn went on to touch on the importance of the curriculum and how teachers are trained and developed to deliver the curriculum. Summing up the points he had referred to Sir Martyn said *'We have talked about leadership and governance, curriculum, developing teaching, looking at the outcomes, behaviour, attendance, personal development and inclusion. Across all of those, we are starting to build the complexity and nuance that people can talk about in the report card. I just need to make sure that it does not drive workload and it is proportionate.'*

Safeguarding was also mentioned as an area of focus, with the suggestion of a separate judgement on safeguarding, rather than being included within leadership and management, as it is now.

You can read the transcript of the session here: committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/15193/pdf/
Or watch a [recording of the event](#)





NEU indicative ballot on pay

The National Education Union (NEU) has agreed to proceed with a preliminary online ballot of teacher members in England. This is to gauge the strength of feeling about the Government's recent recommendation to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) of an unfunded 2.8% pay rise for teachers in 2025/26. The ballot will open on 1 March and close on 11 April. Daniel Kebede, General Secretary of the NEU states: *'The suggestion that an unfunded pay award can be paid for by making 'efficiencies' is an insult to a profession who have already endured 14 years of austerity . No teacher or leader will be able to identify efficiencies without cutting staff or resources or both.'* If indications show that members may be in favour of industrial action then a formal vote would follow in the summer.

[NEU announce indicative ballot on pay | National Education Union](#)

Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) report into school funding



New estimates by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) find that growth in mainstream school funding per pupil in England in 2025–26 (2.8% in cash terms) won't be sufficient to cover the expected increase in school costs (3.6%). Growth in school costs reflects the full effects of the 5.5% rise in teacher pay from September 2024, and the recommended pay offer of 2.8% for September 2025. While pupil numbers are expected to fall by around 2% over the next two years, this is unlikely to allow for a cut in the overall schools budget. Rapid rises in the cost of special educational needs (SEN) provision seem likely to wipe out any opportunities for savings, even if core per-pupil funding is kept constant in real terms.

[Schools and colleges facing another round of belt tightening in this year's spending review | Institute for Fiscal Studies](#)



Nominate someone for an honour



Over 100 Brits who have made outstanding contributions to education, skills and children's social care in the UK were recognised by the King in his New Year Honours. Anyone can nominate an individual for an honour through filling in the online nomination form. There is guidance available on how to write a nomination and nominations can be submitted at any time of the year.

Guidance on the nomination process:

[Nominate someone for an honour or award: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

Following the release of its annual Teacher Wellbeing Index, Education Support revealed new insights regarding the impact of pupil and parent behaviour on staff morale and wellbeing. Feedback from over 3,000 education staff revealed:

- 82% believe challenging behaviour by pupils and students had increased and that this negatively affected their mental health and wellbeing
- 70% reported a similar increase in challenging interactions with parents had the same impact
- 84% said verbal or physical abuse by students has increased, and believe it is because of a lack of provision for students' physical, emotional and mental health needs.

[View the full report](#)

Get Information About Schools (GIAS)



NAGAS has been informed by colleagues in the DfE that they will be adding the role of governance professional (including clerks) to GIAS. This function has currently been 'soft launched' on the system and new guidance on GIAS will be available shortly to assist with adding the data. While it is not currently a mandatory requirement, the DfE strongly encourage governing boards to add their governance professionals' details onto GIAS and they have asked for our support in publicising this to our schools. The change aims to ensure that governance professionals receive important information directly and promptly from the Department for Education. Currently, the department rely on schools or chairs to pass on communications, which can sometimes cause delays. By having the clerk/governance professionals' details available via GIAS, the DfE can keep them updated with the department's priorities and provide key information efficiently.

Due to the limitations of the current GIAS system, you can only add individual names rather than any clerking service provider. The DfE plans to share further communications on this change shortly in the department's newsletters.

Safer internet Day

It's Safer Internet Day on 11th February. This year's theme is 'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online'.

You can access [resources](#) put together by the UK Safer Internet Centre to help professionals working with children of all ages to deliver sessions about online scams.



DfE Sustainability and climate change strategy for education

The strategy states: 'By 2025, all education settings will have nominated a sustainability lead and put in place a climate action plan'. Sustainability leadership could be a group of people or an individual responsible for the development and implementation of a climate action plan. A climate action plan is a detailed plan to enable your education setting, or trust, to progress or commence sustainability initiatives.

There are many organisations providing courses, products, and services to support an education setting's approach to climate change. There are also many examples of excellent practice when it comes to sustainability and climate change in the education sector, and your individual setting or trust may already have a plan in place. Where this is the case the DfE is not suggesting that you create a new plan.

Support available includes:



- Sustainability Support for Education: a digital hub of resources, services and tools to help you identify appropriate action to develop, or build on, your climate action plan, regardless of where you are on your sustainability journey



- Climate Ambassador Programme: provides access to volunteer climate ambassadors and regional networks to support the development and delivery of impactful climate action plans



- The National Education Nature Park: brings together all the land from across education settings into a vast virtual nature park. Participation in the Nature Park is a great way to add meaningful education, skills and biodiversity action to your plan. The Park provides curriculum-linked resources and practical activities to engage children and young people in nature and the improvement of their local environment



- Salix 'the decarbonisation dialogue': the Decarbonisation Dialogue 2025 series is an opportunity to learn about how organisations across the public sector are addressing net zero challenges. Expert speakers will share insights into the opportunities, challenges and lessons learned through energy efficiency and decarbonisation projects completed on organisational estates

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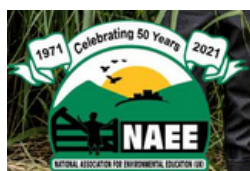
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**greener
schools
index**

[Greener Schools Index](#): The GSI is a free tool self-assessment tool designed to support all schools, however big or small, and at whatever stage they are on their net zero journey. Helps evaluate your school's progress, strengths and areas for improvement in essential areas such as air quality, biodiversity, catering management, energy, ICT, procurement, waste management and water. Each completed survey generates an individual pdf report of responses that can be shared with Governors and Trustees, or used to inform a Climate Action Plan and help develop the school's sustainability roadmap



[Let's go zero](#): Let's Go Zero is the national campaign uniting teachers, pupils, parents and their schools as they all work together to be zero carbon by 2030. Schools will play a critical role in helping the UK cut carbon emission levels. In fact, they have the power to prevent 625,000 tonnes of CO2 from entering the atmosphere. Across a single school or academy chain, interventions such as lowering electricity use or boosting the energy-efficiency of buildings have a huge impact



[Engaging the Next Generation](#) – research report from the National Association for Environmental Education, on the state of environmental, sustainability and climate education in UK schools, and effective practice in the classroom.

National School Governors Awareness Day 2025

Thursday 13 February 2025



**National School
Governors'
Awareness Day**

Governance in 2025

Register

*Exploring key trends and tools
for impactful governance*

13th Feb, 2024

8:00am - 5:00pm

Zoom



Free online event for governors, trustees, clerks and governance professionals.

The programme for the day includes:

- 8.00am welcome and hot topics
- 10.00am The structure of education 2025
- 12.00 Governance and AI in 2025
- 12.00 Introduction to governance
- 1.30 Introduction to trusteeship
- 3.00pm Effective governance
- 4.00pm Being effective as a link governor

[Further details and bookings](#)



Preventing hair discrimination in schools



Research and court cases indicate discrimination related to hair or hairstyles disproportionately affects children with Afro-textured hair or hairstyles. This is often because of the way some school rules relating to hair or hairstyles are designed and implemented. Such rules might be embedded in school uniform or behaviour policies or be stand-alone policies related to hair or hairstyles. This form of discrimination can result in children questioning their identity and belonging in school, leading potential safeguarding implications.

The Equality and Human rights commission have published some resources and tools to support schools in preventing hair discrimination. Schools are encouraged to use these resources to support their efforts in preventing race discrimination and harassment, specifically in relation to designing and reviewing policies and practices related to Afro-textured hair.

Within their resources there is a short video suitable for whole staff CPD and a guidance tool for reviewing and updating policies.

[Videos: preventing hair discrimination in schools | EHRC](#)



Lunch & Learn



NAGAS CPD and networking sessions

The next networking event will be held virtually (via Teams) on Friday 7 February from 12.30 – 2.00pm. Bookings can be made via [GovernorHub](#)



The session will be an open forum for the membership 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 NAGAS 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 21st March 2025 from 12:30 - 2:00pm [BOOK](#)

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