

SPRING 2 2025

NAGAS NEWSLETTER

Newsletter for the National Association of Governance
Advisory Services



WELCOME TO THE SPRING TERM 2 NEWSLETTER



NAGAS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNANCE ADVISORY SERVICES

This term is rushing by, with the Easter holiday period fast approaching and the end of the financial year just around the corner. It is interesting to reflect how very different our role is compared to just a few short years ago. When we speak with colleagues across the country there is a mixed picture regarding the engagement of governors, trustees and clerks with in person training and events. For many the 'convenience' of virtual attendance, brought about through necessity during the pandemic, has lingered; meaning that numbers for face-to-face events have - in some cases - dwindled. Indeed, some areas tell us that all training events are now virtual, with others curtailing the in person offer considerably. With the advent of lighter evenings and better weather (we hope!) perhaps the remainder of the spring and summer terms may provide an opportunity to re-engage with board members in person. The benefits are huge, and any training event is always more impactful when delivered to people in the same room. The opportunities for networking, discussion and questions is far better in person, not to mention the removal of distractions! You can't really answer your emails or make supper at the same time as attending the training session if you are there in person! Let us know your success stories so we can share them with the regions. We hope to see you at our next online event on Friday 21 March! (See page 10 to book your place.)



Fiona Collier
Chair



John Ashworth
Vice-Chair

CONTACT

BEC DAVEY - NAGAS CO-ORDINATOR & CLERK

Email: bdaveyclerk@outlook.com

In this issue:

Page 2

- Updated criteria for wraparound funding
- NAGAS chair contributes a chapter to AoEA book

Page 3

- NGA awards

Page 4

- Early years funding rates for 2025/26
- Sustainability and climate change strategy for education

Page 5

- Allergy guidance for schools
- Cultural Education

Page 6

- Changes ahead

Page 7

- Procurement Act
- School readiness survey
- Use of reasonable force

Page 8

- School accountability
- PE & Sport premium
- Care experienced children

Page 9

- Dogs in schools guidance
- SEND guidance for governing boards

Page 10

- Supporting pupils at risk of becoming NEET
- CPD and networking sessions
- Ofsted research report

Page 11

- Digital & technology standards
- Auto-enrolment for free school meals
- Climate action plans

Page 12

- NAHT poll
- National toothbrushing campaign
- Jamie Oliver school food awards



Updated criteria for wraparound funding

There have been some changes to what constitutes as wraparound childcare hours (i.e.: out of school). Previously the criteria required provision to be open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (a total of 10 hours), however this has been reduced to 8am – 5.30pm where no demand for a 6pm close has been evidenced. The programme's ambition is, however, for a provision to be open 8am – 6pm, Monday to Friday).

[Spring wraparound childcare programme updates - Information for childcare providers](#)



NAGAS chair contributes a chapter to AoEA book

The importance of the clerking or governance professional role is something that NAGAS recognises and actively promotes. To this end the NAGAS chair, Fiona, was approached to contribute a chapter to a newly published book from the Association of Education Advisers (AoEA), entitled 'Advising on governance in education'. Fiona's chapter 'Clerk or governance professional; the impact of the role in relation to board effectiveness' highlights the pivotal role that the clerk plays in facilitating effective strategic governance. The chapter includes a focus on boards allocating sufficient time and resource to the role. The clerk, or governance professional, is the lynchpin of governance, whose responsibilities extend far beyond simply taking minutes. Hopefully this book will help spread the word that their role is hugely valuable and should be valued by all board members. There will be an online book launch event on 6 May at 4.00pm for anyone interested in hearing more from the contributors.





NGA AWARDS

The NGA has launched their Outstanding Governance Awards for 2025

Outstanding governance in a single school

For boards that have demonstrated effective governance and outstanding strategic leadership to create positive outcomes in a single school. Entrants are asked to show how the board demonstrates effective governance and how it has developed a positive culture. Finally, entrants must cite an area of improvement identified, how the board responded and the overall outcome.

Outstanding governance in a multi academy trust

For multi academy trusts that have demonstrated effective governance and outstanding strategic leadership to create positive outcomes across their trust. Entrants are asked to provide evidence on the trust board and local governance arrangements, including fulfilling its core purposes, engaging with stakeholders and how the trust's governance structure has evolved.

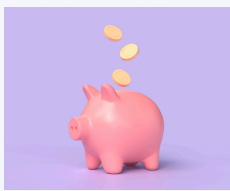
Outstanding clerk to a governing board

Do you know a governance professional undertaking the duties of a clerk (as outlined in the duties and responsibilities of the clerking level of the [NGA career pathway](#)) who has shown outstanding practice and contributed significantly to improving governance? The nominated individual should display the characteristics of an outstanding clerk, including being an efficient administrator, having a good understanding of effective governance practice and using this to support and advise the governing board, and developing a professional relationship with the governing board.

Outstanding lead governance professional

For a lead governance professional who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, management, practice, and contributed significantly to improving governance. This award is for those who fulfil the responsibilities of lead governance professional or governance coordinator as set out in the [NGA career pathway](#), in multi academy trusts, local authorities and other service providers or education bodies. Nominees will have had a significant impact on improving governance at more than one school and on the effectiveness of clerking practice through innovation and rooted in advanced governance knowledge and expertise.

Entries for all categories close on Monday 14 April. Do please publicise to your schools, it would be great to see our boards, clerks and governance professionals represented within the nominations. Further information and entry forms can be found on the NGA website: [Outstanding Governance Awards 2025 | National Governance Association](#)



Early years funding rates for 2025/26

A summary of the funding rates from 1st April 2025:

- 3- & 4-year-old funding: £5.22 increasing to £5.50 (£5.36 base rate plus Universal supplements – 10p for SEND and 4p for Deprivation)
- 2-year-old funding: £7.10 increasing to £7.42 (£7.28 base rate plus Universal supplements – 10p for SEND and 4p for Deprivation)
- Under 2's funding (from 9 months): £9.60 increasing to £9.92 (£9.78 base rate plus Universal supplements – 10p for SEND and 4p for Deprivation).

You will notice that the universal supplement for SEND has been increased to 10p per hour to support providers make reasonable adjustments to include children with low level and emerging needs.

The funding for Early Years Pupil Premium and Disability Access funding is paid in full to providers.

Rates are confirmed as:

- Early Years Pupil Premium funding: £1 per hour for all eligible funded children of all ages if in receipt of any of the funding streams
- Disability Access funding: £938 per annum (pro rata for school starters age 4 years) for eligible funded children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and accessing any of the early years funding streams.

Sustainability and climate change strategy for education



National
Education
Nature Park



This Department for Education (DfE) strategy 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 [National Education Nature Park](#) is a free, fully resourced programme for all nurseries, schools and colleges in England. It empowers young people to improve their educational site for nature by participating in real scientific research and being involved in decision-making.

It aims to support the curriculum, promote outdoor learning, upskill educators, improve wellbeing, tackle biodiversity loss, reduce inequalities around green space and support climate action plans. A growing library of quality assured, curriculum aligned resources is available help teachers in all subjects and phases put nature at the heart of education. A non-competitive grant of £10000 is available to [selected schools](#) to enable their participation in the programme.

Allergy guidance for schools



The Natasha Allergy Foundation has developed 'Allergy School' to supply school settings with resources to promote allergy awareness. As part of the launch of the Allergy School programme, NASUWT – The Teachers' Union has collaborated with the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation to collect data on the prevalence of allergies in schools and the support available to teachers when dealing with allergies in the school environment. The survey of 1900 teachers across the UK found:

- 95% of teachers surveyed said that there were pupils at their school with allergies
- 30% of the teachers also said that they had allergies
- Only 40% of teachers said that their school had an allergy policy; 46% said they didn't know, and 13% said that their school had no allergy policy
- 84% said they knew how to access information on such children's food allergies and medication at their school
- When asked if they had received training on administering an adrenaline pen, only 28% of teachers said they had received training in the current academic year. 20% had received the training last year, and 34% said they had received training but not in the last two academic years. 17.5% said they had never received the training.

The Natasha Allergy Foundation has produced a range of resources, including a model policy. The resources are free and currently aimed at nurseries, primary schools and out-of-school clubs for pupils aged 3-11. Secondary resources are in development.

[Welcome to Allergy School — The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation](#)

Cultural Education

Governing boards have an important responsibility to ensure that their school offers pupils a broad and balanced curriculum; creative teaching and learning is a core component of this.

Governors in maintained schools need to consider cultural education as it is a statutory requirement. Maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum, which requires Art & Design and Music to be taught up to age 14 (KS3). There are also minimum requirements for Drama to be delivered within the English curriculum, and Dance within PE. Cultural education includes: Arts, poetry, music, heritage, film, drama, digital arts, design, dance, craft, theatre and more. Although academies are not currently subject to the National Curriculum, they must teach a broad and balanced curriculum as specified in their funding agreement, which by definition will include arts subjects. The Children's and Wellbeing Bill, currently on its journey through parliament, proposes that academies will be required to follow the National Curriculum, in line with their maintained school colleagues.

continued on next page



continued from previous page.....

One of the key areas for governors and trustees to consider is how their individual school shapes the curriculum for their individual pupils, recognising that it will be different from the school down the road. Do pupils learn how to learn, explore, imagine, create, ask questions and are they encouraged to think for themselves? Most boards will be used to the emphasis put on literacy and numeracy, but many in education believe we should be thinking about literacy, numeracy and creativity. Engaging with the arts is a particularly powerful way to experience creative teaching and learning practices.

Ofsted inspectors have suggested the following questions for governors/trustees:

- Does the school offer a broad and balanced curriculum that develops creativity through cultural education?
- Is the school meeting its statutory curriculum requirements?
- Do we regularly receive information about the range and impact of cultural activities on pupils' learning, for example as part of the headteacher's report?
- What data is there in the school about pupil engagement with cultural education? What does it indicate about which pupils are the most involved? What are the trends over time in this? If certain groups of pupils aren't engaging with cultural education, do we know why? What are we doing to improve this?
- Does the school work with other schools to share best practice and pool resources?
- How does the school involve parents in their children's cultural education?
- Does the school have governors/trustees who work in the creative industries

Changes ahead

We have seen a period of huge change in the education sector over recent months, as the Labour government starts to implement their policies and Ofsted set out their plans for the future of inspection and reporting. The consultation on the Ofsted inspection framework and report cards is running until 28 April 2025.

The consultation covers five main areas:

- **Report cards** –to give parents and carers more detailed information than the current reports, including a new 5-point grading scale to evaluate more areas of a provider's work and short summaries of what inspectors found
- **Education inspection toolkits** – this tool will show providers and inspectors the evaluation areas that Ofsted will focus the inspection on and how they'll assess and grade providers
- **Inspection methodology** – changes to how Ofsted will carry out inspection
- **Full inspections and monitoring inspections, state-funded schools** – plans to end ungraded inspections of state-funded schools and change monitoring programmes so that Ofsted can check that timely action is taken to raise standards
- **Identifying state-funded schools causing concern** – a new approach to how schools would be placed into a category of concern.

continued on next page.....



continued from previous page.....

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill proposes a number of changes which will impact upon schools. Some proposals have been subject to push back from the sector, leading to amendments being made, including those around pay and conditions for academy teaching staff. The bill is due for the third and final reading in the House of Commons, after which it will go to the House of Lords. One of the areas for boards to be aware of is the proposals around limiting the number of branded items of school uniform, including items such as bookbags. If agreed the change will mean that from September next year there will be a limit of three branded items in primary schools and four items (one being a tie) in secondary and middle schools.



Procurement Act

The new Procurement Act 2023 came into force on 24 February 2025.

The Procurement Act means changes in procurement regulation and practices, aimed at bringing about a more flexible, strategic approach to public procurement. This creates both challenges and opportunities for schools and trusts. There are a range of resources to support schools on the [buying for schools page](#) on the GOV.UK website, including a link to a free training programme for those involved in procurement.

School readiness survey

This survey found that in the 2024 Reception cohort, teachers report over a third (36%) of children struggle to play / share with other children, 34% don't know how to listen or respond to simple instruction, and a quarter (25%) are not toilet trained. 50% of school staff have had to allocate more time/ resources to improve early language skills and 44% provided dedicated intervention staff to support children who are not school ready.

[School readiness survey January 2025](#)



Use of reasonable force in schools consultation

DfE plans to update the use of reasonable force guidance (2013) and commence legislation which mandates schools to record and report each significant incident where force is used.

The consultation seeks views on proposed revisions to the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance. The revised guidance will aim to:

- clarify the use of reasonable force to help school staff use this power safely and appropriately
- help schools use prevention and de-escalation strategies to minimise the need to use reasonable force and other restrictive interventions

The consultation closes on 29 April.

[Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance: proposed amendments - GOV.UK](#)



School accountability reform

Consultation seeking views on:

- The approach to, and the principles of, school accountability;
- The introduction of a new digital service – school profiles, which will be a one-stop shop with information on schools for parents; and
- The approach to improvement and support, with a stronger more timely, proportionate and effective approach to intervention.

Within the consultation, which closes on 28 April 2025, the government state:

'Following the introduction of Ofsted school report cards, we propose to update our definition of stuck schools as 'schools which receive an attention needed rating against leadership and governance, which were graded below good – or equivalent - at their previous Ofsted inspection'. This definition reflects the fact that effective leadership and governance is critical to delivering high standards. Overtime, this will mean that once a school has been inspected twice under the new inspection framework it will be deemed stuck if it has on both occasions received an attention needed rating against leadership and governance. In order to make stuck schools eligible for intervention the DfE propose to amend The Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022 to apply to schools meeting the definition of 'stuck', both before and after the introduction of Ofsted school report cards. Where a stuck school, supported through RISE, has not achieved new secure ratings, as proposed in Ofsted's parallel consultation, in all areas within two years, the default will be to move to structural intervention.

[School accountability reform - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

There is additional information, including pledges around funding for intervention, in an accompanying [Press release](#)

PE and sport premium

Schools must use the PE and sport premium to:

- Build capacity and capability within the school and ensure that improvements to the quality of PE, sport and physical activity provision made now are sustainable and will benefit pupils joining the school in future years
- Develop or add to the PE, sport and physical activity that the school provides.

Allocations for the academic year 2024 to 2025 have been released, based on the number of pupils in years 1 to 6, as recorded in the January 2024 census, as follows:
schools with 17 or more pupils receive £16,000 plus £10 per pupil;
schools with 16 or fewer pupils receive £1,000 per pupil.

[Further information](#)



Care Experienced Children

The Children's Commissioner has issued a visual guide to help understand the needs of care experienced young people, based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

[Children's Commissioner guide](#)



New guidance on using dogs in schools

The Dogs Trust has published new guidance on the use of school dogs. Although the charity overall advises against using dogs in school, it has released guidance on how to do so safely in recognition that bringing dogs into schools is a rising trend.

[New guidance from The Dogs Trust](#)



New DfE guidance on SEND for governing boards

This guidance aims to help boards with their role and responsibilities in relation to pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities and to empower governors and trustees to hold their schools to account.

The guidance sets out that, while overall responsibility rests with the board, there should be a lead member of the governing board or a sub-committee with specific oversight of the school's arrangements for SEN and disability. The lead member will:

- champion the school's support for pupils with SEN and disabilities, including good practice in pupil engagement
- ensure that the board has the information it needs for assurance about the school's practice
- work closely with the head teacher or principal, senior leadership team and (in the case of mainstream schools) the SENCO.

Responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 may benefit from the oversight of the same lead governor, trustee or sub-committee as the [2014 Children's and Families Act](#) responsibilities, or they may sit with other equalities responsibilities.

There is a close connection between the duties relating to SEN and equality duties relating to disability. For example, equality objectives and information should typically include matters relating to the experience of disabled pupils and their education and employment outcomes. Some disabled pupils will also have SEN.

The guide mentions that the board should get appropriate and regular training to help it discharge its duties in relation to SEN and disability and to help ensure the best possible outcomes for those pupils.

[SEN and disability duties: guidance for school governing boards - GOV.UK](#)



New DfE guidance to support schools and pupils

The DfE has released new guidance on identifying and supporting young people at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET). The guidance supports a preventative approach to keeping young people in education and training to support their transition into further learning and fulfilling work.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identifying-and-supporting-young-people-at-risk-of-neet>



Lunch & Learn



NAGAS CPD and networking sessions

The next networking event will be held virtually (via Teams) on **Friday 21st March** 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 chair, Fiona Collier, by 4.00pm on Thursday 20th March Fiona.Collier@devon.gov.uk

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

Ofsted research report – curriculum quality

Ofsted has published a new report evaluating the impact of the Education inspection framework (EIF) on curriculum quality, considering whether quality has changed since the EIF was introduced, what role school leaders think the EIF played in these changes, and any unintended consequences.

[Press release](#)

[Research report](#)



Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges

The DfE recently released updated guidance encouraging schools and colleges to adopt new IT service and digital equipment standards aimed at improving their technology infrastructure and enhancing pupil learning. Updates to the guidance include changes to better reflect current broadband standards and cyber security standards. The document has also updated the cyber security standards for keeping registers relating to hardware and systems up to date and including digital technology within disaster recovery and business continuity plans. The governing board will be considering these plans as part of their monitoring and compliance cycle, so will wish to know if the updated standards have been considered within the school documents. The DfE encourages schools to assess their compliance, collaborate with ICT suppliers, and utilise support services to meet these standards effectively. [Updated guidance](#)



Call for auto-enrolment for free school meals

The Education Committee has published their findings relating to The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. One of their recommendations is for auto-enrolment for free school meals: *'We consider that the arguments for auto-enrolment in free school meals for those children currently eligible are conclusive. In the interests of alleviating hunger in schools and improving health and educational outcomes for the poorest children, auto-enrolment must be brought in without delay.'* Currently school lunches are free to children at maintained schools from Reception to Year 2. From Year 3, free lunches are subject to eligibility criteria and parents/carers must apply. It is estimated that 1 in 10 pupils may be missing out. Rather than waiting for the government to deal with this issue, some councils have already introduced auto-enrolment within their own authority, meaning that children who are eligible are offered meals unless their family specifically opt out. At a time when many schools are facing budget challenges auto-enrolment could bring welcome additional funding to the school.

[Education Committee findings](#)

Climate action plans

The DfE has updated their guidance to include a new section on developing the school or Trust climate action plan. The guidance suggests that a holistic climate action plan should cover the following 4 areas:

- decarbonisation, for example calculating and taking actions to reduce carbon emissions, such as becoming more energy efficient
- adaptation and resilience, such as taking actions to reduce the risk of flooding and overheating
- improving the environment and biodiversity
- climate education and green careers, such as ensuring the education provided gives knowledge-rich and comprehensive teaching about climate change, and that teaching staff and lecturers feel supported to offer this.

There is also a suggestion that plans could be published on the school website. [DfE guidance](#)



NAHT poll of over 1600 members

The poll reveals startling percentages of headteachers and senior leaders who have verbal or even physical abuse. Verbal abuse was the most common form of abuse suffered, with 85% saying they had experienced this in the past year. This was followed by threatening behaviour (68%), online abuse (46%) and discriminatory language (22%). 10% said that they had suffered physical violence.

NAHT says this kind of abusive behaviour is not tolerated in other industries and is calling for the government to send a clear signal to parents that it is unacceptable in schools.

It also wants ministers to conduct an urgent review of complaints procedures to deter vexatious use of the existing system by parents which can involve complaints being lodged with multiple agencies - sometimes before school processes have been exhausted.

The governing board has a responsibility for the wellbeing of staff and leaders in the school, so will wish to understand the difficulties that their school may be facing.

[NAHT poll](#)



Funded national supervised toothbrushing campaign

For 3 to 5 year olds in early years settings, with DfE funding totalling £11 million being rolled out from April '25, targeted at 'the most deprived areas' of England. The exact areas have not yet been released. Settings will also receive supporting educational materials, toothbrushes and toothpaste through a collaboration with Colgate. The campaign is planned to reach up to 600,000 children and hopes to save money in the longer term, by preventing tooth decay. The government set out that supervised toothbrushing is a proven, evidence-based health intervention, and is expected to deliver measurable improvements to children's oral health and reductions in oral health inequalities from between 2 and 3 years after launch. The rollout is expected to save the NHS millions of pounds that would otherwise be spent on treating dental disease in children, including preventing hospital admissions that cost the NHS around £1,600 per person. Every £1 spent on supervised toothbrushing is expected to save £3 in avoided treatment costs - amounting to over £34 million over the next 5 years that can instead be spent on treating other patients.

[Further information](#)

Jamie Oliver - Good Food Awards 2025

This is the third year of the awards, celebrating good food in schools. The awards have 6 categories this year: lifetime achievement, food educator, school chef, food kindness hero, food for fitness and school food leader.

Nominations close on 12 April 2025.

[Further information and nominate](#)

