

SUMMER 1 2025

NAGAS NEWSLETTER

Newsletter for the National Association of Governance Advisory Services



WELCOME TO THE SUMMER TERM 1 NEWSLETTER



NAGAS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNANCE ADVISORY SERVICES

This term will see many enjoyable events, such as school residentials, activities week, sports days and performances, but also brings exams and SATs along with big transitions from one phase of education to another for many children and young people. The second half of the summer term is a mammoth 8 weeks long for many schools, so please encourage your boards to think about the wellbeing of pupils, leaders and staff as part of their regular monitoring. Look after yourselves, too! The summer term, from experience, sadly seems to bring more complaints into school, so be prepared. The next CPD and networking session will focus on complaints. We are lucky to be joined by Iain Grafton MBE, who will be explaining about the 'six types of complainant' and how the approach needs to differ, depending upon the type of complainant which a school is dealing with. He will share the tell-tale signs to identify at an early stage that the person making the complaint may not be reasonable, and strategies to manage their behaviour. Do join us at this free session, specifically tailored for the NAGAS regional groups, on Friday 6 June, 12.30 – 2.00pm. There will be plenty of time to ask questions too. The link to book onto the session can be found further on in this newsletter.

Enjoy the half-term break, which is fast approaching, we will be back with the final newsletter for this academic year next half-term.



Fiona Collier
Chair



John Ashworth
Vice-Chair

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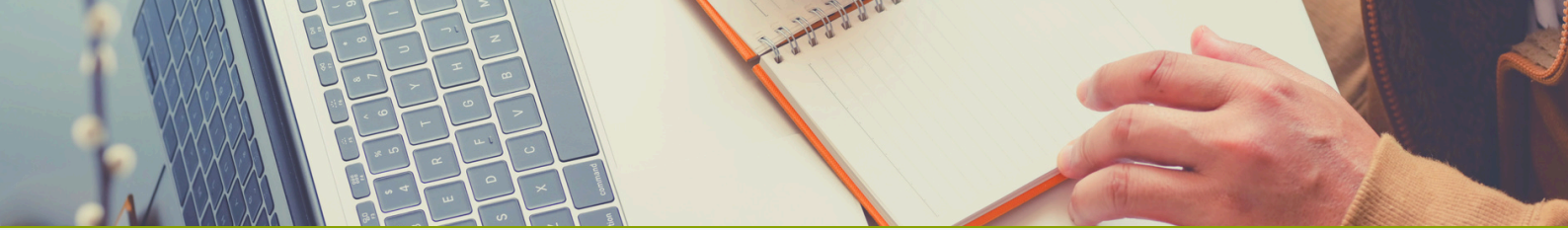
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Message from Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education



Bridget began the term with her now familiar message to schools. She referred to the importance of the exams that pupils will be taking this term, and the milestone that this represents for pupils. Bridget heralded the new school-based nursery provision and the commencement of the rollout of free breakfast clubs, alongside a boost to early years pupil premium. She mentioned the government's commitment to recruiting 6,500 new teachers, but didn't give any details regarding the progress being made towards this ambition. The use of AI to ease teacher workload is also touched upon, in particular in relation to marking and lesson preparation. Two current consultations are also mentioned, the first on '[narrowing the digital divide](#)' and the second considering '[school accountability reform](#)' with people from the education sector being urged to share their views on these two topics.

[View the message in full](#)



Live event with the Education Secretary

The now familiar online live events with the Secretary of State for Education continue this term, with the next session being held on Tuesday 3 June, 16.00-16.45. This event will focus on primary education, and is open for all to attend. Questions can be submitted through the live chat function at the event, and those receiving the most 'up votes' are generally answered during the session. The DfE is working on a schedule of more live events with DfE ministers throughout the academic year, each looking at different aspects of education.

[Sign up for your free place though Eventbrite.](#)

External Review of Governance – updated DfE guidance



The DfE has updated their guidance on External Reviews of Governance to include links to resources that boards can use to help with self-evaluation and benchmarking.

[DfE Guidance](#)

This blog from the NSPCC considers safe wraparound care provision for primary aged children, particularly with the roll-out of new breakfast clubs nationally. The blog also considers the safeguarding responsibilities of governors and schools when using external providers for wraparound care.

[NSPCC blog](#)

Regional improvement for standards and excellence (RISE) teams

The DfE has published details of the second cohort of RISE advisers. An additional 45 advisers have been recruited, in addition to the 20 already named earlier this year. The guidance also explains how the RISE teams will operate, how they are funded, which schools are eligible for intervention and the national priorities for the teams. The RISE team have been working with 32 schools since their inception in February, now set to expand to over 200 schools.

[Access the guidance on the DfE website](#)

[Press release](#) about the work of the RISE teams.



Improving attendance: what every governor and trustee should ask

GovernorHub has published an article, featuring an interview with Jayne Lowe OBE, a DfE advisor on behaviour and attendance and a MAT trustee, about how boards can have truly effective conversations about improving attendance.

The article considers:

- How often attendance should appear on board agendas
- What attendance data should be shared by leaders
- What a 'support first' approach looks like
- Examples of great attendance practice in schools and trusts
- Questions, monitoring activities and challenge
- Sharing effective practice across schools
- How to embed attendance strategies into the school culture and values
- Clear policies on term-time holidays
- DfE expectations for the governing board.



The Hoot

[Read the full article](#)



DfE live events



Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity: Transforming Attendance

Online conference, Thursday 22 May, 10.00-12.00

This free conference is aimed at secondary school leaders, senior attendance champions, attendance officers, school-level governors, and others working with secondary school pupils to improve school attendance.

Sessions include:

- Message from Rt Hon. Bridget Philipson MP, Secretary of State for Education
- Five facts everyone working on attendance should know
- Using school attendance data effectively to improve attendance
- Developing and implementing rigorous systems and processes
- Transition into KS3 and engaging with families effectively

Further information and a full agenda will be sent out prior to the event.

[Further details and book your free place](#)

Monitor your school attendance webinar for schools, trusts and LAs

Online session, Wednesday 4 June, 12.00-12.45

Update on the DfE 'monitor your school attendance tool' which gives schools, trusts and local authorities access to up- to- date attendance data. Learn more about how the reports can help your school manage attendance, the latest policy developments and new features.

[Further details and book your free place](#)

Estate management: competency framework and relevant training - updated

Guidance from the DfE on the functions, skills, knowledge and training needed to manage the school estate. A new document has been added, summarising the training and qualifications available.

[Access the guidance on the DfE website.](#)

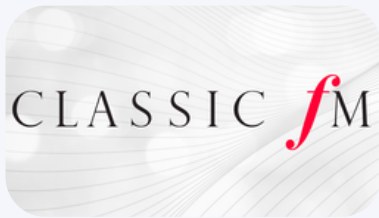


National Governance Association (NGA) annual governance survey



The NGA's annual survey is now live and runs until 2 June 2025. The survey is open to all governors and trustees, including non-members. NGA estimate that the survey will take around 15 minutes to complete. Clerks and governance professionals are not invited to complete this survey, the NGA runs a separate survey to hear their views. This year's survey will focus on governor and trustee recruitment and retention; finance; Ofsted inspection of MATs; safeguarding and SEND; the recruitment and retention of staff.

[Access the NGA survey.](#)



Classic FM Music Teacher of the Year 2025

The Classic FM Music Teacher of the Year Awards in partnership with the UK's leading music exam board ABRSM recognises and rewards incredible music teachers.

Every year, Classic FM celebrates inspiring musical educators from across the nation who are making a real difference to the musical lives of young people. And now, nominations are open again for 2025 – with a sixth category added and a pot of £20,000 of musical equipment to be won thanks to Viking!

Teachers can be nominated into ONE of the following categories:

- Teachers of Primary School Age
- Teachers of Secondary/High School Age
- SEND Music Teachers
- Visiting Music Teachers
- Lifetime Achievement (NEW 2025 category)
- Best Music Learning Initiative

The six category winners in The Classic FM Music Teacher of the Year Awards will each receive a share from a pot of £20,000 of music equipment of their choice for their school, all thanks to Viking. Entries close on Sunday 20 July 2025.

[More information](#)



New rules for a safer generation of children online



Ofcom finalises child safety measures for sites and apps to introduce from July meaning that tech firms must act to prevent children from seeing harmful content. Changes will mean safer social feeds, strong age checks and more help and control for children online. Ofcom is laying down more than 40 practical measures for tech firms to meet their duties under the Online Safety Act. These will apply to sites and apps used by UK children in areas such as social media, search and gaming. This follows consultation and research involving tens of thousands of children, parents, companies and experts.

You can read more about the measures on the [Ofcom website](#)

PE and sport premium (primary schools) digital reporting form

By the end of this term the report on PE and sport premium must be published on the school website. From July 2025, all schools must complete the digital reporting form. The digital form outlines how the school has used its PE and sport premium and the impact it has had on achieving the aims and objectives of the funding.

The digital form contains a series of questions and free text boxes. Schools can enter details on how the PE and sport premium has been used to make improvements in the 5 key areas highlighted in the DfE guidance on using the premium. It can also be used to generate the necessary online report. The information gathered includes:

- Figures on the overall spend
- What the funding has been spent on
- Whether there is any unspent funding
- Swimming and water safety attainment.

The digital form will go live during May or June 2025, and will remain open until 31 July 2025.

The DfE will provide separate guidance to support schools with the completion of the digital form. The link to the form and supporting guidance will be shared with schools by late June 2025. To allow for comparisons to be made, when publishing the digital form download, schools should retain the previous year's written report on the school's website.

If a school chooses to download a copy of its digital form return and use this as its published report, it must ensure that the form is converted to HTML format to meet accessibility requirements.

In multi-academy trusts each school must publish their own report on the individual school websites. The digital tool will not allow for a MAT to complete one form for all its schools.

The DfE, Local Government Association (LGA) and National Governance Association (NGA) have produced in partnership a monitoring tool for boards to use to support them in evaluating PE and sport premium spending decisions. The tool covers:

- Reporting requirements
- Areas where schools should prioritise PE and sport premium spending
- The role of staff CPD in securing sustainable improvements
- Questions to ask when evaluating the impact of spending.

[Monitoring tool for boards](#)

[PE and sport premium DfE guidance](#)





Martyn's Law

You may already be aware of Martyn's Law, named in tribute to Martyn Hett who was killed alongside 21 others in the 2017 Manchester Arena attack. The legislation was introduced to make sure venues across the UK must consider the security of the public and take steps to protect them from harm. Martyn's Law requires schools to enhance their preparedness for potential threats, particularly terrorism. Key measures include:

- Risk Assessments: Schools must conduct regular assessments to identify and mitigate potential risks.
- Integrated Procedures: Schools should implement a single integrated evacuation and lockdown procedure to secure classroom doors.
- Applicability: The law applies to both primary and secondary schools, ensuring they meet specific safety standards.
- Tiered Approach: Schools will be categorised based on their capacity, which influences the specific requirements they must follow. Venues with a capacity between 200 and 799 will fall under the 'Standard Tier' requirements; and Venues with a capacity of more than 800 will fall under the 'Enhanced Tier' requirements.

However, schools are exempt from the Enhanced Tier regardless of their capacity. This recognises the existing security measures and safeguarding protocols in place across schools, reducing the need for them to implement the more stringent requirements reserved for larger public spaces. This means that, even if a school has over 800 pupils, it will still only be required to comply with Standard Tier requirements. A misconception still prevalent is that schools with large events (sports day, concerts etc.) with over 800 attendees will need to have specialist security procedures. This is not the case as the final version of the legislation specifically excludes educational premises from the scope of so-called "qualifying events".

In summary, for a school it means that they must appoint a responsible person who will be required to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, appropriate public protection procedures are in place at the school that would reduce the risk of physical harm to individuals in the event that an act of terrorism occurs, at the premises or in the immediate vicinity.

Four types of procedures must be put in place, as follows:

- Evacuation - getting people safely out of the premises.
- Evacuation - bringing people safely into, or to safe parts within, the premises.
- Lockdown - securing the premises by locking doors.
- Communication - alerting people on the premises to danger. Schools must ensure they have systems in place to alert staff and students during an emergency. This could involve the use of public address systems, alarms, or other technology that enables swift communication during a crisis.

[New DfE guidance for schools](#) and self-assessment templates are available on the DfE website.



Plantlife

No Mow May

Approximately 97% of flower-rich meadows have been lost since the 1930s, and with them, vital food and habitat needed by wildlife. No Mow May is Plantlife's annual campaign urging everyone to pack away the lawnmower, let wildflowers grow freely and help nature. Schools are collectively responsible for grounds the area of Birmingham, Cardiff, Belfast, and Glasgow combined. Even the smallest wild patch can provide vital food needed by bees and butterflies, connecting pupils with nature and giving nature the best start to summer.

[Plantlife's No Mow May Movement](#)



Lunch & Learn



NAGAS CPD and networking sessions

Friday 6 June

12.30 – 2.00

Preventing and managing complaints

We will be hearing from Iain Grafton MBE, who will share his fascinating insight into the 'six types of complainant' and how to deal with individuals, based on their type.

Iain graduated from the Institute of Criminal Justice Studies at Portsmouth University with an MSc (With Merit) in Police Science & Leadership. He has been involved in school governance since 1996, across maintained and academy schools, including as chair of a MAT, and has dealt with complaints at board level. He also supports schools which are facing difficult situations with a complaint or complainant and has first hand experience of the stress that such complaints can place upon the staff and the board (and the Governor Service teams supporting them!)

Iain will share strategies for dealing with complaints, including those which are unreasonable or vexatious, and how to avoid a complaint from escalating.

We look forward to welcoming you to the session.

Please book your free place via [GovernorHub](#)