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School Improvement  
Liverpool

# Governance News

A Termly Newsletter for Liverpool Governors and  
Trustees



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# School Governance in 2019



Funding, support for pupils with special educational needs, and staff workload and wellbeing are the three key concerns unifying school governors and trustees, according to the School Governance in 2019 report. The report reveals the views, experiences, practice and demographics of almost 6,000 school governance volunteers from schools across all types, phases and regions.

The National Governance Association (NGA) has been running a survey of school governors and trustees in partnership with Tes since 2011. The aim of the survey is to gather the views of those who govern in order to inform and shape education policy and, in the absence of official data, to provide an overview of the state of school governance in England.

Over the years, the scope of the survey has increased and so too has the number of responses: 5,923 governors, trustees and academy committee members shared their views in this year's survey, almost four times as many as in 2012, with 700 more respondents this year than last.

The findings in this report are the result of an online survey carried out in May and June 2019. The survey was open to anyone who governs in state-funded schools in England.

The key findings from the report are:

1. Respondents' ***opinion of central education policy continues to decline***. 78% of respondents had a negative view of the government's performance in education over the past year (2018: 75%). Furthermore, at the time of asking nearly three quarters of respondents felt that the Department for Education would not make a strong case for further funding in the upcoming spending review while over half of respondents felt that the government's vision for education did not align with that of their governing board.
2. There is growing ***agreement as to the key issues facing schools***. When respondents were asked to list the top five (out of a possible 31) challenges facing their organisation, ten key issues<sup>1</sup> made up 63% of all responses, as opposed to 53% in 2018. In their asks for government, ***hundreds of respondents implored the government to invest more in school funding and to listen to those governing and school staff*** to overcome the challenges facing the sector.
3. For all regions, school types and phases, ***school funding remains the biggest issue for governing boards***. Over three quarters of respondents said that they are not confident that funding pressures can be managed without any adverse impact on the quality of education provided in their school. Of the 32% of respondents reporting that their school is drawing upon reserves, 61% said that their board expects these to run out by 2021. Additionally, a large proportion of respondents reported reducing the number of staff and spending on buildings and maintenance within the last twelve months due to financial constraints.

4. **Concern over the adequacy of high needs funding is growing.** 78% of respondents, as opposed to 74% in 2018, said that their school(s) does not receive enough funding to meet the needs of pupils with special education needs and disabilities (SEND). *While in 2018 high needs funding pressures were significantly worse for secondary schools, this year the trend exists regardless of phase, type or school.*
5. **Staff wellbeing and workload moved up the list of concerns from third place last year to second place this year.** 62% listed this within their top five issues as opposed to 37% in 2018. Half of respondents noted that the workload and/or pressure places on their lead executives had risen in the last twelve months. This may be linked to concerns about recruitment and retention which was the fourth most common concern for respondents.
6. Respondents reported spending a significant amount of time on governance, with 29% spending over 30 days per year completing their duties. **Nearly a quarter of governing board chairs reported that the time they dedicate to governance was somewhat or completely unmanageable** and only 22% of employed respondents said the time commitment was completely manageable.
7. Governing boards continue to lack diversity – particularly in terms of ethnicity and age. **93% of respondents identified as white compared to 74% of pupils in England** and only 10% of respondents reported being under the age of 40.
8. Respondents reported an average of 1.26 vacancies per governing board or academy committee. **Based on a conservative estimate of the number of governing boards and academy committees in England, an estimated 18,000 additional school governance volunteers are needed to sustain school governance under current board sizes.**
9. The lines of accountability in MAT governance continue to be blurred, with **the same individuals acting as trustees, academy committees and members in large proportion of MATs.** This can and does negatively impact transparent decision making as well as creating governance workload issues.
10. Only **57% of academy committee members felt that their voice was being listened to by MAT trustees and leaders**, and less than half said that they would be happy to share their schools' resources with the wider organisation. Furthermore, there are clear inconsistencies in what MAT trustees and academy committee members claim to have delegated responsibility for, suggesting more work is needed around schemes of delegation.
11. **16% of respondents say their school has reduced pastoral support due to funding constraints, and 61% of respondents said that they do not have enough funding to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.** This year there has been a 3.5% decrease in the number of schools providing financial support with purchasing school uniform, but an increase in those providing foodbanks, meals outside term time and washing uniforms.
12. **Nine out of ten school governors and trustees supported the proposed new Ofsted inspection framework.** 42% of respondents had already done work in preparation for the framework while a further 47% were planning to do work in preparation. Only one in ten said they were not planning to do, or had not done, any preparation.

13. *Respondents were slightly less likely to have engaged in stakeholder engagement (of any form) than in previous years* - including staff, pupil and parent/carer surveys as well as engaging the school and wider community face-to-face, despite the importance of stakeholder engagement to good governance.
14. *Only 76% had the same clerk for the full governing board and its committees, despite virtually all respondents employing a clerk.* This means that those who did not either used another individual (such as a member of staff) or did not have anyone clerking committee meetings.

*The report can be viewed at the [NGA website](#)*

# Parentkind Annual Parent Survey 2019



Parentkind's Annual Parent Survey, now in its fifth year, gauges parental views from a large sample size of 1,500 parents (1,200 in England, 200 in Wales and 100 in Northern Ireland). The survey is independently distributed to a cross-section of parents outside of Parentkind membership. This ensures that the results really are indicative of what parents have to say when it comes to their child's education and schooling.

## Key findings

### 1. Parents want to have a say on their child's education, but research shows an accountability gap exists

Despite three quarters (76%) of parents wanting to have a say on a range of issues at school level, only a fifth (18%) of parents of children in local authority maintained schools strongly agree that their school listens to them. In standalone academy schools this drops to less than one in ten (8%). Half (50%) of all parents feel that schools need to be more accountable to them. Whilst 80% of parents trust school leaders, a substantially lower proportion trust leaders at Government, Local Authority, Education Authority or Multi Academy Trust level to deliver the best education for their children.

The survey also revealed that many parents have a lack of clarity about school governance models. While 91% had heard of an academy, only 51% felt they could explain what it is.

#### Arising from the survey:

- 57% of parents say they trust MATs and local government leaders and even fewer (38%) say they trust central government
- Half (50%) of respondents say their child's school listens to their views
- Only a quarter (27%) believe local authorities or multi Academy Trusts listen to their views
- Fewer than one in four (23%) think central government listens to their views
- Half (49%) believe their child's school takes action based on their views/feedback
- Half (50%) say their child's school should be more accountable to parents than they currently are
- 41% feel able to have a say on school decisions that affect their child's education
- Less than half (49%) of respondents said they had heard of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), and only one in five (19%) felt able to explain what they are
- Among parents whose children attend a school governed by a MAT, only two in five (40%) feel they are able to explain what it is.

## **Parentkind's position on accountability**

There is an accountability gap between how much parents wish to input into education decision-making at all levels, and the amount they believe they are consulted or listened to. The further removed parents are from decision-making processes, the less they feel their voices are reflected in resulting policies. It is important and beneficial to have a system where every education level can be held to account for the service they provide and are open to input from all stakeholders, including parents. This leads to better policies and practices that are fit for purpose. This approach creates a culture of genuine partnership between home and school as well as a pathway for continuous school improvement. Decision-making transparency also guards against undesirable policies and practices, and helps to achieve the highest standards of ethical and child-centred leadership. Clear communication pathways between parents and those responsible for delivering education at every level are needed to achieve this. We would like the accountability gap to be narrowed by seeing government and schools include parent voice as a vital part of democratic decision-making processes, especially because parental engagement leads to better attendance, attainment and a positive learning environment. It is important that parents are provided with enough information to ensure that they can effectively interact with schools and the education system as a whole on matters that impact on their children's experience of education.

## **2. Parents prioritise a curriculum which develops responsible citizens and good mental health and well-being**

The 2018 survey found that curriculum was the area parents would most like to be consulted on. This year's survey found that the majority of parents are happy with the quality of education that their child receives from school and agree their child's school offers a good range of after school clubs and other extra-curricular activities. Whilst most parents agree that their child's school teaches a curriculum that meets their child's needs, a significant minority feel that the choice of subject options available at their child's school is too limited and less than half agree that their child's school offers good careers advice.

### **Arising from the survey:**

- 63% believe that it is very important that the curriculum helps children develop good mental health and well-being
- 59% of parents think that it is very important that the curriculum teaches life-skills such as self-confidence and the ability to cope with set-backs
- 76% say that the school teaches a curriculum that meets their child's needs, with 27% strongly agreeing
- 75% are happy with the quality of education that their child receives from school
- 88% say that it is important (and 56% say 'very important') that the curriculum focuses on preparing pupils for the future job market; but around a third (34%) are concerned that the curriculum doesn't do enough in this area. It is particularly important for parents of children in secondary school (62%) and further education (63%) compared to those in primary school (47%)
- 90% think it should help to develop skills that are useful outside of school; but over a quarter (28%) think insufficient time is spent on this

- 90% say it should prepare pupils to become responsible citizens (62% saying this is very important); yet over a quarter (26%) say not enough focus is given to this
- 89% think it should focus on introducing pupils to a broad range of subjects; but only 69% are satisfied that it achieves this
- 89% say it should support pupils' personal development by teaching life skills; but almost a third (32%) don't feel the curriculum does enough on this
- 64% would like it to support pupils' spiritual development, and 58% feel the balance is about right
- Three quarters (75%) agree that it should include RE/RSE lessons, and 61% say that the current level of focus is about right
- 89% would like it to focus on developing good physical health, and the same proportion for developing good mental health and well-being; whereas two thirds of parents (66%) say that the focus on developing good physical health is about right but one third (33%) say there is too little focus on developing good mental health and well-being.
- 68% agree their child's school offers a good range of after school clubs and other extra-curricular activities
- 43% agree that their child's school offers good careers advice
- 35% agree that the choice of subject options available to their child is too limited

### **Parentkind's position on the curriculum**

To give parents more of a voice on curriculum, we are calling on national governments, local authorities and multi academy trusts to genuinely listen to the parent voice and views on ensuring that the curriculum is fit for purpose. Parents should be routinely informed about the curriculum their child is taught, especially when changes are made, and asked for feedback. It is especially important that parents can access a summary of the curriculum in academies or independent schools where they are not obliged to follow the national curriculum but can set their own core curriculum. The curriculum should be more aligned to equip children for life beyond school, and it needs to be clearer to parents how schools are achieving this.

In addition, we would like to see a national roll-out of our Blueprint for Parent-Friendly Schools. This will provide all schools with effective strategies to engage with all parents. Finally, we call for a consultative parent body in every school. Using our Blueprint as a framework, school leaders can seek dialogue with a representative cross-section of parents through a parent voice group such as a PTA or parent council, to fully understand how parents wish to be engaged on curriculum.

### **3. Parents still contributing financially to schools**

Previous surveys have monitored parental attitudes on the key issue of school funding to build a year-on-year picture of the effect tightening budgets have on parents' finances and their child's school experience. This year, the results show that over half of parents are concerned about the cost of sending a child to school, and most feel that the cost is increasing. The survey found that parents of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) are more likely to have been asked to make voluntary donations to their school fund, that a greater proportion of them are donating, and that they give higher monthly payments compared to their more affluent peers.

Parents continue to be asked to pay for things that used to be free, such as school clubs, concerts and sports days, while stretched school budgets are seeing money-saving measures normalised in many schools. Parents also reported that they would like additional funds to be prioritised.

### **Arising from the survey:**

- 76% of parents think that the cost of sending children to school is increasing and more than half (51%) agree that they are worried about such cost
- Parents' concern about the cost of schooling continues to be highest in relation to uniforms (46%), school trips (44%) and school meals/drinks (19%)
- Parents of children who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) are more likely to feel costs are increasing (38% strongly agree vs. 31% of parents whose children are not eligible) and to be concerned about them (29% strongly agree vs. 15%)
- Concern over the cost of uniforms is significantly higher for parents whose children are eligible for FSM (61% vs. 44%); this is also true about the cost of school trips (49% vs. 43%) and the cost of school extra-curricular events such as concerts and sport days which parents are asked to pay for (20% vs. 13%)
- 38% of parents reported being asked by their child's school for a donation to the school fund and 29% donate
- Parents of children eligible for FSM (45%) were more likely to be asked to donate than those not eligible (38%)
- The most common cost-cutting solutions that parents reported seeing implemented by schools were being asked to pay for school clubs which used to be free (22%) and for events such as sport days or concerts (20%)
- 55% of parents believe that any potential extra funding available to schools should be spent on learning resources and 43% say IT equipment.

### **Parentkind position on school funding**

We commend all parent groups for the invaluable fundraising efforts they make on behalf of their schools. We welcome recent promises from the government to add substantially to school funding, but even then, academy trusts, governors and school leaders must continue to consult with their parent communities about how school funding is affecting them. This can be achieved most effectively by using a consultative parent body such as a parent council, and ensuring parental engagement is maximised through adoption of our Blueprint for Parent-Friendly Schools.

# Character Education and Development



Schools have a statutory duty, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, to promote the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. Character education contributes to this duty to promote SMSC.

The Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance (which applies to all state funded schools) makes clear that this is most effective when schools also actively promote good behaviour and positive character traits, including for example courtesy, respect, truthfulness, courage and generosity.

Schools have an important role in the fostering of good mental wellbeing among young people so that they can fulfil their potential at school and are well prepared for adult life. Schools with clear expectations on behaviour and with well-planned provision for character and personal development can help promote good mental wellbeing.

Ofsted recognises the importance of schools' provision for character education through its inclusion in the judgement on Personal Development in all Section 5 and Section 8 inspections.

## **The Six Character Benchmarks**

The Department of Education has identified six benchmarks that summarise the most important features of good provision for character education to assist schools in evaluating their own work and planning for development.

### **A. What kind of school are we?**

- How clearly do we articulate the kind of education we aspire to provide?
- How do we ensure that all members of the school community (e.g. staff, pupils, parents/carers, governing body) understand and share our aims?
- How effectively do we create a sense of pride, belonging and identity in our school?

### **B. What are our expectations of behaviour towards each other?**

- Are we clear on the importance of discipline and good behaviour in school life? How do we promote this understanding?
- How well do we promote consideration and respect towards others (pupils and adults), good manners and courtesy?
- How well do we promote a range of positive character traits among pupils?

### **C. How well do our curriculum and teaching develop resilience and confidence?**

- Is our curriculum ambitious for our pupils? Does it teach knowledge and cultural capital which will open doors and give them confidence in wider society?
- Is our curriculum logically organised and sequenced, including within subjects, and taught using effective pedagogy, so pupils gain a strong sense of progress and grow in confidence?

### **D. How good is our co-curriculum provision?**

*(Co-curriculum refers to planned provision for pupils that sits alongside lessons)*

- Does it cover a wide range across artistic, creative, performance, sporting, debating, challenge, team and individual etc. so all pupils can both discover new interests and develop existing ones?
- Do we make use of or promote local, national or international programmes or organisations (e.g. uniformed organisations, Duke of Edinburgh, National Citizen Service etc.)?
- Is provision of high quality and does it challenge pupils and build expertise? Is participation sustained over time?
- Are there ample opportunities for pupils to compete, perform etc., and is success acknowledged and celebrated?

### **E. How well do we promote the value of volunteering and service to others?**

- Are age-appropriate expectations of volunteering and service to others clearly established?
- Are opportunities varied, meaningful, high-quality and sustained over time?
- Do volunteering and service opportunities contribute to breaking down social barriers? Are they effective in making pupils civic-minded and ready to contribute to society?

### **F. How do we ensure that all our pupils benefit equally from what we offer?**

- Do we understand and reduce barriers to participation (e.g. cost, timing, location, logistics, confidence, parental support, etc)?
- Do we enable young people from all backgrounds to feel as if they belong and are valued?
- Is our provision, including our co-curricular provision, appropriately tailored both to suit and to challenge the pupils we serve?

Schools will want to consider character education in the context of their own school against these benchmarks so that they can evaluate the nature and quality of their current provision and determine their aspirations for future development. It is for individual schools or trusts to decide what constitutes good provision and to be accountable for it. It is important for school leaders to reflect on practice in their institutions and seek to develop and improve it as effectively as possible.

When considering these questions and the wider character provision in schools, the capacity and work-life balance of school staff should be taken into account. The responsibilities and demands placed on staff need to be proportionate and should not lead to additional workload. Considerations of use of directed time, remuneration, personnel and resources should be made before embarking on any course of action. School leaders may wish to consider using the [workload reduction toolkit](#) to review current practices in their schools.

The toolkit was developed by school leaders, teachers and other sector experts. It provides accessible materials, including practical advice, tools and case studies that school leaders, teachers and other staff can use to address workload issues in their school.

### **The Definitions of 'Character'**

Character education is not new. Schools use a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities to provide character education, including: assemblies, subject lessons, dedicated character education lessons, sports, performance arts clubs, outward bound activities, hobby clubs, and subject learning clubs. These opportunities help young people to explore and express their character and build the skills they need for resilience, empathy and employability.

Character is a complex concept with a number of overlapping facets. The DfE has identified four important aspects, which can inform the way schools shape their wider provision for children and young people:

- The ability to remain motivated by long-term goals, to see a link between effort in the present and pay-off in the longer-term, overcoming and persevering through, and learning from, setbacks when encountered;
- The learning and habituation of positive moral attributes, sometimes known as 'virtues', and including, for example, courage, honesty, generosity, integrity, humility and a sense of justice, alongside others;
- The acquisition of social confidence and the ability to make points or arguments clearly and constructively, listen attentively to the views of others, behave with courtesy and good manners and speak persuasively to an audience; and
- An appreciation of the importance of long-term commitments which frame the successful and fulfilled life, for example to spouse, partner, role or vocation, the local community, to faith or world view. This helps individuals to put down deep roots and gives stability and longevity to lifetime endeavours.
- Research suggests that there are enabling character traits which can improve educational attainment, engagement with school and attendance. A literature review for the Education Endowment Foundation and Cabinet Office found that:
  - High self-efficacy, or self-belief, is associated with better performance, more persistence and greater interest in work;
  - Highly motivated children (linked to tenacity) driven internally and not by extrinsic rewards show greater levels of persistence and achievement;
  - Good self-control (or self-regulation, the ability to delay gratification) is associated with greater attainment levels; and
  - Having good coping skills (part of being able to bounce back) is associated with greater wellbeing.

## Rationale for the benchmarks

While schools are not the only environments where pupils develop character, they are significant ones. There are at least three main ways in which schools can ensure pupils' character is developed:

- Clear leadership creates a pervasive ethos of high expectations of behaviour towards others in and beyond the school community, underpinned by a clear understanding of the kind of young people the school wishes its pupils to become, and a strong sense of shared identity and belonging. The school's ethos embodies a strong vision for character and personal development which may include resilience and self-regulation, virtues education, social behaviours and learning about the importance of long-term commitments.
- A well-designed curriculum ensures that pupils grow incrementally in justified self-confidence in their ability to learn and make progress in mastering appropriately rigorous content. Pedagogical approaches, taking account of the best research and evidence, as in the Department for Education's [Early Career Framework](#), support the well-designed curriculum by ensuring its effective delivery, and professional development for teachers focuses on these priorities.
- Alongside the school's ethos and taught curriculum there is strong provision for co-curricular activities. The programme is designed to focus on high quality activities across a wide spectrum of different domains (for example cultural, creative, sporting, physical, service-oriented, volunteering) which enable pupils to participate over time, learn and improve in their chosen activities and compete or perform as appropriate. Participation is enabled for all pupils in the school, including the least advantaged pupils, through a careful understanding of the most common barriers to participation. Activities which offer pupils experiences which they would not otherwise get, taking into account their background and home circumstances, are prioritised. With any additional provision, school leadership teams should take into account how they will be resourced.

The DfE's [Omnibus Survey](#) of pupils and their parents/carers found that 70% of state-school secondary pupils took part in clubs inside school regularly and 69% took part in clubs outside of school regularly. The Social Mobility Commission has [reported](#) that opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities are driven by the school attended, gender, ethnicity and geographic location, but that household income is by far the most important factor driving gaps in participation, with children from the poorest households much less likely to take part in all types of extra-curricular activities, but especially music classes and sport. Research by the [Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues](#) found that individuals who first get involved in service under the age of 10 were more than twice as likely to have formed a habit of service than if they started aged 16–18 years, and they are also more likely to be involved in a wider range of service activities and participate in them more frequently. In their inspections of schools, Ofsted will be considering both the quality and range of provision and whether the least advantaged pupils take part in the co-curricular offer.

Schools have an important role to play in ensuring that they offer a good range of co-curricular opportunities and that, critically, barriers to participation are minimised so that all pupils are able to access them, including the school's least advantaged pupils. Typically, barriers to participation in extra-curricular activities include:

- The direct cost of an activity and or the associated costs of equipment or transport;
- Difficulties in managing family logistics: for example, if children in the same family are at different schools, parents or carers need to make additional arrangements for children not attending the activity and schedule individual travel plans; and
- Concerns about physical safety of children travelling unaccompanied from school to another venue, especially if in a different neighbourhood.

Parents, especially those on low incomes, welcome extra-curricular activities for their children which take place at, or very near to, their children's school.

Schools should consider the provisions of the Equality Act when making decisions on aspects of character education and co-curricular provision so that pupils are not unfairly inhibited from benefiting from this aspect of education on the basis of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics).

# Governing Our Schools: 10 Years On



In 2008 Business in the Community (BITC) undertook a detailed report into school and academy governance called 'Governing Our Schools'. Ten years on, the research team at Education and Employers revisited some of the themes that emerged from that earlier report a decade ago. Here are their main findings:

## 1. Clarity of Purpose

- a. The different roles and responsibilities of governors and trustees are much clearer than ten years ago. Governors and trustees are much more informed and knowledgeable about their role, have a heightened sense of responsibility and are more focused on school strategy.
- b. Although clearer, the roles and responsibilities of governors and trustees have not been simplified in the last ten years. The emergence of new models of school and academy governance and the varying degrees of local governing board autonomy in Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) have made some roles more complex.

## 2. Skills/Composition

- a. Since 2008, there has been an ongoing push to value governors with professional skills. Participants in the study welcomed the increased focus on skills but felt that the DfE's competency framework is too prescriptive and does not guarantee governors will be effective in their roles.
- b. Interviewees were predominantly in favour of achieving the right balance between skills and community representation, referred to as the 'stakeholder plus' model of governance.
- c. Diversity on governing boards, particularly in terms of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) representation, has not seen much change in the last ten years.
- d. Interviewees identified a third set of skills important to governance that they suggested were additional to professional skills and stakeholder representation. These they deemed as skills of 'leadership' and 'governance' itself.

## 3. Recruitment

- a. School governance itself is now much better publicised and there are more pathways for volunteers to become a governor. Initiatives like Inspiring Governance, Academy Ambassadors and Governors for Schools were praised by interviewees for helping to support boards in their governor and trustee recruitment.
- b. It is still more difficult for schools in rural and disadvantaged communities to recruit governors than the more urban and well-connected areas of the country.

## 4. Recognition

- a. Interviewees felt that increasingly, new and existing governors are put off from volunteering due to the increasing pressures of the role and perceived negative press that governance receives when linked to school/MAT failure.

## **5. Clerking**

- a. While training and guidance has improved, it is still hard to recruit professional clerks to school boards. Many schools still use a member of the school's administrative staff as the board's clerk.

## **6. Training and Induction**

- a. Training and induction for school governors has improved. However, the uptake of governor training is varied according to the availability of training, school geography, school budget and whether the chair encourages it.
- b. The majority of interviewees favoured making induction training mandatory.
- c. Interviewees called for more ongoing training and CPD taking place once governors are in post.

## **7. Employers**

- a. There was unanimous agreement that volunteering as a school governor was beneficial for both volunteers and their employers.
- b. Larger employers encourage school governing more formally (through volunteering policies and paid time off) than small and medium sized enterprises, who are more informally supportive.
- c. The growth of self-employment has not significantly impacted governor recruitment.

## **8. Funding**

- a. Interviewees felt that changes to school funding in the last ten years have negatively impacted school governance. There was wide agreement that it is now harder for governors to balance the school budget without cutting Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision, closing sixth forms, spending less on teacher CPD or making posts redundant.

## **9. Accountability and Ofsted**

- a. More emphasis has been placed on the accountability of school governors since 2008.
- b. Ofsted has placed more emphasis and inspection on governing boards in the last ten years, but interviewees felt inspectors do not seem to adequately understand the role/contribution of governors.
- c. Ofsted are limited in their ability to inspect academies without being able to adequately assess the governance structures of multi-academy trusts.

## **10. Technology**

- a. Perhaps not unexpectedly, governing boards are embracing new forms of technology to support meetings and to keep connected between meetings (such as conference calls and Skype).
- b. Governing boards are also using new technology to support the business of their board such as e-mailing papers, document sharing platforms, online recruitment services and online e-learning.

## Recommendations

### For the Government and Governing Boards:

#### 1. Clarity of Purpose

- 1.1) Greater clarity needs to be given to volunteers about the widening range of governing and trustee roles. For example, the differences between governing within a local authority-maintained school, governor in a foundation school, acting as a trustee or member within a MAT and of becoming a governor within a MAT's academy committees/ local governing boards.
- 1.2) There should be an aim to share practice and achieve greater consistency around the terminology and practice of governing in an academy committee/local governing body of a MAT. This role has emerged in the last decade and varies significantly between MAT's.
- 1.3) Further work should be undertaken to share best practice in all types of school governance (maintained, Single Academy Trust, Multi-Academy Trust, Foundation) and more research is needed around increasingly important elements of governance such as how the system shares governance good practice, good schemes of delegation and governing for financial sustainability.
- 1.4) Further guidance is required to support headteachers and governing boards to agree the right data from the school executive to enable governors/trustees to fulfil their strategic role around holding the executive to account and setting executive pay. This guidance needs to keep pace with or precede changes in the school/academy system.

#### 2. Composition of Governing Bodies

- 2.1) The focus on smaller, skills based governing bodies has been beneficial but with the growth of larger MATs there is a need to investigate and define a more nuanced 'stakeholder plus' model of governance, that better blends skills with representation.
- 2.2) The DfE governor competency framework is too long and should be shortened and revised to better articulate the leadership and governance skills that are needed to govern, alongside the range of professional skills such as finance, procurement and HR.
- 2.3) Achieving race diversity on governing boards over the last decade has been hard to achieve with governing bodies increasingly unrepresentative of the school populations for which they govern. Efforts need to be increased significantly in order to achieve better representation and more diverse thinking by characteristics such as age and ethnicity.
- 2.4) Governing bodies themselves need to think wider than a basic skills audit to ensure they have the right representation and leadership skills on their boards, including educational skills.

### **3. Recruitment and placement**

- 3.1) Recruiting governors remains challenging. There should continue to be a wide range of nationally provided routes that skilled volunteers can use to become a governor or academy trustee. Further effort and investment need to be made in supporting recruitment and induction in areas that suffer a lack of 'governance capital' such as rural and socio-economically disadvantaged areas. This should also cover governor roles that have a more limited pool to draw from such as foundation governors for schools of a religious character.
- 3.2) Governing boards should be supported to become far more professional and strategic in the way they approach their recruitment and succession planning. Equipping governing boards to succession plan for the increasingly demanding role of Chair of Governors/Trustees is particularly important and will require more definite measures to ensure better continuity and stability.

### **4. Recognition**

Greater public recognition should be given to the importance of serving as a school governor/ academy trustee and the work done by governors should be more publicly celebrated. More practical and detailed examples of excellent governance should be generated inspiring governing bodies to improve their own practice.

### **5. Clerking**

Good governance is built on sound advice and understanding of process. The clerking competency framework should be retained and updated to reflect the differences between maintained schools and academies, most of whom are constituted as charitable companies. All schools and academies should have professional (and where possible independent) clerking/company secretary support. Clerks training should continue to be funded by the DfE and further consideration given to measures that could address the reported shortage of professional clerks.

### **6. Training and Induction**

- 6.1) Governor/Trustee induction training should be mandatory to ensure new governors/ trustees understand their distinct role and can operate effectively to ensure they focus on their strategic role. With the increased diversity of governance roles, there should be moves to stimulate a market in more diverse and tailored training to avoid one size fits all approaches and improve governing boards for their specific context.
- 6.2) In addition to formal and online training, governing boards should consider more informal training and support for new appointments including peer mentoring and personal development sessions with more experienced governors to quickly establish and grow positive relationships. Governors should be provided with glossaries of educational terminology and acronyms as this was regarded as a significant barrier to making early contributions to the governing boards' work.

### **7. Accountability**

Ofsted should ensure all Inspectors understand with clarity the purpose of school and academy governance to ensure consistency of inspection.—

## **8. Approaches to meetings and new technology**

Governing Boards should consider less traditional approaches to board and committee meetings and aim to maximise the availability of their membership by considering the times that they meet and the use of new technology (e.g. Skype and conference calls) to support meeting connectivity. This could also include approaches to document sharing via platforms and undertaking online training modules.

### **For Employers:**

## **9. Civic and Corporate Social Responsibility commitment**

- 9.1) Employers of every size and in every sector should be encouraged to support their employees to serve as school governors/academy trustees, supporting closer links with their local schools and communities. Consideration should be given to the launch of a national pledge and simple actions that employers can easily sign up to, to publicly express their support for school governance.
- 9.2) Employers should actively promote the opportunity to govern via their intranets, internal communications channels and staff noticeboards. Employers should also be encouraged, through their approach to volunteering, to support governors to undertake relevant training for the role and secure appropriate time off to govern (preferably paid). Larger employers should consider establishing governor support networks across their organisations.

## **10. Professional development**

Employers should be encouraged to position the undertaking of school governance as a part of their formal professional development and talent management offers to staff. This could include reviews of the skills gained from being a governor as part of regular performance management reviews. Employers of size could further consider creating internal governor networks through which staff can share experiences and best practice.

## **11. Research and Recognition**

The government should invest in further research to understand the financial contribution made by UK employers to the UK economy through governance. It should also research the return 'skills gain' that employers receive from supporting their staff to govern. To date only relatively small-scale studies have been undertaken. Employers should give greater recognition to their employees who are supporting the education of young people in their local communities by serving as a governor or trustee.

# Ofsted Blog: Peer-on-Peer Abuse



*Sean Harford, Ofsted's National Director for Education, and Yvette Stanley, National Director for Social Care, outline peer-on-peer abuse: what it is, what schools should be doing when it happens and how inspectors have been trained to recognise it.*

Peer-on-peer abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical and sexual abuse
- Sexual harassment and violence
- Emotional harm
- On and offline bullying
- Teenage relationship abuse

It can even include grooming children for sexual and criminal exploitation.



It's hard to say just how widespread a problem it is. But we know that there's extensive evidence of peer-on-peer abuse in the context of both sexual and criminal exploitation. In autumn last year, the NSPCC announced a 29% increase in children seeking help from Childline due to peer-on-peer sexual abuse. The issue has, understandably, been scrutinised in the media recently.

## **What should schools and other providers be doing about it?**

Unfortunately, peer-on-peer abuse can and does happen in a whole range of settings that children attend. However, it often goes unseen. It might take place online, for example, or away from the school or setting. Therefore, training for professionals to help them recognise the signs, and know what to do, is essential.

For schools and colleges, there's detailed Department for Education [advice](#) on what to do if a child is sexually harassed or experiences sexual violence. This expands on the principles set out in the statutory guidance '[Keeping children safe in education](#)'.

We expect all staff at a provider to be familiar with this guidance and to apply it. Staff should understand child protection policies and use them: there's no point to a policy that is not put into action. It should be clear that peer-on-peer abuse will never be accepted or dismissed as 'children being children'.

We expect all staff in a school to know what to do if they come across, or are worried about, peer-on-peer abuse. They should know who to speak to and what action to take to make sure children are safe.

## **Involving other agencies**

Peer-on-peer abuse that involves sexual assault and violence must always result in a multi-agency response. As well as supporting and protecting the victim, professionals need to consider whether the perpetrator could be a victim of abuse too. We know that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

We need to make sure that the children affected are getting the help they need. A typical response will involve:

- Children's social care
- The police
- Any specialist services that support children who demonstrate harmful sexual behaviour
- The family
- Any other professionals who know or have had contact with the child

Of course, if the children involved are in the same class, the school will need to consider carefully whether to separate them while the concerns are being investigated. In situations of alleged rape and assault by penetration, the statutory guidance is clear that the alleged perpetrator should always be removed from classes they share with the victim.

The DfE guidance also asks schools and colleges to consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart while they are on the same premises, as well as on transport to and from school or college, where appropriate.

There is no simple answer to the question as to how long these measures should be in place, especially if any police investigation is inconclusive. Lack of a conviction is not the same as the allegation being unfounded. The DfE guidance is clear that in this case, the school or college must continue to provide support to the victim and alleged perpetrator 'for as long as necessary'. Therefore, any separation arrangements must also be continued with for as long as is necessary to make sure children are safe.

### **The importance of context**

Professionals also need to think about risks to other children. If there's an incident in a school, has this put other children at risk? Have other children witnessed the incident? Could any siblings of the perpetrator be at risk? There may well be a need for a range of assessments and interventions for different children. A multi-agency approach is needed. No school or college can deal with this issue alone.

In addition, schools need to consider the potential vulnerabilities of the victims and any risks to them, including their potential abuse by others. The government guidance asks schools and colleges to have extra consideration for pupils who may have additional vulnerabilities due to protected characteristics. Schools and colleges should consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to their sex, sexuality, and if relevant, gender reassignment.

Schools and colleges should think about any potentially unsafe spaces on the premises. Where did the incidents happen? What can staff do to make that environment safer?

It's equally important that schools and colleges think about children's safety outside of the school gates. Are they aware of any unsafe spaces in their local area? Are schools and colleges aware of incidents of sexual harassment or violence involving children in the local park or other places where young people congregate? Staff should pass on contextual information like this to the police so that they can address the risks.



## **A whole-establishment approach**

Settings should not wait until an incident of peer-on-peer abuse happens before taking action. We expect any provider educating or caring for children to create an environment in which children and staff show respect for one another. They should know what language and behaviour are acceptable and what to do and who to speak to if they are worried or feel unsafe.

All settings should take a whole-establishment approach to keeping children safe. They should set expectations that violence and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated, support children to have a good understanding of consent and healthy relationships and provide immediate support for victims of abuse.

## **Ofsted's role**

As an inspectorate, we do not have any role in investigating individual child safeguarding cases, including cases of peer-on-peer abuse in schools. Rightly, this is a matter for the relevant local authority and, when appropriate, the police.

We take children's safety very seriously. That includes making sure that all the providers we regulate and inspect have effective procedures for keeping children, other learners and vulnerable adults safe from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

We train our inspectors to understand what peer-on-peer abuse is and how to recognise the signs. School and college inspectors have all had training on the government's statutory guidance on sexual violence and harassment between children in schools and colleges. We have given more recent training to inspectors on the risks to children online, including bullying. We train all our inspectors to understand the risks to children of sexual and criminal exploitation and the role that peer-on-peer abuse can play in that context.

If we learn about a case in which a child has suffered peer-on-peer abuse or may be at risk of harm in any setting, our first priority is to make sure that the child has been referred to the right agencies for help and protection.

Ofsted was also a partner in the Bedfordshire University research project '[Beyond referrals](#)' on sexual harassment in schools. The project developed a toolkit to help schools assess how effective they are at identifying and addressing peer-on-peer sexual harassment.

It's important that all schools and colleges familiarise themselves with the statutory guidance. Individual professionals should know, understand and, most importantly, use their school/college policy on peer-on-peer abuse to make sure that children are protected. If you want to find out more about our approach to safeguarding, please have a look at [our guidance](#).

For Ofsted's part, we are ever-vigilant, and committed to improving our own practice. We will reflect on any recommendations that come out of the ongoing Independent Inquiry for Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) hearings, and of the feedback from [victims](#).

# Off-rolling: update on recent analysis



**Jason Bradbury**, Deputy Director for Data & Insight and Chief Statistician, Ofsted, looks at the most recent data on off-rolling.

## Analysing schools with exceptional pupil movements in years 10 to 11

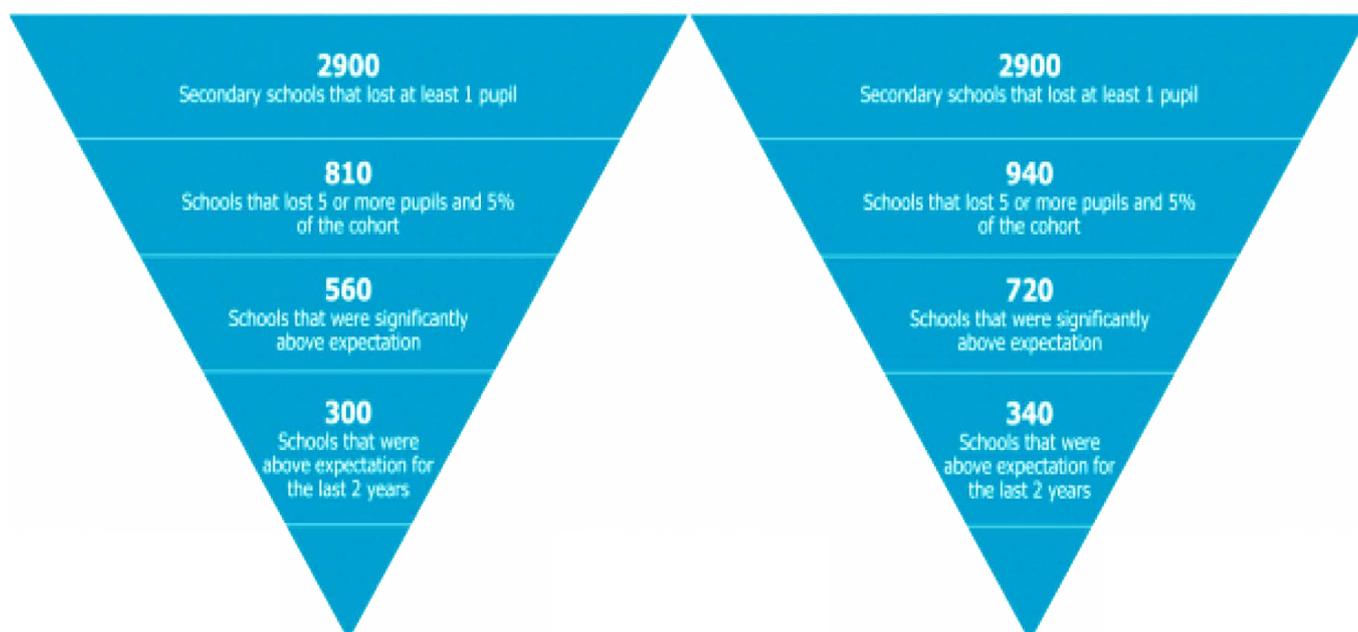
Last year, Ofsted looked at the movements of pupils between year 10 in January 2016 and year 11 in January 2017.

Over 19,000 pupils left a state-funded secondary school in this period. There was no information on the destination for about half of these pupils because they had not moved to another state-funded school. They may have moved to an independent school or to be home educated, but we could not be sure.

Using a statistical model, Ofsted identified around 300 schools that had exceptional levels of pupil movements when compared with schools with pupils with similar characteristics. There are often reasonable explanations for pupil movements, and the data is there to help its inspectors and regional directors to have conversations with schools, multi-academy trusts and local areas.

## Updating this analysis and what we found

This analysis was repeated by comparing school census data for January 2017 and January 2018. In that year, there were over 20,000 pupil movements between year 10 and 11. As in the previous year, we do not know the destination for about half of these pupils.



*Left shows last year's analysis and right shows the latest analysis*

This year, the statistical model identified around 340 schools that had exceptional levels of pupil movements for two years running, compared with around 300 last year. The increase in the number of schools with exceptional pupil movement does not necessarily mean that off-rolling is increasing. There may be legitimate reasons for the increase in pupil movement. However, the increases do warrant further consideration.

On average, 13 pupils left each of these 340 schools between years 10 and 11: a critical stage in their education. Of the 20,000 pupils who left their school, 22% were in one of these 340 schools, despite these schools making up only 11% of all secondary schools.

Sixty per cent of the schools on the previous list of 300 schools are also in the new list of 340. Of those that dropped out, two thirds no longer meet the criteria of losing at least 5 pupils and 5% of their pupils, but many of these schools still lost some pupils.

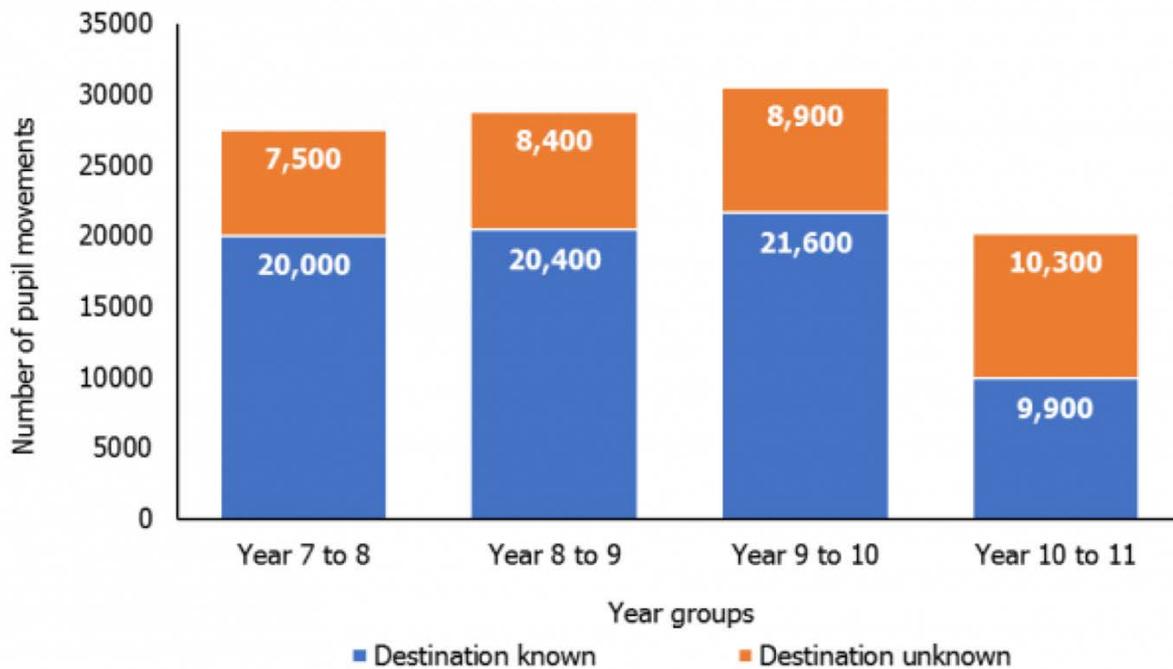
### **A new analysis of pupil movements between years 7 and 11**

As well as pupil movements between years 10 and 11, this year Ofsted also looked at movements between all year groups in secondary schools. Between January 2017 and January 2018, 107,000 pupils left their state-funded secondary school.

Pupil movements in younger year groups were higher than the 20,000 movements seen between years 10 and 11, though this is not in itself surprising as families like to avoid moving their children during the GCSE years if they can. Movements peaked between years 9 and 10, around the time pupils traditionally begin their GCSE courses.

Interestingly, the proportion of pupils whose destination is unknown (because they left the state-funded sector and cannot be tracked with the data currently available) was lower for the younger age groups. For instance, 29% went to an unknown destination in year 9 to 10 versus 51% in year 10 to 11.

This may be a sign that in the younger age groups pupils may be moving because their family are leaving the area (and we can usually track these pupils to their next school), whereas more of the pupils who move in later school years are becoming home educated (and cannot be tracked). Unfortunately, there is no data on pupils who become home educated. However, we do know that some of the older home-educated pupils (in the 14 to 16 age group) actually spend some of their time at further education providers, such as colleges.



*Number of pupil movements, by year group and destination*

Over the past year or so, Ofsted has started to use the data on pupil movements in years 10 to 11 to:

- Prioritise which schools to inspect
- Ask schools about exceptional levels of pupil movements in school inspections
- Ask local areas about movements of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) as part of our local area SEND inspections
- Talk to local authorities and multi-academy trusts about pupil movements in their area/in their schools, as part of our regular meetings.

Between 1 September 2018 and 30 June 2019, Ofsted inspected around 100 schools with high levels of pupil movement. Five published inspection reports from this period directly refer to 'off-rolling'.

In many other cases, the data facilitated helpful discussions about why pupils left the school, such as:

- Families leaving the area
- Pupils moving to specialist school provision nearby (such as schools specialising in engineering)
- A lot of school choice in a small area, which may result in pupils moving school more often.
- Inspectors also discussed what the school does to support pupils to either continue at the school or to find a place in other schools.

# Early Reading and the Education Inspection Framework



## ***Gill Jones*, Ofsted Deputy Director for Early Education, sets out how inspectors look at early reading and phonics teaching**

Many schools will already have had an inspection under the new education inspection framework (EIF). A large proportion of those are primary schools.

Primary/Junior/Infant schools should be aware that the new EIF includes a reading deep dive. The reading deep dive is a mandatory part of the new inspections in these schools. Inspectors will look at seven aspects of early reading, as set out in paragraph 298 of the school [inspection handbook](#).

If you've not looked at this section of the handbook yet, then do; it sets out what inspectors will be considering when they look at how well the school teaches children to read from the beginning of Reception.

We've made the early reading deep dive mandatory because it's so important that children learn to read fluently as quickly as possible. Inevitably, fluent readers will learn more, because they can read and gain knowledge for themselves.

All inspectors have been trained to focus on the things that make the biggest difference, drawing on the evidence set out in our report '[Bold beginnings: the Reception curriculum in a sample of good and outstanding primary schools](#)'.

To prevent myths being created, I've set out here what inspectors will be looking at during deep dives into early reading. They will consider the extent to which:

- Direct, focused phonics is taught every day in Reception and key stage 1
- Children read from books with the sounds they know, while they are learning to read
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide extra practice through the day for the children who make the slowest progress (the lowest 20%)
- All children in Year 3 and above can read age-appropriate books
- Teachers instil in children a love of literature: the best stories and poems

However, we do not expect to see phonics in 'continuous provision' activities. This is a time to develop children's talk, play and wider curriculum experiences. A 'language-rich' environment is just about *talking with* children, not building displays, or sticking on Post-it Notes.



I've been looking closely at what inspectors are finding so far when they look carefully at reading on inspection. It's heartening to see the teaching of reading being reported on so clearly in our new-style inspection reports. Here is what some inspectors are writing in their reports about the teaching of reading:

*"Leaders believe that the key to pupils' success is their ability to read. Well-trained staff ensure the expert teaching of phonics. As a result, nearly all pupils meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check."*

*"There is a well-organised system for teaching reading, which starts from the beginning of Reception."*

*"Teachers are ambitious in their expectations of the sounds and words that children should be able to read by the end of each term."*

*"Pupils told us they love to read. They spoke confidently about their favourite stories."*

*"Almost all the children, including the disadvantaged, were successful in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Any pupil who falls behind is given extra help to catch up."*

I'm pleased to say that many schools are coming out well in reading because leaders are making sure that staff are experts in teaching reading, particularly phonics. However, some schools have been judged to require improvement because they are not teaching reading well enough. For example:

*"Early reading and phonics remain areas for improvement, particularly for pupils who struggle."*

*"They have attempted to bring together several phonic schemes that do not match. This leads to inconsistencies from class to class."*

*"Pupils' reading books are not always well matched to their reading stage. Books contain sounds they have not yet been taught. As a result, some pupils fall behind in their reading."*

*"There are not enough phonics experts across the staff team to help all pupils to learn to read from an early age."*

*“Staff try to develop pupils’ love of reading. Storytelling sessions occur daily, and these engage pupils well, but some of the books that staff read to pupils vary in quality.”*

At a national level, I was disappointed to see that the phonics screening check (PSC) results did not improve in 2018/19. Most concerning was that nearly a third of children from poorer backgrounds did not reach the required standard, as opposed to 15% of those from better-off backgrounds.

As Amanda Spielman mentioned in our [Annual Report](#) last year, this does not have to be the case. Some schools in disadvantaged areas help **all** their children learn to read well from the start. Some schools have said that this gap in the PSC between poorer and more affluent children is because of the lower levels of cultural capital among disadvantaged children. However, as we know, the successful learning of systematic synthetic phonics is not dependent on cultural capital.

Good phonics teaching will make sure that **all** children learn to read early, regardless of their background. It is easy for inspectors to find out if a school has a team of expert reading teachers: if the slowest progress readers in key stage 2 can read age-appropriate unseen books with fluency, inspectors know the school has made reading its priority.

I hope that with a strong focus on the teaching of early reading in the EIF, it will lead headteachers to pay greater attention to ensuring that **every** child learns to read in their school.

# Multiple Disadvantage & Key Stage 4 Attainment



A Department for Education research report, undertaken by the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England Cohort 2 (LSYPE2), focuses on the academic attainment of young people in year 11 - the concluding year of Key Stage 4 and the point at which most sit their GCSE exams or equivalents.

An earlier report by LSYPE2 had hypothesised that disadvantage cumulates – that the more disadvantages a young person faces, the greater the impact on their KS4 attainment is likely to be. For this report, the team investigated this hypothesis further, looking to better understand the answers to the following questions:

- To what extent are different disadvantages associated with young people’s attainment, both individually when considered alone, and uniquely when considered together?
- To what extent is the number of disadvantages a young person experiences associated with their educational attainment?
- Does this vary by gender or ethnicity?
- Do certain disadvantages co-occur more than others?
- What is the prevalence of certain combinations of disadvantage within the broader population of young people?
- How do different measures of disadvantage which are associated with lower KS4 attainment interact with each other?

The analyses in the report are based on seven specific disadvantages that have been shown to be independently predictive of KS4 attainment, distributed across four broad domains as outlined below:

## ***Personal characteristics***

- Special Education Needs (SEN)
- Family background
- Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Maternal qualifications

## **Home environment**

- Parental engagement in young person’s education
- Relationship of main parent with young person
- Access to an internet connected computer

## **School environment**

- Ofsted rating

## Key findings

The findings in the report provide nuanced insights into the complexities of multiple disadvantage and bring new insight and understanding of how disadvantages interact to influence outcomes of importance. The seven specific disadvantages described above, together explain around a third (35.4%) of the total variation in attainment. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind the fact that young people may also experience other types of disadvantage.

### **To what extent are different disadvantages associated with young people's attainment?**

Of the seven examined disadvantages, having Special Educational Needs (SEN) was associated with the largest penalty by far, accounting for an attainment deficit of around 17 grades at KS4 after controlling for the other six disadvantages. Each of the other six disadvantages were, nevertheless, associated with substantial attainment deficits (ranging from about 3 to about 6 grades).

The attainment deficits for the different types of disadvantage were much larger when they were examined in isolation than when the effect of the other six was also taken into account. This substantial interplay between the measures supports the notion that a young person's circumstances and needs should be considered holistically.

SEN was an exception in this respect - there was relatively little difference in the penalty associated with SEN regardless of whether or not the other six disadvantages were controlled for. Compared with the other six disadvantages, less of the apparent SEN penalty is attributable to the effect of other overlapping disadvantages.

As an example of the interplay between disadvantages, young people who had a poor relationship with their parents and parents who were less engaged with their education had attainment around 9 grades lower than those with more supportive parents (controlling for the effect of the other disadvantages).

### **To what extent is the number of disadvantages a young person experiences associated with their educational attainment? And does this vary by gender or ethnicity?**

Overall, around a third of young people had none of the disadvantages, a further third experienced one of the disadvantages and the remaining third experienced two or more disadvantages. While the majority of young people experience at least one of the measured here, the proportion of young people experiencing a high number of the selected disadvantages was relatively low – around one in twenty had to contend with four or more.

In general, the greater the number of disadvantages experienced by a young person, the lower their Key Stage 4 attainment. The relationship between a simple count of the number of disadvantages a young person experiences and the size of their attainment deficit was near linear. A young person experiencing one type of disadvantage had significantly lower attainment on average than a young person with none of the disadvantages. This attainment deficit approximately doubled among young people experiencing two rather than just one of the disadvantages, approximately trebled among those experiencing three, and so on.

However, there is further complexity underlying the relationship between multiple disadvantage and attainment - different specific combinations of disadvantage can be associated with very different attainment deficits. In particular, combinations of disadvantage involving SEN tend to result in greater attainment deficits.

There were variations in the numbers of disadvantages experienced by gender and ethnicity. Boys were likely to experience slightly more of the selected disadvantages than girls, an effect that was primarily driven by the higher incidence of SEN among boys.

Compared to White young people, young people from an Indian background had fewer disadvantages on average. Those from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black African and Black Caribbean ethnic minority groups had a relatively high incidence of multiple disadvantage in comparison to both young people from a White background and young people from an Indian ethnic background.

### **Do certain disadvantages co-occur more than others?**

The most common co-occurrence amongst the seven key disadvantages was between FSM status and maternal qualifications – households where the mother had no qualifications were also likely to have been eligible for free school meals (suggesting they had been disadvantaged in the labour market). There was also a relatively strong relationship between SEN and eligibility for free school meals.

Nearly all (94%) of those who experienced two or more types of disadvantage either had SEN or have been eligible for Free School Meals. Nevertheless, even based on the reduced set of seven disadvantages that we examine here, there is a small group of young people (around one in twenty of all young people) who experience some type of multiple disadvantage and fall outside these two prominent administrative measures of educational disadvantage.

### **What is the prevalence of certain combinations of disadvantage within the broader population of young people?**

While many different combinations of disadvantage were experienced, none constituted a large proportion of young people. Further, the more types of disadvantage experienced, the lower the prevalence in the population. This serves to highlight the diversity of varieties of disadvantage, as experienced by young people. Any new approaches to supporting young people who have multiple disadvantages will need to consider this heterogeneity.

Nevertheless, some combinations of disadvantage are far more common than others. In particular, around one in ten young people had been eligible for free school meals and also attended a less effective school (a relatively high prevalence in this context). However, this pairing of disadvantages was also associated with a less severe attainment penalty than many of the others and, as such, may be less of a clear priority than lower incidence pairings with a higher associated penalty.

In general, the attainment deficit was most pronounced where a pair of disadvantages included SEN. Again, the SEN pairing with the highest incidence (SEN coupled with FSM eligibility, which was experienced by around one in twelve young people) had a smaller attainment deficit than other less common SEN pairings. Young people with SEN who also had parents who were less engaged in their education or who had more challenging parental relationships saw larger attainment deficits, as did those whose mother had no qualifications or who did not have access to an internet connected computer at home.

When considering three-way disadvantages, the incidence of each was, inevitably, lower still. The most widespread was SEN accompanied by eligibility for FSM and attendance at a lower quality school (which affected around one in 30 young people).

### **How do different measures of disadvantage which are associated with lower KS4 attainment interact with each other?**

While the effect of experiencing multiple disadvantage is broadly cumulative in terms of the associated attainment penalty, sometimes the total penalty is more (or less) than we might expect had we just added the two associated attainment penalties together i.e. there appears to be exacerbating or mitigating interaction between some types of disadvantage. However there were some exceptions:

- Having both Special Educational Needs and parents who are less engaged with education was associated with a larger penalty (4 grades larger) than would be expected given the sum of the respective penalties associated with each (all other disadvantages held equal).
- In contrast, the cumulative penalty associated with both having been eligible for FSM and having a mother with no qualifications, or being both enrolled in a less effective school and having Special Educational Needs, was lower than would be expected from the sum of their respective penalties (between 1.5 and 2.5 grades lower).
- Inverse interpretations also apply - for example, young people who had not been eligible for FSM and whose mothers had no qualifications had lower attainment than might be expected.

*The full research report can be viewed or downloaded [here](#).*



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## LGF Conference: November

**David Blythe**, LGF Hon Sec, provides an overview of the conference hosted last term.

This was the eighth half-day conference we have now organised for Liverpool school governors and trustees and the focus on this occasion was Headteacher and Staff wellbeing; how can Governing Bodies ease the pressure. The venue, again, was the Partnership for Learning Charity Training and Conference Centre, Liverpool 24.

We were delighted to welcome Ruth Town to deliver and facilitate the presentation for us. Ruth has over 30 years' experience in teaching and leading education in Liverpool, including headships at Breckfield Primary and St Michael-in-the-Hamlet Primary schools, and Chair of LPHA and LLP.

A key message from the presentation was that Headteacher and staff wellbeing is an important responsibility for all governors and trustees to ensure appropriate measures are in place to support all their employees.

| Numbers attending from all sectors           |    |
|--|----|
| Total number of governors/trustees attending | 47 |
| Booked-in who did not attend                 | 7  |

| Overall rating by attendees |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Very good                   | 43 (91.5%) |
| Good                        | 4 (8.5%)   |
| Requires improvement        | 0          |

| Schools represented |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Nursery             | 7   |
| Primary             | 37  |
| Secondary           | 12  |
| Special             | 5 (Including one independent)                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>61</b>                                       |
|                     | (NB: 15 governors/trustees serve on two boards) |

## **Synopsis of delegates' comments**

### ***Objectives:***

- There was strong endorsement that the conference fully met its key objectives

### ***Outcomes:***

- Excellent event; speaker very knowledgeable, engaging and easy to listen to
- Clear, focused and informative presentation
- Excellent delivery
- Highly informative, thought provoking and engaging
- Good table discussions and exercises
- Opportunity to ask questions
- Examples of specific case studies would be useful
- Print size of power point handouts a little small

### ***Quality Assurance:***

- Generally speaking, nothing needs to improve
- Breakfast bars were a welcome start to the event!
- Well organised event

### ***Venue:***

- Very good venue and facilities
- Not easy to access by public transport (NB: We will investigate alternatives)

### ***Summary***

With her extensive knowledge and experience in Liverpool schools, Ruth understands the many challenges which staff face on a daily basis and was able to ensure we now have a clearer understanding of these issues together with actions and solutions that we as governors / trustees can provide to support our staff at our respective schools.

The delegates attending the conference clearly indicated the key objectives set out were fully met and that they had benefitted from their attendance. Furthermore, it was another opportunity for governors / trustees from all educational sectors to learn together.

We had a total of 47 governors and trustees attending this 8th conference, which is above the average of 43 and a total of 39 Liverpool schools represented.

It is rather disappointing that once again we had a small cohort of governors / trustees who booked-in, but unfortunately did not attend on the day nor offer any apology for their non-attendance.

We would like to take the opportunity to record our thanks to Ruth Town for making this another successful conference and for ensuring that our members found it interesting, informative and an enjoyable event from which they benefited.

Finally, we would also like to thank the governors and trustees who attended and for their important contribution during the discussions, actively engaging in the table exercise and through raising appropriate questions which contributed to making it a successful event.

### Summary of LGF conferences to date

| Conference Number | Conference Date | Number Attended | Conference Subjects / topics   |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| 1                 | October 2015    | 46              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headteacher Wellbeing</li> </ul>  |
| 2                 | October 2016    | 20              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headteacher Appraisals</li> <li>Philosophy for Children</li> </ul>  |
| 3                 | March 2017      | 41              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing Budget Reductions</li> <li>LLP Mental Health &amp; Emotional Wellbeing project</li> <li>Improving Children's Wellbeing through Yoga</li> </ul>           |
| 4                 | October 2017    | 31              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental Health               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Touch that Matters Most</li> <li>- Attachment Friendly Principles</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| 5                 | April 2018      | 41              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online Safety</li> <li>The Liverpool Promise</li> </ul>   |
| 6                 | November 2018   | 64              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governing Body Self-Assessment</li> <li>Liverpool's Education Vision</li> </ul>   |
| 7                 | May 2019        | 51              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Effective Governance of SEND</li> <li>SEND provision in Liverpool</li> </ul>  |
| 8                 | November 2019   | 47              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headteacher and Staff Wellbeing: How Can Governing Bodies Ease the Pressure</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Average</b>    |                 | <b>43</b>       |  |

There are currently about 1,890 governors/trustees across all sectors and thus on average approximately 2.3% attend our conferences.

## **Ofsted – A Governor’s View**

**Avril O’Brien**, LGF Committee Member, reports on her experience of her school’s inspection under the new framework.

Generally speaking, the inspection was a constructive experience, with the main focus being on curriculum.

Judgement was made through the collection of three main evidence sources:

- Pre-inspection information, including a 90 minute phone call with the headteacher
- Deep dives through a range of interviews with leaders at all levels, lesson observations work scrutiny, discussions with teachers and pupils covering reading and maths together with one or two foundation subjects
- Triangulating the collated information.

### **Quality of Education**

This is HUGE! It covers curriculum (below) and was a very high priority throughout. Need to ensure that children ‘know more and are able to do more’ so that a positive impact is seen in results.

#### ***Curriculum – the three ‘I’s***

- Intent: what is the rationale for the curriculum the school has adopted and the level of aspiration for the learners?
- Implementation: the way teachers teach the curriculum, how leaders support them, subject knowledge, presentation, assessment, feedback, responsive teaching and pupil recall, focuses greatly on consistency and systems used.
- Impact: what are the outcomes? They will look at books, and everything in your curriculum should have an impact on data outcomes. Where are the opportunities for challenge and depth?

#### ***Behaviour & Attitudes***

The impact that a safe, calm, orderly and positive environment has on the behaviour and attitudes of pupils. High expectations and a positive culture are included here, taking in:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Expectations
- Pupil motivation and positive attitude
- Positive, respectful culture
- Bullying and discrimination including safeguarding
- Focus on off rolling, exclusions etc.

### ***Personal Development***

The school's intent to provide for the personal development of all pupils and the quality with which the school implements this work, including:

- Inclusion
- Extra-curricular
- Life in modern Britain
- British values
- Attitudes and resilience
- Debate and discussion
- Equality and diversity
- Sex and relationships

### ***Leadership and Management***

- Ambition and vision
- Professional development – focus on training rather than performance management
- Consistency, systems and processes in school
- Ensuring there is no cheating
- Community engagement
- Staff wellbeing and protecting staff from bullying and harassment
- Safeguarding
- Governors included in this judgements

### ***EYFS***

Evidence to evaluate what it is like to be a child in the early years' provision:

- Curriculum
- Communication
- Challenge
- Logical progression of curriculum
- Consolidation and deepening of knowledge
- Phonics and reading
- Attitudes and behaviour

### ***Judgements***

Made through 3 main evidence sources:

- Pre-inspection information – 90 minute phone call and data
- Deep Dives – interview with leaders at all levels, lesson observation, work scrutiny, discussions with teachers and pupils – Reading, Maths and 1 or 2 foundation subjects
- Bringing it together – triangulation

Ofsted say they will no longer look specifically at certain groups (e.g. SEND). However, our SENCo and SEND Governor were interviewed for 90 minutes.

### ***What we found...***

There were five governors interviewed for almost two hours. It was a very easy flowing conversation, the inspector would pick up on points mentioned and come back to them. All of the subject matter below was covered in some form or other throughout the interview:

- Curriculum – Intent, implementation, impact, how school delivers it and why
- Consistency – systems, processes – all stakeholders
- Appropriate building of skills and knowledge
- Reading
- Pupil premium, accelerated progress
- High ability accelerated progress and depth of curriculum
- Progress from EY to KS1, KS1 to KS2, etc.
- Behaviour – including low level disruption
- Disadvantaged – interventions, including parent workshops
- Be prepared to talk around young carers, bereaved, child protection, children in need and vulnerable children under safeguarding
- Teacher workload, health and wellbeing, work life balance, teachers' voice
- Character and resilience of pupils
- Culture Capital – what enriches the children and what is the curriculum doing to impact this?
- Governance – how governors challenge and support the HT and drive improvement through monitoring and knowledge of the school
- What is the governors' vision, ethos and accountability?
- Know about subject of INSET days
- Know your website
- Talk about moderation – in school, consortia, LA
- Know the school's strengths and weaknesses
- Be familiar with and understand performance data
- Know what requires improvement, is good or outstanding and be ready to argue your case – know the grade descriptors! Use the Ofsted handbook for descriptors in leadership, areas for which governors are specifically responsible and differences between good and outstanding, particularly with reference to governors.

### ***Deep Dives***

- Reading
- One or more foundation subjects
- Maths
- Work scrutiny with subject lead (curriculum implementation and impact)
- Discussion with approx. 6 children, with books
- Observations and discussion with teachers to understand where each lesson sits in the sequence of lessons
- Long and medium term planning
- Content and sequencing

## LGf Committee Meetings for Spring 2020

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Tuesday, 21st January</b><br>10:00 - 12:00 | <b>LGf Committee Meeting - Spring 2020</b><br><u>Venue:</u> Mosspits Lane Primary, Mosspits Lane, L15 6UN<br><u>Guest speaker:</u> TBA |
| <b>Tuesday, 3rd March</b><br>10:00 - 12:00    | <b>LGf Committee Meeting - Spring 2020</b><br><u>Venue:</u> Gateacre School, Hedgefield Road, L25 2RW<br><u>Guest speaker:</u> TBA     |
| <b>Date for diary:</b>                        | <b>LGf Summer Conference: Saturday, 9th May 2020</b>   |

# Governor Training Courses

## Spring 2020



**Thurs 16 January**  
**6pm – 8pm**

**Cost: Free**

Venue: [Gateacre School,](#)  
[Hedgefield Road, L25 2RW](#)

### **Termly Briefing for Chairs**

This meeting is open to the Chair, or a representative, of all Governing Bodies. Councillor Barbara Murray, Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills, Steve Reddy, Director of Children’s Services, and Heather Duggan, Chief Education Officer will be present at the meeting.

There will be presentations followed by opportunities for discussion and questions.

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**Thurs 23 January**  
**10am - 12pm**

**Cost: Free**

### **Termly Briefing for Clerks**

Our termly meeting for clerks to governing boards and/or committees includes briefings and discussion on current issues as well as an opportunity to share good practice and raise queries.

Presenter: Terry Brown, School Governance Services

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**Tues 28 January**  
**10am - 12pm**  
**or**  
**6pm - 8pm**

### **Pupil Exclusions**

A good preparation for any governor who may be required to sit on a panel to consider the exclusion of a pupil.

This course will cover:

- Regulations and statutory procedures
- The role of the governing board in reviewing an exclusion
- Appeal hearings
- The role of the Independent Review Panel

Presenter: Terry Brown, School Governance Services

# Governor Training Courses

## Spring 2020



**Wed 12 February**  
**9am - 16pm**

**Cost: This course is free with the Governor Training Service Agreement or £200 + vat if no Service Agreement**

### **Safer Recruitment**

It remains a statutory responsibility for at least one person on each appointments panel to have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. Participants on this course will be awarded a Certificate of Accreditation upon successful completion of a short assessment paper on the day. This course will cover::

- Features of offending behaviour
- Key features of safer recruitment practices
- What pre-employment checks need to be undertaken on staff
- What checks should be undertaken on governors, volunteers and third parties
- How recruitment checks should be recorded on the Single Central Record
- Which documents should be retained on personnel files
- Developing safer working practices and a safer culture

Presenter: Phil Cooper, Senior School Improvement Officer

**Tues 25 February**  
**10am - 12pm**  
**or**  
**6pm - 8pm**

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### **The Mastery Approach to Teaching and Learning: Primary Maths**

This course will:

- Provide an overview of the Mastery approach to teaching maths in the primary sector
- Explore the features of this approach and examine what it may look like in practice
- Increase awareness of effective implementation of the mastery approach

Presenter: Clare Putwain, School Improvement Officer, Primary Curriculum

# Governor Training Courses

## Spring 2020



**Mon 02 March**  
**10am - 12pm**  
or  
**6pm - 8pm**

### **Pupil Premium**

This course will cover:

- The responsibilities of governors
- Ofsted requirements and expectations
- Questions for governors to ask
- How successful schools are using the Pupil Premium

Presenter: Terry Brown and Dave Cadwallader, School Governance Services

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**Wed 04 March 10am - 12pm**  
or  
**6pm - 8pm**

### **The Mastery Approach to Teaching and Learning: Primary English**

This course will:

- Provide an overview of the Mastery approach to teaching English in the primary sector
- Explore the features of this approach and examine what it may look like in practice
- Increase awareness of effective implementation of the mastery approach

Presenter: Clare Putwain, School Improvement Officer, Primary Curriculum

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**Tues 24 March**  
**10am - 12pm**  
or  
**6pm - 8pm**

### **Parent Governors**

This informal session aims to clarify the role of the parent governor and will include:

- How do I represent the other parents?
- The importance of confidentiality
- What if I'm approached by another parent?
- Separating being a parent governor from being a parent

Presenter: Dave Cadwallader, School Governance Lead

# Governor Training Courses

## Summer 2019



This course is held over two sessions:

**Part One:**

**Tues 10 March**  
**10am to 12pm**  
**or**  
**6pm to 8pm**

**Part Two:**

**Tues 17 March**  
**10am to 12pm**  
**or**  
**6pm to 8pm**

### **The Role of the School Governor: An induction course for new governors**

*(Or a refresher course for experienced governors!)*

This two-part course is an important element of a governor's induction and it is recommended that all new governors attend. It covers the essential aspects of a governing board's responsibilities and provides an opportunity for participants to discuss how best to approach their role as a governor. The course is informal, non-threatening (you won't be put on the spot) and provides a forum for you to ask questions about your new role.

This course will cover:

- The core functions of governing bodies
- The legal framework for meetings
- What is strategic? What is operational?
- How governing bodies 'challenge' school leaders and hold them to account
- Monitoring and evaluating progress
- Complaints against the school

Presenter: Dave Cadwallader, School Governance Lead

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### **Attendance, Attendance, Attendance**

With attendance under increasing scrutiny from Ofsted, this session will cover:

- What factors affect attendance in schools
- Your school Attendance Policy
- School processes
- The Role of Education Welfare Officer
- Governor Challenge
- Frequently asked questions by Ofsted

Presenter: Charlie Breen, Team Manager, Education Welfare

**Wed 01 April**  
**10am - 12pm**  
**or**  
**6pm - 8pm**

# Governor Training Courses Summer 2019



## **Booking information:**

For more information or to book a place on a course call Jean Worrall on 0151 233 3944 or email [jean.worrall@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:jean.worrall@si.liverpool.gov.uk). You will receive written confirmation of your booking by email. You can now book onto any course via **GovernorHub**. Simply click Liverpool Governor Services tab at the top right of the screen then click on training. Courses are listed alphabetically, scroll down to the course you wish to book on and click “See sessions and book” then click “Book me on” for the session of your choice.

Our courses are available to all schools, whatever their status (maintained, academy, free, independent, UTC) and from any local authority.

**Cost:** Unless otherwise stated all sessions are FREE with the Governor Training Service Agreement or £100 excl vat per session if no Service Agreement. Longer sessions are priced individually. As a courtesy, please liaise with your school before booking onto a course if this will incur a fee. If you are unable to attend a course on which you have booked please tell us as soon as possible otherwise a fee, if applicable, will be charged.

**Venue:** The venue for all sessions is [Toxteth Annexe Conference Centre](#), Aigburth Road, Liverpool, L17 7BN. Free car parking is available within the grounds of the building (please note that Aigburth Road is a dual carriageway). Bus routes 82 and 60 run regular services along Aigburth Road whilst St Michael’s train station is located 600 metres away on Southbrook Road, L17 7BQ.

## School Improvement Liverpool

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