

# THE BURY GOVERNOR

## The Joint LA, BGA and BGTG Governors' Newsletter

Autumn Term 2014



### **Dear Governor**

Welcome to the first edition of the Joint Local Authority, Bury Governors Association and Bury Governor Training Group Governors' Newsletter with the aim of providing information about current issues.

All governing bodies of maintained schools are required to be constituted under the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 by **1 September 2015**. The Regulations create an explicit requirement that all appointed governors have the skills required to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school.

The National Governors Association (NGA) encourages all governing bodies to use a skills audit to help them identify any skills and knowledge they still need to deliver their functions effectively. The updated version of the NGA skills audit is structured around the core functions of the governing body, as defined in the Governors' Handbook:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

To make it easier to get a view of the skills across the governing body as a whole, NGA also produced a skills matrix, which can be used to collate governors' responses from the skills audit.

Please visit the NGA website – [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk) to download the skills audit and the skills matrix.

**PTO .....**

### Dates for your Diary

#### **Chairs of Governors' Briefings: -**

Tuesday, 9th September 2014  
Wednesday, 14th January 2015  
Thursday, 23rd April 2015  
At 6.45 pm, at Peel Room, Town Hall

#### **Bury Governors' Association meetings: -**

Wednesday, 19th November 2014  
Tuesday, 3rd March 2015  
Thursday, 11th June 2015  
At 7.00 pm at Peel Room, Town Hall

#### **Bury Governor Training Group—board meetings:**

Wednesday, 17th September 2014  
Wednesday, 26th November 2014  
At 12.30 pm at the DTC, Seedfield

Continued from Page 1....

### **Constitution of governing bodies -**

Section 3 of the Regulations explains how the governing body of every maintained school must be constituted. The governing body must not be smaller than seven members, and must include:

- at least two parent governors;
- the headteacher unless the headteacher resigns as a governor;
- one, and only one, staff governor;
- one, and only one, local authority governor; and

The governing body may appoint as many additional co-opted governors as they consider necessary. However, the number of co-opted governors who are eligible to be elected or appointed as staff governors must not, when counted with the one staff governor and the headteacher, exceed one-third of the total membership of the governing body.

In addition to the requirements above, foundation and voluntary schools are required to have partnership or foundation governors as follows:

- foundation and foundation special schools without a foundation must have at least two partnership governors;
- foundation and foundation special schools that have a foundation but are not a qualifying foundation school must have at least two foundation governors;
- qualifying foundation schools must have up to two more foundation governors than all other governors;
- voluntary aided schools must have two more foundation governors than all other governors; and
- voluntary controlled schools must have at least two foundation governors.

Please note that 'Constitution of the Governing Body' will be an agenda item for the Autumn term 2014; governing bodies are requested to start planning for the reconstitution and should have regard to the statutory guidance as listed above. If you need any assistance/advice with your constitution, please don't hesitate to contact the Governor Support Team.

Best wishes

***Elma Knowles***

Governor Support Coordinator

## Message from the Chair of the BGA

The complex and demanding role of a governor is to set the ethos and vision of the school, the strategic direction, hold the headteacher to account and have oversight of the school's finances. A lot for the 'man or woman' in the street – especially new governors, to get to grips with. Remember your first meeting with acronyms and agenda items flying up and down the table? If the learning curve could be accelerated, new governors could gain the confidence to quickly make real impact and contribution to the whole Governing Body.

With consistent feedback and support from governors for mandatory training (90% of governors supported mandatory training in the NGA June 2011 survey, and 89% agreed in the 2009 survey), which the NGA highlighted to the House of Commons Select Committee on the role of governors, but we still await a response from DfE, that training will become mandatory.

The recent Governors' Handbook (May 2014) has a stronger emphasis on the importance of high quality induction and training, and maybe we should not be frightened of this. The only frightening thing would be its *perception*, risking putting off potentially good governors who do not want to be forced to take up training in a voluntary post. A real risk? Governance brings with it all the pluses of personal development, the satisfaction of 'putting something back', and we should not be frightened with the imminent governance constitution amendments with the added worry of skills audits. It's the quality of governors that is crucial rather than the number of them.

A little bit of training may give a big bit of confidence, and you can't buy that! I'm sure we don't want professionals doing a voluntary job (worse still – a professional being paid for governance positions impacting even further on school budgets), but equally, we don't want novices doing what is increasingly being expected a professional job.

Remember though – leave the baggage at the door, because sitting at the GB table, you're not representing anyone at all, we're there purely and wholly for the best interest of the pupils.

***Richard Ainsworth***

Chair, Bury Governors Association

### BURY GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION

Chair—Richard Ainsworth

[richard@fintek.co.uk](mailto:richard@fintek.co.uk)

### BURY GOVERNOR TRAINING GROUP

Chair—Kenneth Kerr

[kerr361@btinternet.com](mailto:kerr361@btinternet.com)

### GOVERNOR HELPLINES

If you need help with governance issues, please contact the Governor Support Team either by phone or email on:

**0161 2535617; 0161 2535688**

**[Governors.Support@bury.gov.uk](mailto:Governors.Support@bury.gov.uk)**

### KEEP UP TO DATE AND INFORMED:

**[www.bury-governor.com](http://www.bury-governor.com)**

## The View from the BGTG

As the Summer term of 2013/14 drew to a close, one event and two pieces of data provided excellent lenses through which to reflect on 2013/14 with some relish whilst looking forward with considerable confidence and some trepidation to the year ahead.

**Retirement of Barbara Hutton** - Barbara, who retired after 27 years of unbroken service to local government in Bury, was given a rousing send-off on 27 June 2014. Colleagues both current and past gathered at the DTC in an atmosphere redolent of the Australian way of life.

All present whether they lived locally or afar were determined to remember and celebrate Barbara's devotion to the professional development of Bury colleagues with direct responsibility for the well being and success of Bury's young people. It is quite likely that most people present did not realise the breadth of Barbara's sphere of influence until speakers from the BGTG Board and the LA in turn recognised and rewarded her for her leadership of her team. That team supports governors from primary, secondary and special schools; staff and headteachers from Bury schools; the increasingly important generation of an income stream for Bury LA to make the DTC virtually self-sufficient.

Barbara's response to all those words of thanks and praise was thoughtful, self-effacing and typically turned into praise and thanks for her team and all of the nice people she had worked with over the years. There was scarcely a dry eye in the house.

The name of Barbara's replacement will be announced in early September, I am sure, she/he will be made to feel most welcome by Bury governors.

**Survey of Governors June/July 2014** - In response to a number of requests over the last year from GBs for in-school governor training the BGTG Board commissioned a survey of all governors of Bury schools. The survey asked respondents to indicate their preference(s) for the venue at which a sample of 11 different courses be offered in future. The venues offered for consideration were: in-school; in a school serving a cluster of schools; in the DTC.

The consolidated summary of responses follows with one quotation from a respondent whose preferred venue was the DTC.

Venues		
In-school	In Cluster	In DTC
80	61	203
<p><i>"My one set of comments apply to all of the courses. It seems clear to me that courses are more beneficial where there are a wide range of attendees who bring a variety of questions and contributions to the course. As such, it is preferable if they are borough wide courses. It also seems clear to me that they need to be held at one regular place thereby ensuring that attendees know where they are going, how to get there, and how long it will take to get there."</i></p>		

The overall response rate from approximately 1000 governors was disappointingly low but about one third of all Bury schools generated at least one returned survey by the closing date for emailed responses, 11 July 2014. The summary of responses shows that the DTC emerged as the strongest preference across all 11 courses included in the survey. However, members of the Board noted for possible action in 2014/15, the strong support for governor development and training to be in schools for specific GBs for;

- Preparation for Ofsted – challenges for 2014/15
- Understanding Data & Challenging Performance
- Governor & GB Self-evaluation
- Expectations of Governors & GBs for 2014/15.

A copy of the final summary showing the detailed responses to each of the sample of 11 courses is available. Please email requests to me, Ken Kerr, in the first instance using the email address in your copy of the Training Guide for 2013/14 or 2014/15.

**Monitoring and Feedback Report for 2013/14** - The final summary of governor activity for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 indicates that Barbara and her team, the trainers and participants in training had enjoyed another very successful year. The evidence is strong and unambiguous:

- an overall response rate of 93% from a total number of attendees of 577
- four key performance indicators (KPI) rated Good or better – Usefulness to you 99%; Organised & led 99%; Matched stated objectives 99%; Course materials provided 98%.

The data for ALL activities and across ALL subjects shows the totality of activity at the DTC for 2013/14. There were 7782 attendees of whom 90% completed monitoring and feedback forms. The summary of their feedback for the same four KPIs rated Good or better was 98%, 99%, 99% and 97%. These figures include the data for governor training and underpin the strength of the service delivered at the DTC.

**The challenges for the year ahead** are twofold:

- to match or preferably exceed the KPIs achieved in 2013/14
- to secure a re-location of the DTC services for 2015/16 which matches or preferably exceeds the quality of the learning environment and technical infrastructure currently available at the DTC, Seedfield.

For participants in pursuit of development and training at a Bury location the challenge is – use it or lose it. For the LA it's a different challenge. Their choice is between re-locating the DTC service to a location that is available or to a location that is 'Best for You' where the You are all of those governors whose GBs have bought back the BGTG governor training package. That means 73 schools of the 80 which will be operating in 2014/15.

**Ken Kerr**

Chair of BGTG Board

## **The 0-25 Special Educational Needs Reforms**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms aim to join up help across education, health and care, from birth to 25.

Schools will be expected to have clear systems for identification, assessment, monitoring and securing appropriate support for children with special educational needs. The SEND Code of Practice published in June 2014 sets out the need for schools to involve parents in a more structured and systematic way to shape the support their child receives, and to be more transparent about what the school can provide. In particular, the code places an emphasis on working with parents to agree and review the outcomes the support is intended to achieve, rather than counting the hours or resources given to a child at school.

### **Are you ready for implementation of the reforms?**

Do you understand what is meant by whole school SEN provision?

Does the Senior Leadership Team understand the implications of the reforms and know what needs to change in the school?

Are classroom teachers aware of the changes and recognise their responsibilities for identifying and supporting pupils with SEN?

Do parents have confidence that their child will get the support they need for their child?

The SEND reforms require a whole school approach to SEND. It is essential that the whole school community, governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, young people and parents, understand what the reforms mean for them.

### **What schools need to do**

- Initiate a review of your school's SEN Policy engaging governors and staff, parents and young people.
- Publish information on your SEN provision as set out in the SEND Information Regulations 2014.
- Tell parents about the reforms and explain to them how the transition will happen, make staff aware of the reforms and start essential training needs.
- Engage with the local authority in relation to the requirements, in particular the development of the local offer and their process for transferring from statements to EHC plans.
- Ensure the SENCO has the right qualifications and explore how the SENCO fits into strategic management of the school.
- Have arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions.  
Review and refresh the school's process for the early identification and assessment of SEND to follow the graduated approach.
- Review pupils currently on SA/SA+, engaging the child and parent in decision making and planning and being clear about the extra support that they need, what impact you expect support to have and by when.
- Review and refresh the schools procedures for effective engagement to ensure children, young people and parents are involved in decision making and planning. Review how the schools support pupils with SEN with their transition to high school, post-16 education and preparing for adult life.

***Paul Cooke, Strategic Lead - Schools, Academies & Colleges***

## **UPDATE FROM THE DfE .....**

### **Constitution and Federation Amendment Regulations**

The Regulations **come into force from** 1 September 2014 with all governing bodies, including those of federations being required to reconstitute under the 2012 Constitution Regulation by 1 September 2015.

DfE will be issuing further amendment regulations to correct an error in the Amendment Regulations. These new regulations will make clear that the requirement that the appointment of governors should all be on the basis of skills, and that the removal of the juniority principle for removing surplus governors from the governing body will take effect from September 2014.

Surplus governors – any governing body which reconstitutes prior to 1 September 2014 will still apply the juniority rule to remove surplus governors.

The Statutory Guidance published to accompany the regulations focuses on the changes which come into force from September 2014.

### **Governors' Handbook**

DfE is currently working on the next edition of the Handbook and it is expected to be issued in September 2014.

### **GovernorLine**

**A reminder** - the new contract for GovernorLine came into force from 1 July. Under the new contract the opening hours of the service have changed. You can now contact the service Monday to Friday between 10:00-20:00. The service does not operate on weekends or Bank Holidays.

### **NCTL**

A re-write of the highly successful *Leading Governors* is available online, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/leading-governors-the-role-of-the-chair-of-governors>

### **Bury Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) TRAINING**

<http://www.safeguardingburychildren.org/index.aspx?articleid=8921>

Bury LA school staff and governors can access the BSCB training for free apart from the Group 3 course, which is provided for school staff by the DTC or the Lead Officer Safeguarding for Schools. For further information please contact BSCB@bury.gov.uk; 0161 2535705,

### **FOR TRAINING COURSES, please visit [www.burygtg.org.uk](http://www.burygtg.org.uk)**

To book a course or for further information, please ring or email Governor

Training Email: [educationdtc@bury.gov.uk](mailto:educationdtc@bury.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0161 2536931

**TRAINING COURSES FOR SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2014**

<u>29 Sept 2014</u>	Performance Management Training for Governors to Cover Head Teachers Panel and Whole School	12.30pm – 3.00pm	GV09AU14
1 Oct 2014	The New Primary Curriculum	6.00pm – 9.00pm	GV13AU14
7 Oct 2014	Governors Role in School Improvement	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV19AU14
9 Oct 2014	The New Primary Curriculum	9.30am – 12.30pm	GV13AU14 A
14 Oct 2014	E Safety (Mark Gay)	12.30pm – 3.00pm	GV06AU14
16 Oct 2014	Governors Role in School Improvement	6.00pm – 8.00pm	GV19AU14 A
20 Oct 2014	Group 3 Safeguarding Training For Schools & Governors	9.00am – 1.00pm	CH01AU14
22 Oct 2014	School Websites	9.30am – 12.00pm	GV16AU14
23 Oct 2014	IT Coaching for Governors – Session 1	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV10AU14
24 Oct 2014	National Induction Programme for Governors Modules 1 – 4	9.00am - 4.00pm	GV02AU14
3 Nov 2014	Basic SEN Awareness for New SEN Link Governors	10.00am – 12.00pm	GV17AU14
3 Nov 2014	Basic SEN Awareness for New SEN Link Governors	6.00pm – 8.00pm	GV17AU14 A
3 Nov 2014	E Safety (Mark Gay)	6.00pm – 8.30pm	GV06AU14 A
6 Nov 2014	IT Coaching for Governors – Session 2	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV10AU14
6 Nov 2014	Preparation for Ofsted – Challenges for 2014/2015	6.00pm – 8.30pm	GV11AU14
7 Nov 2014	Understanding a Schools Budget	9.00am - 12.00pm	GV01AU14
11 Nov 2014	Expectations of Governors & Governing Bodies for 2014/2015	9.30am – 12.00pm	GV12AU14
12 Nov 2014	Emotional Intelligence for Governors	9.30am – 4.30pm	GV05AU14
13 Nov 2014	IT Coaching for Governors – Session 3	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV10AU14
13 Nov 2014	Understanding a Schools Budget	6.00pm - 9.00pm	GV01AU14 A
15 Nov 2014	CONFERENCE – The Journey to Outstanding (Will Ryan)	9.30am – 2.30pm	GV15AU14
18 Nov 2014	Resolving Conflict	1.00pm – 4.00pm	HS04AU14
19 Nov 2014	Role of the Link Governor and Effective School Visits	6.00pm – 8.30pm	GV14AU14
20 Nov 2014	IT Coaching for Governors – Session 4	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV10AU14
20 Nov 2014	Health & Safety Core Competency for Governors - Do You Know What Your Health & Safety Responsibilities are as a Governing Body?	1.00pm - 4.00pm	GV04AU14
22 Nov 2014	National Induction Programme for Governors Modules 1 – 4	9.00am - 4.00pm	GV02AU14 A
26 Nov 2014	Now You are Chair – What Next?	6.00pm – 8.30pm	GV08AU14
27 Nov 2014	IT Coaching for Governors – Session 5	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV10AU14
27 Nov 2014	SEN Update for SEN Link Governors	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV18AU14
27 Nov 2014	SEN Update for SEN Link Governors	6.00pm – 8.00pm	GV18AU14 A
28 Nov 2014	Bullying in its Various Forms	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV07AU14
3 Dec 2014	National Induction Programme Modules 1 & 2	1.00pm - 4.00pm	GV03AU14
3 Dec 2014	Understanding Data	6.00pm – 8.30pm	GV20AU14
4 Dec 2014	IT Coaching for Governors – Session 6	1.00pm – 3.00pm	GV10AU14
10 Dec 2014	National Induction Programme Modules 3 & 4	1.00pm - 4.00pm	GV03AU14 A