

THE BURY GOVERNOR



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

&

Welcome to the Spring Edition of The Bury Governor

Message from the BGA Chair

The Autumn meeting of the Bury Governor's Association was held in the Irwell Room of the Town Hall, 26 November 2014. It was opened by Will Mason-Jebb of SGOSS (if you need governors during, or have excess governors after, your re-constitution, please refer to their website).

Peter Lowe, of the Finance Department gave a presentation on the increased funding secured for 2015/16. As one of the most poorly funded boroughs, Peter and his team have worked tirelessly to increase the amount Bury receive, and thanks must be passed on to them for their success.

There was also a presentation on the Reconstitution of the Governing Body. Open discussion followed, with recommendation that the NGA timeline be followed for reconstitution and that the Ofsted 'inspection myth buster' was a very useful tool about what actually happens under the new framework.

Finally, AGM saw confirmation of members of the executive committee.

The Margaret Ann Smith Charity

This is a Tottington based charity assisting young people to travel overseas on broadly-defined educational visits. The trustees particularly wish to help pupils in Bury schools whose parents or carers find it difficult to fund overseas travel for their children. The Tottington residency qualification must apply for individuals although the charity may support groups of young people, provided at least some members of the group satisfy the residential requirement of the trust.

For further information and an application form, please contact trustee Neville Kenyon na.kenyon@btinternet.com (Tel: 01204 88 7222)

Reconstitution has been the hottest topic this Autumn term as the deadline looms. As we are all aware, since 2012 there has been a requirement that all Governing Bodies must be reconstituted by September 2015 – much closer than you think.

There are various articles out there, so I won't repeat what most of you will probably have seen, the NGA is a great resource with their *Twenty key questions for a school governing body to ask itself* and *NGA Q & A around Reconstitution for 2015* as good starting points.

Reconstitution should not be viewed as more DfE bureaucracy, but part of a vital school improvement tool. Consider attitude, conduct, commitment, etc as well as skills of your GB members, using training to fill any skills deficit.

Dates for your Diary

Chairs of Governors' Briefings: -

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

Bury Governors' Association meetings: -

Tuesday, 3rd March 2015
Thursday, 11th June 2015
Thursday, 19th November 2015
At 7.00pm to 9.00pm at Peel Room, Town Hall

Bury Governor Training Group—board meetings:

Wednesday, 28th January 2015
Wednesday, 18th March 2015
At 12.30pm to 2.30pm at DTC

Schools will not succeed without strong and skilled school governors who are confident to ask difficult questions in the interests of children and young people. Together with principles of good governance, including total clarity of the role, robust schemes of delegation, excellent induction and a culture of on-going training and development will impact directly on improving schools to good and beyond. Strong governance equals strong schools.

Good luck, and remember we're an association, here to help each other.

From myself and the members of the Executive, please accept our Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for you all in 2015.

Richard Ainsworth

Chair, Bury Governor's Association

The View from the BGTG

In the September meeting, the Board of the BGTG decided to share the minutes of its meetings with the Training Link Governor for every GB. If your GB's Training Link Governor wishes to receive the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Board (26 Nov 2014) please email your request to Sandra Whalley at the DTC (s.whalley@bury.gov.uk).

For all governors, the meeting of 26 Nov 2014 covered the following items:

Key stakeholder analysis

Financial modelling of likely effects of reconstitution of GBs

Clerking of governor meetings

Seedfield site

Website

Terms of reference (revised)

Old Hall induction & development policy for school governors

Training programme updates including Chairs' Development Programme, request for a trial of some evening courses to start at 7pm rather than 6pm, briefings for governors around alcohol & drug abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation and the Prevent strategy, Through the Lens of an Inspector – led by an HMI

BGA update

Action plan around phonics and mathematics at KS1

Update on the NW Teaching Alliance – in preparation for a briefing in 2015.

If these topics excite your interest please ask your Training Link Governor for a copy of the minutes.

The final version of the Terms of Reference alluded to above will become effective from Spring 2015 when the Bury Governor Training Group is re-launched as the Bury Governor Development Group. This is in recognition of the greater emphasis being placed by Ofsted and the DfE on the development of governors, governance and GBs in the years ahead. Governors who embrace their self development and engage with the programme on offer through the BGDG in future will, I feel sure, be able to face inspections with renewed confidence and conviction that they are doing the best that can be done for the children and young people in their school(s).

Ken Kerr

Chair of BGTG Board

Dec 2014

CEIAG is the 'umbrella' term for **careers education, information, advice and guidance** which is about the *whole* careers provision that a school organises, including lessons, talks from visiting speakers, guidance interviews and other activities like visits to colleges.

Statutory Duty for Governing Bodies

- The statutory duty requires governing bodies to ensure that all registered pupils in years 8 to 13 are provided with independent careers guidance in an impartial manner.
- Include information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and other vocational pathways.
- Governors should provide advice to the head teacher upon which to base a strategy, which delivers the school's legal obligations and the strategy should be embedded within a clear framework linked to outcomes rather than ad hoc activities.
- The strategy should meet the needs of all students, be targeted and:
- Include a range of activities designed to inspire, including: employer talks; careers fairs; motivational speakers; college and university visits.
- Consider the needs of pupils who require sustained or more intensive support.
- Online tools do not meet the statutory duty on their own.
- Schools can retain in-house arrangements, by having a careers teacher/adviser, but these are not sufficient to meet the duty in themselves. Advice and guidance must be provided from external sources to meet legal requirements.
- Schools should take steps to ensure stereotyping is prevented in all forms of advice and guidance provided.
- Schools are required to work with their local authority in providing data on students' destinations. There are three sets of data that are reported annually to the Department for Education: Intended destinations, September Guarantee and the Activity Survey.

Bury Council recommends that schools only commission Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services from providers that hold the Matrix Standard accreditation (for IAG). Currently, all schools buy in traded IAG services from Connexions Bury; by doing this, the school can be reassured that not only does the organisation have Matrix Standard accreditation, but also that all the advisers employed by Connexions Bury are qualified to a minimum of Level 6. Connexions Bury provides destination information to every school on an annual basis

Bury Council endorses the government's recommendations to schools to work towards a CEIAG quality award. This ensures that the school is working within a rigorous quality assurance framework that reaches beyond the statutory requirements. The Council provides free mentoring for any school working towards the Greater Manchester CEIAG quality award *Inspiring IAG*; currently there are 13 schools pledged to work towards this or who have already achieved stages in the award. Please note that each school should also ensure that pupils are aware of the National Careers Service that provides a website, web chat and telephone helpline for young people, though it should be highlighted that the National Careers Service does not deliver services directly to young people in schools.

Ensure there is a member of the senior leadership team with overall responsibility for CEIAG; Ensure oversight of the school's careers provision by an appropriate committee/sub-group that could make sure the careers policy is up to date and monitor effectiveness against the annual careers plan; Monitor use of funding streams such as Pupil Premium and that destination data of pupils is embedded as part of the school's evaluation and development of CEIAG; Encourage the school to work towards *Inspiring IAG* quality award; Identify a link governor to have oversight of CEIAG in school; Ask learners about their experiences of provision; Build strong connections with employers – consider having an employer on your Governing Body

For further information, contact: Vilma O'Shea, 14-19 Transition Manager, v.oshea@bury.gov.uk or Telephone 0161 253 5983.

Liz Baker – Old Hall Primary School Governor Development Link Governor

After the first ten minutes of my first Full Governing Body meeting in November 2013, I realised that I desperately needed some training! I felt totally out-of-my-depth. At that meeting, I heard about Bury Governor Training Group (www.burygtg.org.uk) and the excellent courses they run at the Development and Training Centre (DTC) in Bury. I also heard about the Bury Governors' Association. Soon, I was attending courses at the DTC. All the courses are facilitated by highly qualified and widely experienced consultants. I am always impressed by the professionalism of everyone at the DTC and the facilities are outstanding. At the DTC, all Bury Governors are welcomed and appreciated, they even lay on fabulous buffets as an added bonus! The courses are very empowering. They are presented in such a grounded way that it is really easy to take back the knowledge that you gain and apply it into real life situations as a School Governor. The courses also give you an important opportunity to meet a wide variety of volunteers from other schools.

On the back of all this training, myself and fellow governors at Old Hall Primary School felt that, in order to meet the ever increasing responsibilities given to Governors these days, we needed some kind of Induction Policy to support new governors. I attended a BGA event in May 2014 and happened to mention to another governor that we were trying to put together an Induction Policy. "We've got one you can have," said Mr Paul Singleton, Chair of Governors at St. Monica's RC High School in Prestwich. From this chance meeting, St Monica's High and Old Hall Primary have collaboratively developed a new '**Induction and Development Policy for School Governors**'. Several professionals have advised and contributed, including Dave Eccles, one of the DTC Facilitators, and Graham Howarth, School Improvement Partner from Bury Local Authority. This new policy is a perfect example of the benefits of collaborative work between Governing Bodies. Looking to the future, I feel it is particularly important for High Schools to work with their feeder Primary Schools.

This Induction Policy document will soon be available electronically on the BGTG website to share with all Governing Bodies. Ken Kerr, Chair of the BGTG Board said, "This Induction Policy is very impressive in its tone, content and clarity."

After being a governor for twelve months, I am the Governor Development Link governor as well as the Chair of the newly formed Governor Development Committee at Old Hall. I have joined the BGTG Board to support their aims for Outstanding Governance in Bury. I have also signed up for a new Leadership Development Course run by Edge Hill University through the DTC commencing in January 2015 which is a nationally recognized professional development course. It is extremely rewarding to see that the time and energy I give to my volunteer role is having a positive impact and benefiting local children. The transition from feeling out of my depth to becoming confident that I can swim like a Swan 'graceful on the surface with legs paddling hard underneath' has happened because I am able to access the training I need at the DTC. In our October 2014 Ofsted Inspection, Old Hall was graded "Good" and the Inspector's report mentions that "Governors hold the leadership to account and are very supportive of the school. They are well trained and regularly review and visit the school." Ofsted is placing ever more emphasis on the quality of Governance.

Governors in Bury are extremely well supported and we are incredibly lucky compared to governors in other parts of the UK. Governors have a great responsibility to make sure that children get the education and the future they deserve. Training really does make a difference! Check out the BGTG website today and get yourself booked on some courses at DTC in 2015.

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

Email: educationdtc@bury.gov.uk

Telephone: 0161 253 6931

A full list of all available training courses can be found at <http://www.burygtg.org.uk/>

GOVERNOR HELPLINES

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

01612535688/01612535670

Governors.Support@bury.gov.uk