



Welcome back to the second half of the Autumn term. In this edition we have included a short Survey Monkey in relation to our governor training offer, as well as information from Inspiring Governance on how they can support you to source skilled individuals to join your governing board. To support boards in preparing for the Spring term, this edition also focuses on finance and managing your budget.

As part of the Learning Improvement Service the Governor Support Team are here to support you and your board. To assist us, it would be very helpful if you can update us with any changes to chairs and clerks contact details so we can ensure all boards receive our communications. GST contact details can be found at the end of this newsletter.

## **School Governance Update**

Baroness Barron has been appointed as the minister with responsibility for governance and as such, a new guidance document has been issued which can be accessed here:

**School governance update: November 2021**

## **National Governance Association: e-learning for school governors, trustees, chairs and clerks**

As part of the Learning Improvement Service's support to our governing boards, all schools in Cumbria have been gifted 12 months free subscription to the National Governance Association Learning Link. This offer ends in April 2022.

We encourage all governing boards to keep a training record of the modules that have been undertaken by each member of the board.

### **Survey Monkey**

As we are now 6 months into the NGA Learning Link offer, we would greatly appreciate it if you could take the time to complete the following survey, so that we can begin to assess the impact of the NGA training on GBs. Your feedback will help to shape and drive forward future governor training.

The Survey can be accessed via the link below and will be live until Wednesday 15 December 2021:

**<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NKDP87D>**

## National Governance Association Learning Link Modules

The following modules may assist you with forthcoming tasks for the governing board:

### Ofsted Inspections: step by step (new module October 2021)

This comprehensive, interactive guide to inspections is designed to provide insight into what Ofsted requires of your school and governing board. Ofsted inspectors will review your website as part of their inspection preparation. Statutory requirements should be part of your Ofsted inspection checklist to ensure school website compliance. Details of what maintained schools must publish online can be found [here](#).

### Pupil Success and Wellbeing: Pupil Premium

The 'Pupil Premium' module is designed to help governors and trustees fulfil their strategic role in the effective and efficient management of the school's use of the Pupil Premium Grant, to raise the attainment of Free Schools Meals Children, Looked After Children, and the children of serving members of Her Majesty Forces. The Department of Education requires schools to publish their strategy statement by 31 December 2021 - **Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**.

In preparation for the Spring term and submitting budgets, now is the time to consider the following finance modules:

- **Understanding Schools Finance**
- **Finance: Making the most of what you've got**
- **Using Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning**

The first two modules outline the funding and types of funding schools should receive, how this should be used, managed and the strategic and compliance function of the governing board.

The third module is a bitesize module providing an introductory exploration into integrated curriculum and financial planning.

## Financial Delegation

The Local Authority delegates the responsibility for managing the school's budget to governing bodies and the '**LA Scheme for Financing Schools**' requires that governing bodies set out the duties, responsibilities and delegated powers for financial matters of each individual within their school in writing.

The Local Authority have produced a model example Policy for Financial Delegation. The model example policy is a key document which forms the basis for all financial controls in the school and sets out the areas of responsibility held and delegated by the governing body in a clear and defined way. The policy should be reviewed at least on an annual basis or more frequently as necessary, such as when a change in responsibilities has been agreed by governors or if there has been a change of staff with financial responsibilities.

Schools and governing bodies are encouraged to adopt the template and amend it where necessary to reflect the levels of delegation agreed by the governing board in your school. Please find the model policy [here](#) and supporting letter [here](#).



## Recruitment of Governors - Inspiring Governance

Recruiting the right governors is one of the most important decisions that a board can make, ensuring the board has a good balance of skills and knowledge around the table.

Inspiring Governance is a free, online service that connects schools and trusts in England with skilled volunteers in your area who are interested in becoming a school governor or trustee.

Inspiring Governance work with employers, professional networks, FE providers and universities to find individuals interested in becoming school governors. Their volunteers come from a wide range of professions and sectors, with skills and expertise in areas such as finance, human resources, law, marketing and education.

Their online technology lets you quickly search for volunteers based on skills, experience and location. You can then directly contact as many as you like and invite them to have a conversation with you about the vacancy and what it entails. You can recruit and advertise governor vacancies in a single school, or across multiple schools.

Inspiring Governance are holding virtual 'lunch and learn' sessions with a focus on recruitment and how to attract volunteers. Ideally, boards could have one governor attending a lunch and learn session and provide feedback to the whole board. Further details can be found [here](#).

## Governor Computing Webinar

Did you know there is funding for schools to support the delivery of the Computing curriculum?

The Department for Education has funded an online National Centre for Computer Education for England's schools and colleges. They offer free resources, online training, and a network of local hubs with the aim of improving computing skills and subject knowledge.

To find out more about supporting the delivery of the Computing Curriculum, the Governor Support Team have arranged a webinar on: **Thursday 2 December 2021, 6pm to 7pm**

There is no need to book as there is no limit on numbers, to attend please click on this [link](#).

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities update

The Department for Education have approved funding for all schools in Cumbria to receive free Whole School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities training. The pilot in 2020-2021 was attended by 30 schools across the county and received positive feedback.

Although this is not compulsory, we recommend any school that is able to engage in this training to do so; it is suggested that headteachers and Special Educational Needs Coordinators attend the course. In schools where this is not possible, governors with the responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities would benefit from the training and could then feedback to governors and headteachers.

Headteachers have received a briefing session before half term and links to all training sessions. The training covers: all staff having responsibility to lead on SEND in school, use of data, SEND Reviews and Quality First Teaching. This training will feed into Local Authority work planned for this academic year that aims to develop a system led Special Educational and Disabilities Review focus across the county. Please contact your headteacher for further details.

Whole School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities currently holds the Department of Education's Schools Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Workforce contract and is well known for providing free materials which are useful to schools (the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Review framework and Special Educational Needs Coordinator Induction Pack for example), videos, etc. all of which can be found at:

[www.sendgateway.org.uk/whole-school-send/find-wss-resources/](http://www.sendgateway.org.uk/whole-school-send/find-wss-resources/).

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Governing boards should be aware of the introduction of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, which became statutory from 1 September 2021. The Early Years team have produced an information sheet to support governors in understanding the new framework and the role for governors which can be found **here**.

## Complaints Policy

The duty to establish procedures for dealing with complaints lies with the governing board. To ensure complaints are dealt with effectively and in a timely fashion, it is important boards review their Complaints Policy annually and ensure it is fit for purpose.

The Department for Education have a **model Complaints Policy** which schools can choose to adopt; however, schools must tailor the policy to their school. It is also recommended that schools incorporate a serial complaints policy into their complaints procedure.



## Contact

GST continues to offer advice, support, and guidance, specific to your boards needs and can be contacted as follows:

**Jane Lees** (Barrow and South Lakes)  
E: jane.lees@cumbria.gov.uk M: 07768 027 244

**Faith Matthews** (part-time), (Carlisle and Allerdale)  
E: faith.matthews@cumbria.gov.uk M: 07384 825 941

**Kellie Fricker** (part-time), (Copeland and Eden)  
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There is also a wealth of information on the Governor Support Team website:

**[www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/governorservices/govcontact.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/governorservices/govcontact.asp)**