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Governors' newsletter Autumn Term 2020



Autumn Term 2020

Dear Colleagues

It feels so good to be writing to you again after what can only be described as the most challenging period in education that I, and no doubt many of you, can ever remember. All I can say is the partnership of Hull schools has held the City together in our phenomenal response to the challenges of Covid 19. We would be in a very much worse place if you had not entered into what can only be described as a wartime spirit of survival along with our partners in and beyond the Council to support our children through this very difficult time. Our schools have been at the heart of keeping children safe, enabling key workers to carry on in critical jobs and working to carry on educating our school population at home. We are so proud of what you as governors have supported and encouraged your schools to do.

Please carry on in that spirit as we face the challenges of a return to a new and much altered normality of safe full-time education. I think we have all amazed ourselves at just what we can achieve with all the restrictions of working away from our normal base however, for our young people, there is no substitute for being physically present in school for all the reasons we know so well. I am also pleased to acknowledge that our teachers have finally gained the well-deserved rewards on behalf of students of their robust assessments in the absence of examinations and tests in 2020. My hope is that we will begin the term with children who can't wait to return and staff who can't wait to get going and make up for lost time. I know that our schools can count on your further support for recovery. We are still in uncharted waters and likely to be for some time. I welcome you back to the new School Year and all it will hold for the City and look forward to sharing the journey with you.

Kindest regards

Jo

(Jo Moxon, Assistant Director Learning and Skills PSA, Education)



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Good News - Broadacre Primary School



The new Broadacre Primary School has started its journey with a new build.

The project, which will see the existing building demolished and replaced, has now been approved by the Regional Schools Commissioner expected to be completed for Spring 2022. The new build will provide 630 pupil places, 210 more places than the existing building for children in the North Carr area of the city.

It will also have a 52 place nursery and a 10-place Special Educational Needs Autism Spectrum Disorder provision. This school is one of several in Hull that are being remodelled or expanded to provide a further 1,110 pupil places. This ensures that the LA meet the rising number of children needing school places and maintains the focus in providing special educational needs places a top priority for the city. The council has received basic need funding from the Department of Education to provide additional pupil places.

Admissions Team Update for Governors

On 1 March 3296 pupils were allocated a secondary school and 95.89% were allocated one of their preferred schools. On 16 April 3314 pupils were allocated a primary school and 97.71% were allocated one of their preferred schools. A number of parents who have children in nursery don't apply as they feel that they will automatically gain a place at the school or because they don't want their child to start school until later in the year. This means that parents often miss out leading to an increase in appeals for schools places. Reminders are sent to parents, schools and nurseries throughout the year.

The number of in year applications processed by the admissions team this year exceeded 2900 despite the lockdown.



Every school **must** consult on their admission arrangements if they wish to make any amendments and they can do this between the beginning of October and the end of January in relevant year. If nothing changes the school must still consult on their arrangements every 7 years. Every year the school must determine their arrangements by the end of February. If there are no determined arrangements this could have an impact on the appeals for the school as the panel need to check that the arrangements are legal and comply with the School Admissions Code. Once the arrangements have been set they must be published on the schools website and a copy must also be sent to the admissions team by 15 March to be published on the council website.

Unfortunately, each year we have to report to the school's adjudicator that not all schools are compliant with this part of the admissions code. If assistance is required please contact school admissions.

Alyson Joyce, Senior Admissions Officer

Admissions Team: 01482 613348

More Fame for Music Service

Governors have always been keen supporters of the HCC Music Service who have not only delivered more than 5,000 music lessons virtually since lockdown began but also done 14 weeks of the 'Sing for Hull'.

Sing for Hull took a break for the summer holidays but due to its popularity will re-start in September and go from once a week to once a month.

Not only have the music service been on BBC Look North in the past few weeks but they've also featured on Music Matters on BBC Radio 3, raising the profile of music services and explaining the issues during lockdown and how they've kept children singing and playing throughout the pandemic.

[Access the Radio 3 interview here](#)

[Access the music hub here to Sing for Hull](#)



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

DBS Checks for Chairs of Trust Boards

The DfE have developed a new digital service for chairs of academy trust boards to apply for suitability checks. A recent change in regulations allows an improved process for identity checks and modernised Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for new chairs using the online Verifile service.

All new academy trust chairs of trust boards must complete a suitability check as soon as they are appointed.

The suitability check includes:

- an identity check
- confirmation of the right to work in the United Kingdom
- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- providing additional information if you have lived outside the United Kingdom for a period of 12 months or longer

Chairs of trustees who have already started their DBS applications may need an explanation as to what they need to do next. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) carries out suitability checks on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education to comply with legislation and to keep children safe in education.

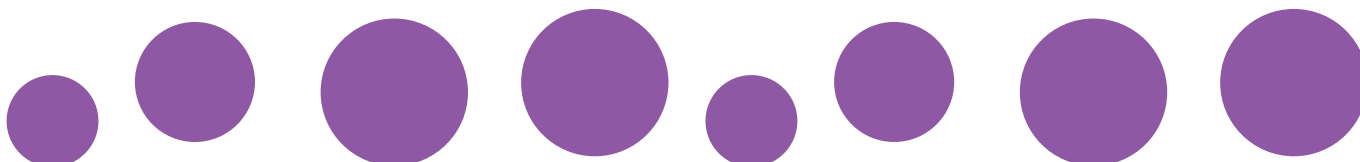
For more information, read [Academy trust chair suitability checks](#).

Changes to Academies Financial Handbook 2020

The [new edition of the Academies Financial Handbook 2020](#) comes into effect on the 1st September 2020.

The changes are summarised at the front of the handbook. Changes include new information and requirements for academy trusts from 1 September 2020, such as:

- trustees' responsibilities with regard to maintaining the trust as a going concern
- internal scrutiny coverage
- updated information on general controls and transparency





The September edition of GATHERround reported on the following:

“This time of the year is often referred to by the media as the ‘silly season’ as there are usually few newsworthy events with parliament in recess and people away on holiday. How different this summer has been for education and I’m afraid it’s resulted in a Covid-dominated issue of GATHERround yet again. There is a slight difference this time though, because instead of looking at what schools were told to put in place to minimise dangers of the pandemic, we’ve concentrated mainly on what’s happened as a result of government plans to provide results for examinations that no pupils actually sat!. The newsletters cover articles on key current issues and arguments on such areas as examinations and a damning report on SEND reforms.”

There was some welcomed good news from the special lockdown edition:

“Hull’s only University Technical College, Ron Dearing UTC, has had its first Ofsted inspection since opening in 2017. The inspection took place on the 11th and 12th March, just before lockdown started and the report was published on 21st May. The college was judged to be outstanding in all five areas of the new inspection framework – a feat made all the more remarkable because the framework has been criticised by some educationists who said it made achievement of the top grading very difficult. Ron Dearing UTC is believed to be only the sixth establishment in England to be rated as outstanding under the framework introduced in May 2019.

The report contained a number of phrases that aren’t lightly made by Ofsted inspectors. For instance: *“[the UTC] has all the hallmarks of a school that could be viewed as a guiding light in the educational sector”* and *“students are fortunate to receive an exceptional quality of education”*. Praise indeed!

There is a particularly notable comment in the Leadership and Management section of the report: *“Governance is outstanding. Without exception, all trustees and governors know the school inside out. They hold leaders to account very well. Governors and trustees ensure that the curriculum is ambitious and leads to pupils achieving their own career goals.”*

If you would like to be involved in GATHER or pose any questions or comments please see contact details below.

E-mail us at: info@ga-ther.org

Tweet us at: [@ga_ther.org](https://twitter.com/ga_ther.org)

Find us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/groups/GATHER.Governors



Frequently Asked Questions on Coronavirus (Covid-19)

There are many websites that include frequently asked questions by governors in reference to schools return and Coronavirus (COVID-19). These are updated regularly in line with government guidance. All Hull schools have welcomed back students and the Learning Partnership in Hull have commented on the amount of careful thought and planning which has taken place by schools in conjunction with advice from Public Health which includes considerations on transport, home learning and mental health.

The following answers provide broad guidance rather than legal or procedural advice to governors on frequently asked questions.

What is the governing board's role in carrying out the risk assessment for the full opening of schools in September?

DfE guidance says that the Headteacher/senior executive leader should revisit and update their risk assessments to consider the additional risks and control measures to enable a return to full capacity in the autumn term.

The governors are responsible for ensuring that reasonable steps have been taken make sure staff and pupils are not exposed to risks to their health and safety i.e. separate risk assessments may be required for staff and others affected by particular school activities. Governors/trustees should be able to read the most recent review plan for their school/trust plans for returning to full capacity in September.

Schools should share their risk assessments with stakeholders, for example by publishing it on their website. This will demonstrate transparency and help to instil confidence against the risks. The governing board also has a role in supporting the school/trust communications intended to provide stakeholders with reassurance over the measures that have been put in place to reduce the risk in school.

What is the board's role in overseeing the education provision provided for those not in school from September?

Schools will be re-opening to all pupils in September but need to ensure that they provide suitable remote education support for any pupils who may need to self-isolate or if there is a local lockdown. Special schools in particular are aware that not all of their students will return in September.

How does the board fulfil its safeguarding duties from September?

Governors/trustees are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. DfE guidance on full opening in September advises they should consider revising their child protection policy led by their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to reflect the return of more pupils. Schools must have regard to the safeguarding statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020](#). In practice, revisions to the child protection policy will be managed by the trust DSL and DSL in school and Designated Safeguarding Governor should be involved/receive an update on the safeguarding arrangements made in response to the guidance on full opening in September. Safeguarding should also be an agenda item or referred to in the Headteacher's report to the LGB/FGB.





Should the school prioritise the core subjects to make up for the content missed during lockdown?

Pupils continue to be taught a broad and balanced curriculum but the DfE appreciate that given the length of time some children have not been in school, it will be necessary to allow some flexibility. All subjects can help fill the gaps in core knowledge, for example the focus on reading through all subjects. The emphasis should therefore be on not only providing a broad and balanced curriculum, but also ensuring that pupils are able to catch-up on missed learning.

Whilst being flexible with the curriculum to ensure the needs of pupils who have missed out on key learning are met, the DfE advise against overhauling the curriculum at this time and acknowledges that schools may consider it appropriate to suspend some subjects for some pupils but this should only be in exceptional circumstances. If schools decide to do this, they should be able to show that this is in the best interests of those pupils and discuss this with parents during the autumn term. Schools should also have a coherent plan for returning to their normal curriculum for all pupils by the summer term 2021 and this should be shared with governors.

What can governors/trustees do to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff and children following the full opening of schools in September?

The impact of COVID-19 will continue to be felt for a long time and there is a duty of care to school/trust leaders and their staff. The logistical, safety and safeguarding issues attached to providing reduced provision and the gradual re-opening of schools may well increase levels of pressure and anxiety. It is likely that your headteacher/CEO will have reported on these issues from their operational perspective, but they may be less forthcoming about any personal issues and their own wellbeing. Governors and trustees will need to reflect how the culture of their school or trust promotes the wellbeing of everyone involved. Their wellbeing strategy may need to be reconsidered in the light of current circumstances and how it:

- encourages senior leaders to prioritise their own wellbeing and look after themselves;
- highlights and responds to specific pressure points and risks that need addressing;
- communicates (and demonstrates) the commitment (e.g. to reducing working hours);
- allocates resource to providing confidential external support for those who need it.

Can LGBs, GBs and TBs meet in person and will governor visits resume from September?

Schools should consider how to manage visitors to their sites. If governors meetings take place in schools you should aim to hold meetings after school hours where possible. This should be in accordance with the school's control measures.

Can governor and trustee elections that have been put on hold now take place following the full opening of schools in September?

The most recent school governance update from DfE advises maintained school governing boards to take a pragmatic approach to the timing of governor elections during the outbreak and continue to function with vacancies where necessary and practical. It also advises academy trusts to make pragmatic decisions as to whether the terms of office of elected parent trustees and/or local parent governors can be extended under their articles or whether the trust can continue to function with less governors or trustees if necessary.

How should the governing board approach the headteacher performance?

- The DfE is clear that performance management requirements remain; however, it states that it expects schools 'to use their discretion and take pragmatic steps, to adapt performance management and appraisal arrangements to take account of the current circumstances'.
- Schools, governing boards and trusts are encouraged to respond flexibly and pragmatically, given that the performance management objectives of teachers and leaders are likely to have been impacted by the government's COVID-19 emergency measures, including school closures. It is likely that the vast majority of objectives set for teachers and leaders will be adversely affected by the inability of teachers and leaders to work towards their objectives during a substantial part of the performance management cycle.
- NGA, the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) have provided [joint guidance](#) on the conduct of schools on professional matters in light of COVID-19.

Can schools receive reimbursement for the additional costs incurred as a result of Covid-19?

Yes, the DfE acknowledges that there will be some instances where schools face additional costs as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. In these circumstances, additional funding is available for specific items. More information can be found in DfE guidance.

Can we still continue with our current IT Policy and arrangements?

- New guidance on managing cyber security risks in your school from the DfE
- When considering a school's security policies and plans, schools should also include an assessment of cyber security risk. A cyber security incident can result in a data breach where sensitive personal information about pupils, parents and staff is accessed without permission. This can have implications for safeguarding, and can also result in serious disruption to the running of the school.
- The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has published Cyber security in schools: questions for governors and trustees to help inform conversations with school leaders about managing cyber security risks.

I hope you find the above helpful and if you are unable to find an answer to a query that you have please don't hesitate to contact me on: maria.bannister@hullcc.gov.uk or telephone: 01482 613573.



Impact of Covid-19 on Young People and Parents Emotional Health



HeadStart Hull along with Barnardos and Hull's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have completed the first round of a survey that charts the impact of COVID-19 on young people, parents and carers in Hull and the return back to school.

The surveys have been coproduced alongside young volunteers and the Voice and Influence team and will help ensure that services provide the right support at the right time to meet all young people and their family's needs now and in the future.

The Stepping into Secondary School guide is designed to help year 6 children to explore their thoughts and feelings about the move to secondary school, so they can feel more confident and prepared, with the idea that sharing feelings with someone will help them get support if needed. It can be filled in with an adult or by the child themselves.

The 'Returning to School Life After Lockdown' booklet allows children in key stages two and three to express their thoughts about how lockdown has been for them, and to look ahead to how returning to school might be for them.

The electronic versions of these booklets are being distributed to all primary and secondary schools across Hull, as well as over 13500 hard copies to ensure they are accessible to all. Schools will continue to use these as the new term commences to support the emotional health and wellbeing of pupils.

The findings from the first round have been gathered together in useful infographics and electronic copies of the books can be found on the homepage of www.howareyoufeeling.org.uk



Health and Safety Spot-checks Post Covid-19

As schools gradually return to full capacity the [Health and Safety Executive](https://www.hse.gov.uk) (HSE) last week confirmed that it will be carrying out spot-checks in schools. An initial phone call to review the measures taken for reopening, to minimise spread of the virus causing COVID-19 will start with a phone call to the school. The caller will evaluate knowledge [DfE Guidance for full opening - School](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dfe-guidance-for-full-opening-school) (England) and the control measures required under health and safety legislation. School duty holders, school business managers, need to be briefed about the HSE spot checks and know about a school's risk assessment and have it to hand if they receive a call from the HSE. Where the initial call raises concerns about a school's approach, it will be referred for a further intervention which may include a visit to the school. The above will be of interest to all governors with health and safety responsibility. In the NGA's updated COVID-19 [resource hub](https://www.nga.org.uk/resources/updates/covid-19-resource-hub) you'll find the latest information and guidance to answer any further queries on the matter.

Governor Training and Development Programme 2020/21

All courses will take place at the Guildhall unless otherwise stated.

Appropriate arrangements will be in place in line with Covid-19 guidelines. All virtual courses will be via Microsoft Teams invite.

To apply for any of the courses below please contact the Governors' Team on telephone number 613 380 or neil.bahn@hullcc.gov.uk. Please also do not hesitate to contact us if there is a course you think would be useful that we have not included, or if the times listed are not suitable for you, and we will endeavour to organise further sessions where there is sufficient interest. Additional courses will be added throughout the year and will be advertised in the termly In Touch.

Welcome to New Governors

This session is recommended for all new governors as part of their induction. Essential information and advice will be provided on what being a governor involves. Topics covered include the role of the clerk, governing body agendas and meeting procedures.

4 November 2020, 10.00am to 12.00

10 February 2021, 3.00 to 5.00pm

9 June 2021, 3.00 to 5.00pm

The Critical Friend

This induction module is suitable for governors who have attended the Welcome to New Governors and will explain the role of the "critical friend". Topics covered include the characteristics of an effective governing body, monitoring and evaluation, school performance information and governor visits.

3 March 2021, 3.00 to 4.30pm



Safeguarding Children - Update for Governors

This session will be discuss Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, which is the statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges, key updates within this new government guidance and the role Governors hold in ensuring that the school is fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities. Additionally you will hear about key aspects of the safeguarding governor's role including ways in which you can support the Designated Safeguarding Lead and how you can check that the school is compliant with statutory guidance.

Given that this session will be delivered virtually we are encouraging participants to submit questions prior to the session, this will enable your questions to be factored into the sessions delivery. This session will be delivered by Maria Bannister (SEO Governors Services) and Phillip Painter (Education Officer – Safeguarding).

Venue: to be held via Microsoft Teams
20 October 2020, 6.00 to 7.00pm

How to be an Effective Chair

This session focusses on the skills chairs of governors need to carry out their role effectively. The leadership role of the chair, the importance of developing positive relationships and identifying and sharing good practice are all covered.

22 October 2020, 3.00 to 4.30pm

Understanding Attachment - Looked After Children

This course will consider the reasons why looked after children achieve significantly lower results than their non-looked after peers, why they are more likely to be excluded, have behavioural difficulties or need additional educational support and how this can be addressed.

11 November 2020, 2.00 to 3.00pm on Microsoft Teams

Dealing with Parental Complaints

This course will cover why schools should have a complaints process, legislation and policy surrounding the handling of complaints, how to manage the process through the various stages in schools with governors supporting, and discussion on various scenarios.

12 November 2020, 2.00 to 3.30pm

Pupil Exclusion Training

This course will cover current legislation and statutory guidance (09/2017) and provide governors with an understanding of why schools exclude pupils. Governors will be trained to understand exclusions within their safeguarding and inclusion duties under Ofsted expectations. The course also aims to ensure governors are confident to sit on Pupil Exclusion Committees and deal with any subsequent challenge.

25 January 2021, 2.00 to 3.30pm



Safeguarding Children - A Shared Responsibility

Sessions are held regularly at Endeavour Learning and Skills Centre throughout the year - other dates will become available, please ask for details. Please note this is a full day course, 9.30am to 4.00pm.

24, 29 September 2020

Venue: Endeavour Learning and Skills Centre

Attendance Responsibilities for Governors

This course will ensure that you will have greater insight into how your school manages attendance, being lawful, thoughtful about the different reasons for absence and provide effective challenge on the data.

1 December 2020, 2.00 to 3.30pm

ELearning modules - Governors for Schools

Since 1999, Governors for Schools has been connecting skilled and committed volunteers with schools across England, and they are currently offering the training modules detailed below which are free to complete. You don't need to have become a governor through Governors for Schools to access this eLearning, but you'll need to register as a user. Create an account or log in when you click to start a module. Each module takes roughly an hour to complete. You'll receive a certificate for each module you finish.

Short course: special educational needs and disabilities for governors

Governors in all types of school have duties towards children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This short course looks at the definition of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), how the needs of pupils with SEND are met in schools, funding for SEND provision, and the role of the board and link governor in securing effective provision for pupils with SEND. This short course sets out what you need to know.

[Start course](#)

Multi-academy trusts

Multi-academy trusts provides governors with an introduction to leadership and governance in these types of education organisation. This course looks at the key characteristics of multi-academy trusts, how they are structured, and the roles of the trustees and local governors. It explores government policy towards multi-academy trusts and the various operating strategies that multi-academy trusts might adopt. It also looks at how existing schools might form or join a multi-academy trust.

[Start course](#)



Driving school improvement

Driving School Improvement covers the role of governors in the school improvement process. It looks at setting a clear and compelling vision for the future, ensuring effective self-evaluation is taking place, and approving and monitoring clear and costed plans for improvement.

[Start course](#)



Performance data for new governors

Performance data for new governors covers the key metrics and measures governors need to understand in order to provide effective oversight of pupil and school performance. It focuses on the key types of data governors need to be able to interpret, how to interrogate data to provide support and challenge to the school leadership, and how to investigate performance more closely by benchmarking against other schools.

[Start course](#)



Finance for new governors

Finance for new governors covers the key principles of the schools financial framework, including the funding system and accountability framework. It also focuses on the key principles of effective financial management, including the development of a financial strategy, budget monitoring, internal controls and value for money.

[Start Course](#)

National Governance Association - Funded Training and Development Programme

The DfE with support from the NGA have advertised their funded development programmes which are now available virtually and are suitable for home working. The governance leadership programme is ideal for those in roles such as chair, vice chair or committee chair. They will support you to work with your board to increase its effectiveness.

For further details on these programme, read [Academy and school governance: professional development](#).

Boards wishing to continue with their CPD can still access DfE funding for the Leading Governance programmes.

Development for Chairs: up to two places per governing board, worth £500 each, for aspiring chairs and/or those who currently chair, to develop their leadership skills.

Development for Boards: work with an NGA consultant on an area of whole-board development or choose a whole-governing board training workshop delivered by an NGA consultant. Available for all boards who govern more than one school; empty MATs; federated boards of both academies and maintained schools; and governing boards of single maintained schools in specified areas currently rated by Ofsted as RI. The programme includes a fully funded place on the [Development for chairs](#) programme. It can be fully funded by the DfE, with up to £2,500 of funding available per eligible trust or board.

All workshops will be delivered via online classrooms. Groups will be kept small to ensure we replicate as much as possible the face-to-face environment.

To apply for your funded place please visit <http://www.nga.org.uk/leadinggovernance>

or call 0121 237 3780 option 4





Compulsory Sex and Relationships Education, Health Education and Managing the Impact of Covid-19

Governors should be aware from September relationships education is becoming compulsory in primary schools, and relationships and sex education is becoming compulsory in secondary schools. They need to be able to recognise good provision of RSE within their schools and the wider role of the new inspection framework. The impact of COVID-19 on school preparation for compulsory teaching has had an impact, with government recently announcing that schools [can delay teaching](#) if they are not prepared or wish to carry out phased delivery.

[Updated implementation guidance](#) for 2020-21 has been made available which encourages teaching to start in September if prepared and requirements are met whilst also permitting schools that are not ready to start implementation to delay teaching until the summer term. There is also the development of 14 training modules to support the teaching of the new curriculum, including a new training module for [teaching mental wellbeing](#). Extra [mental health support and resources](#) given to teachers for supporting pupils during the pandemic and the [new inspection framework](#) which places a focus on personal development and preparing children for modern life.

For inspection, priorities have been laid out for how the new RSE curriculum will be inspected within schools when Ofsted return to full inspections from next January. The [new inspection framework](#) places a focus on personal development and preparing children for modern life. There are strategies for developing and maintaining a good standard of RSE to children, how good RSE provision will be recognised and how full coverage of RSE across schools in England and minimising unwarranted variation can be achieved.

SEND Reform Post Covid-19

SEND provision is under scrutiny and the next steps for reform in England including the transition to Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, funding arrangements and opportunities for improving outcomes.



The Local Offer Hull

[Hull Local Offer](#)

The SEND team have provided and circulated a new SEND Handbook devised and designed to support the work of Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in schools and post-16 settings. This document is designed to support SENCOs in some of the key elements of their roles as well as the roles of those whom they work alongside. The handbook may also provide useful information to other key professionals in relation to SEND and for governors. The Handbook should be read in conjunction with the SEND Code of Practice, Jan 2015: [SEND Code of Practice January 2015](#). Page 6 of the new handbook lists the role of governors to:

- Ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school
- Publish information on the schools website about implementation of the SEND policy
- Liaise with the headteacher to determine the school's policy and approach to provision for pupils with SEN
- Establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintain a general oversight of the school's work
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEN provision in the school
- Provide challenge as a critical friend



In addition, the governor with responsibility for SEN will regularly discuss provision, impact and any other issues to enhance SEN provision with the SENCO.

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has [launched an inquiry](#) into the impact that COVID-19 has had on children and young people with SEND during transition within educational establishments. They will need to examine the impact specifically in relation to social and emotional wellbeing within the community and for capacity and areas of responsibility. It could be the Government, the sector, parents and young people themselves or a combination of all of these who take responsibility.

For special schools and their carers this has been exceptionally challenging due to the vulnerability of those young people. The LA has been working closely with the Learning Partnership and wider services to address the impact throughout lockdown.

The DfE have provided a list of [online education resources for children with SEND](#), [coronavirus educational resources](#) from The Sensory Projects and [SEND-specific resources for learning from home](#) from Tech Ability have been made available. This came along with the [Supporting children and young people with SEND as schools and colleges prepare for wider opening](#) guidance and details on risk assessment guidance for the settings managing children and young people with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or complex needs during the coronavirus (COVID-19; however, last term headteachers reported on more practical concerns such as the significant additional costs on new cleaning regimes that special schools have incurred particularly when an in-year surplus is evident. Governors challenged this as those schools had worked hard to ensure a balanced budget at the end of the financial year.

Experiences of home-schooling, pedagogical approaches and the future use of SENDTech

After the experience of the pandemic governors may question:

- would further support be available for children and students with SEND going forward, following changes to the daily lives of children and students with SEND across the country due to the COVID-19 lockdown;
- will there be a greater future role of EdTech for supporting students with SEND, with increased attention being given to education technology;
- how would the experience of remote learning inform pedagogical approaches for teaching students with SEND going forward;
- with the varied experiences during lockdown and home-schooling between children with different special educational needs can teaching environments change to be more appropriate;
- how is the [catch-up tutoring plan](#) to bring students up to speed with their studies which has been recently set up by the DfE, is it working in practice for students with SEND, and how they can be best supported in the return to normal.

Supporting the wellbeing and educational attainment of children with SEND post-pandemic

Governors are mindful of the wider context and have considered:

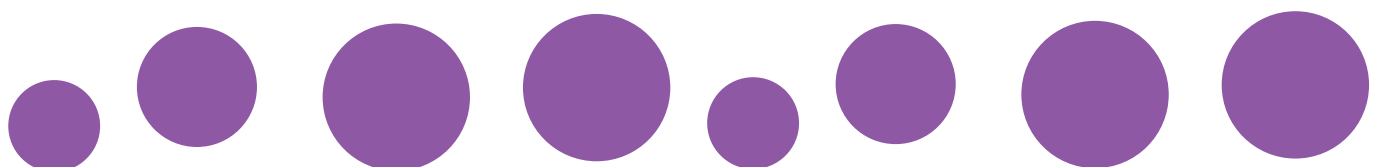
- the long-term consequences of the pandemic for children's wellbeing and educational attainment - following Ofsted's [temporary suspension of all routine inspections](#);
- assessing the success of child mental health initiatives and the overall provision of support for children with SEND during this time, and how local authorities and service providers can ensure families with children with SEND are adequately supported post-pandemic;
- how funding can best be allocated to support local authorities in coping with the expected rise in demand for services following the pandemic.

Why is SEND so relevant now than ever before?

There has been significant attention given to improving the current system of support, including an announcement by the DfE of [£37.3m to go towards support for children with SEND](#) and their families in 2020-2021, as well as the expected publication of the DfE's review into the SEND system announced last year, aiming to improve available services, better equip staff in educational settings to respond to their needs and tackle local variation in provision of adequate support.

The government announcement earlier this year of [SENDTech pilots in schools and colleges across England](#) as a part of the broader EdTech Strategy and there was recent NFER research on [pupil engagement in remote learning](#). There has been the passing of the [emergency legislation relaxing local authority statutory duties towards vulnerable children](#), impacting the education, health and care (EHC) plans for children with SEND. In addition to increased reports of child mental health concerns during the lockdown, as well other initiatives, including: [£12m going towards supporting vulnerable children](#) during the pandemic, [£3.1 for children affected by domestic abuse](#) during the lockdown and an ongoing inquiry by the Education Committee into the [impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services](#)

Please click on any of the above hyperlinks for more information.



Academies planning calendar

A summary of key dates and actions relating to academy funding, finance and trust compliance with their funding agreement.

September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020
<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the 2020 budget forecast return three year (BFR3Y) by 29 September <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academies Financial Handbook 2020 comes into effect ESFA publishes key findings following the assurance work relating to academy trust financial statements, academy funding audits and financial management and governance reviews for the year 2019 to 2020 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete autumn school census Academies must publicly consult by 31 January 2021 on proposed changes to admission arrangements for entry in September 2022, or if they have not consulted in the past 7 years <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA publishes guidance and workbook for the 2019 to 2020 academies accounts return DfE issues guidance on the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) 2021 to 2022 Audited financial statements submitted from 15 October ESFA publishes the 16 to 19 revenue funding allocation data for 2020 to 2021 <p>Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second quarterly pupil premium payment for the 2020 to 2021 financial year 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land and buildings collection tool online form available 12 November Deadline for new CIF applicants to register on the online portal Accounts return online form available 10 November <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PE and sport premium conditions of grant and allocations issued for the 2020 to 2021 academic year <p>Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First payment of the teachers' pay grant and teachers' pension grant for the 2020 to 2021 academic year First payment of the PE and sport premium for the 2020 to 2021 academic year 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the land and buildings collection tool by 17 December Deadline for CIF bids <p>Announcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DfE announces the schools revenue funding settlement for the next academic/financial year (2021 to 2022)
January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021
<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete spring school census Trusts submit their 2019 to 2020 audited financial statements, auditor's management letter, internal scrutiny annual summary report and accounts submission coversheet by 31 January <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA publishes outcomes of requests from LAs for changes to high needs places for the 2021 to 2022 academic year. Academies have 2 weeks to submit a query about the outcomes <p>Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third quarterly pupil premium payment for the 2020 to 2021 financial year 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the audited accounts return by 23 Feb Trusts publish their 2019 to 2020 audited financial statements on their website by 28 February Academies must determine their admission arrangements for entry in September 2022 by 28 Feb Academies must publish their admissions appeals timetable for 2021 on their website by 28 Feb <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA confirms exceptional 2020 to 2021 post-16 in-year growth outcomes ESFA issues guidance on 2021 to 2022 funding allocations for open academies ESFA issues 16 to 19 allocation calculation toolkits (ACT) containing funding factors and student numbers, to schools and academies 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academies must publish their admission arrangements for entry in September 2022 on their website and send a copy to their local authority by 15 March Trusts complete and submit the school resource management self-assessment tool (SRMSAT) <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA issues academy revenue funding allocations for 2021 to 2022 including 16 to 19 allocations (plus student support, 16 to 19 Bursary Fund and free meals in further education) where applicable ESFA publishes guidance and workbook for the budget forecast return outturn (BFR0) for 2021 ESFA publishes the Academies Accounts Direction for 2020 to 2021 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA makes live the form for trusts to claim national non-domestic rates (NINDR) for the 2021 to 2022 financial year Budget forecast return outturn (BFR0) online form available 16 to 19 revenue funding allocation business case for major data errors deadline 30 April <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA publishes 16 to 19 funding regulations guidance and 16 to 19 funding rates and formula guidance for 2021 to 2022 ESFA publishes 16 to 19 student support eligibility and guidance, including 16 to 19 Bursary Fund guidance DfE publishes the CIF 2021 to 2022 outcome <p>Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final quarterly pupil premium payment for the 2020 to 2021 financial year
May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021
<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete summer school census Complete and submit the BFR0 Trusts must submit their audited financial statements to Companies House within 9 months of the end of the accounting period which is 31 May <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA publishes guidance and workbook for the budget forecast return three year (BFR3Y) for 2021 <p>Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second payment of the teachers' pay grant and teachers' pension grant for the 2020 to 2021 academic year Final payment of the PE and sport premium for the 2020 to 2021 academic year 	<p>Trust Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget forecast return three year (BFR3Y) online form available <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA publishes the 2021 to 2022 Academies Financial Handbook ESFA publishes the 16 to 19 sub-contracting controls guidance for 2021 to 2022 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the BFR3Y <p>Information and published guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESFA refreshes the 16 to 19 interactive census tool DfE publishes the academies sector annual report and accounts (SARA) <p>Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final payment for universal infant free school meals for the 2020 to 2021 academic year 	<p>Trust action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final quarterly pupil premium payment for the 2020 to 2021 financial year