

VOYAGER...

A Newsletter for Governors of Discovery
Vol 1, Issue 2, January 2016



Discovery Schools
Academy Trust

In this issue:

- Pupil Premium Governor
- Governor Training
- New Governor Handbook
- Commonly used Acronyms
- Governors' views: surveys
- Central Office round up

Spotlight on...

PUPIL PREMIUM GOVERNOR

Pupil Premium is additional funding given to state-funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and other pupils. Those eligible for the funding are pupils in reception or years 1 to 11 recorded as 'ever 6 free school meals (FSM)', Children Looked After (CLA) and post-CLA and Service children. This year each Pupil Premium child will receive £1,320.

The government does not prescribe what the premium should be spent on. However schools are held accountable for how the fund is allocated and for narrowing attainment gaps between these disadvantaged pupils and other pupils.

The Pupil Premium governor should have a good overview of the fund, analysing how well the school is using it and the impact it is having on closing the gaps. They should take an active lead in keeping the governing body well informed, ensuring that they are being involved in decision making about how the premium is spent.

It is important that the governor is really familiar with DSAT's pupil premium policy, reviewing how it is adapted to each individual school context. They should know basic pupil premium facts for the school, such as how many pupils attract the premium, how this figure compares with other local and similar schools, and how the money is spent, challenging it if they feel there is no clear audit trail and evidencing appropriate use of the resources. Using the reports from the designated PP Leader or Champion, the governor can monitor and evaluate use of the fund and share an audit report with

their local governing body to keep them informed on a termly basis. They should make sure the school has clearly published information on the school website about how pupil premium is allocated, spent and its impact.

Click here to see DSAT Pupil Premium [policy](#)

Key Questions for the Pupil Premium governor to ask

- How effective is the school's pupil premium policy in supporting the target groups?
- How confident are you that the pupil premium grant is spent appropriately on the intended target groups?
- Is the pupil premium funding kept separate from general school resources so it can be specifically and identifiably used as intended?
- How is the allocation of the pupil premium decided?
- What is the pupil premium used for?
- How is the progress of different groups of pupils monitored so that the school can identify any underperforming groups?
- Are there groups of pupils whose attainment falls behind others?
- How does the attainment of pupil premium pupils as a group compare with others?
- What would you say are the main challenges in the use of the pupil premium, and how is the school working to overcome them?
- What benefits can you see from the allocation of the pupil premium?

Next issue Spotlight on...

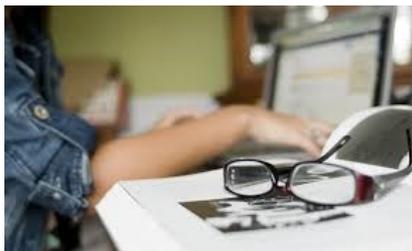
E-SAFETY GOVERNOR

Governor Training coming up in 2016...

- **Budget** 25th February, 7pm, Parkland Primary School
- **SEND** 7th April, 7pm, Parkland Primary School
- **Sports Premium** 10th May, 7pm, Parkland Primary School
- **DSAT Governor Away-Day: Well-being and EPIC** 18th June, 9am-1pm, Parkland Primary School
- **Health and Safety** 23rd June, 7pm, Parkland Primary School



Contact the Clerk to Governors to book your place: amousley@discoveryschoolstrust.org.uk



Governor Training

In the last issue we looked at governor recruitment, and this time we address the need for governing bodies to continually evaluate their performance and ensure they undertake any training that is required to be effective in their role.

Ofsted will focus particularly on training and the arrangements schools are making to source expertise in this vital work, and mandatory training for governors is a sensible way forward.

The new Governance Handbook says that governing bodies “*are responsible for identifying and securing the induction and other ongoing training and development governors need. They should set aside a budget for this purpose*”. Every governing body should identify its priorities for training and development, and ensure that it takes place, and the Handbook goes on to say the “*expectation that (governors) undertake whatever training or development activity is needed to fill any gaps in the skills they have to contribute to effective governance*”.

This is where the Training and Development link (T&D) governor comes in. Although it is not a statutory role, with no specific responsibilities expected to be carried out, the T&D governor plays a very significant role in developing the effectiveness of the governing body and its impact. Every T&D governor will

have different ideas and limitations about how to develop the role, but essentially one of the responsibilities is to help governors, especially those who are new, to identify their learning and development needs.

All new governors, once registered with GDS, receive a welcome pack including a programme of training courses, and alongside the Clerk, the T&D governor should ensure new governors are booked on induction training. Furthermore they could carry out a skills audit to identify gaps in skills and suggest other training opportunities making governors aware of available training courses and encourage them to attend.

To evidence any continual professional development that takes place, including any briefings and presentations governors attend, a further responsibility is to make sure that governor development is discussed regularly at governing body meetings, and it is useful for the T&D governor to record all training in a training log and this should be updated at each meeting. Equally governors have a responsibility to keep abreast of their own training needs, and update the T&D governors as and when they attend training.

Support available for T&D Link Governors:

GDS runs regular briefings to enable T&D governors help develop the countywide Governor Training and Development Programme and to share good practice with other schools. The next session is 26.4.16 at Premier Inn, Fosse Park, 10-11.30 or the NSPCC National Training Centre, 6.30-8pm. [Click](#) here for GDS 2016/7 training programme.

✂ CUT OUT AND KEEP ✂

Handy to know Acronyms

- AB** Advisory Board
- ARE** Age-related Expectations
- CLA** Children Looked After
- CPD** Continuing Professional Development
- EAL** English as an additional language
- EFA** Education Funding Agency
- EHCP** Education, Health and Care Plans
- EP** Educational Psychologist
- EPiC** Educational Psychologists in the Community
- EWO** Education Welfare Officer
- FSM** Free School Meals
- FTE** Fixed Term Exclusion
- HAPs** Higher Attaining Pupils
- HLTA** Higher Level Teaching Assistant
- LSA** Learning Support Assistant
- NOR** Number (of pupils) on Roll
- NPQH** National Professional Qualification for Headteachers
- NQT** Newly Qualified Teacher
- PHSCE** Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education
- PRU** Pupil referral Unit
- SPaG** Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar
- STEM** Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
- RAG** Red, Amber, Green (rating)
- RAP** Raising Attainment Plan
- SEAL** Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
- SENCo** Special Educational Needs Coordinator
- SEND** Special Educational Needs and Disability
- SEF** Self-Evaluation form
- SLT** Senior Leadership Team
- SMSC** Spiritual Moral Social Cultural



Governors' Views

To reflect DSAT's ongoing commitment to providing governors with an efficient support service, up to date and relevant information and training, and accessible communication solutions, we have set up a governor survey. There is still time to complete the survey which should take no more than 10 minutes to complete and all responses are anonymous. We'll be collating the results in the new year. Please click the link to start the survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MYLZCCC>

Ofsted survey: *Effectiveness of School Governance*

Ofsted have launched a call for evidence from anyone who has views and experience to contribute. They will use these views as part of the evidence to inform the thematic survey which they intend to report on early 2016. This call for evidence is open until 31 January 2016.

Answer the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/govevidence>

Governance Handbook—New

The DfE has recently published the *Governance Handbook*, which replaces the previous *Governors' Handbook*. The new handbook appears to have undergone a significant rewrite rather than just additions to the older versions and, unusually, it doesn't include an appendix detailing all the changes. However Lord Nash's foreword says it has been re-named to make clear that it applies to all those involved in governance and now refers throughout to the 'board' to emphasise that it applies equally to the governing body of a small maintained school as it does to the board of a large MAT.

The handbook sets out the government's vision and priorities for effective school governance. It also outlines the core role and functions of the board of governors in maintained schools and academies, summarises and provides a first point of reference on all the legal duties on boards, signposting to more detailed information, guidance and resources, and provides information on the support available to help boards function more effectively. It has also been updated to reflect changes to the law and education policy, including the 'Prevent Duty' and what schools must publish online.

Click here to download the new [Handbook](#)

Central Office round up

Happy New Year to all governors and advisory board members! We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and a well earned break.

Here at DSAT HQ we've had an office move around and, although a little tight on space, we've found room for our newest members of staff: Executive assistant to Paul Stone, Sarah Hancock; IT apprentice, Joe Durham; and Group Finance Officer, Rosemary Bromley. Another mini-addition is the arrival of Lillie-Mae, Jo Rogerson's new baby girl!

DSAT subject leaders have continued to meet regularly, collaborating on curriculum developments as well joining together for sporting fixtures, a poetry writing competition and trust pantomime... oh yes they did!

As ever governors and advisory board members have been busy. On top of the usual board and committee meetings, training, visits, SIAMs inspection (*congratulations Kibworth!*) governors have been getting to grips with the new assessment system. Captains Close and Farndon Fields advisory boards have met for the first time, as has the newest addition to the Trust, Fossebrook Primary, currently under construction on the Holmfield Avenue West site in Leicester Forest East/Braunstone Town.

Congratulations to Emma Elton, year 2, from Woolden Hill Primary school who won our 'Design a Christmas card' competition! Here is Emma's winning design plus some of the runners up.

