

Governor

Headlines

Governor Headlines is a regular newsletter produced by Suffolk County Council's Governor Services team to support you in your role as governors and keep you informed of the latest updates.

Welcome Back

Welcome to Governor Headlines #45 for September and October and welcome to the start of another academic year. We hope you have all had a lovely summer, with plenty of time to relax and enjoy with family and friends. As we begin the new term many schools have reported positivity about being back in buildings and "schools feeling like schools again". A priority for many is to settle children and young people back into routines, with an early focus on attendance and support needed and a re-engagement with extracurricular activities. Many of you as governors will also be enjoying opportunities to visit your schools, carry out monitoring and speak to colleagues face-to-face. It is also important to be mindful that the effects of Covid-19 can be far-reaching, and that school leaders will continue to benefit from the support of governors as the term progresses.

This edition of Governor Headlines includes articles on the development of governor network meetings, Headteacher Performance Management and the support that is available for new Chairs of Governors. You will also notice several changes to the newsletter that we hope will make it more user friendly. Where possible, this includes the grouping together of articles under the key features of effective governance. Many of you will already be familiar with these features but an explanation of them can be found in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

As always, if you have any thoughts or suggestions about the Governor Headlines newsletter, please email the Governance Services team at governance@suffolk.gov.uk.



Suffolk
County Council



governance@suffolk.gov.uk 1

The Knowledge

Please find the latest edition of **The Knowledge** for September 2021 [here](#).

Strategic Leadership

that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.

Developing Governor Network Meetings



As we continue to work together with you as governors, we are very aware of how helpful it is when governors from different schools can meet together to share how they are working on particular aspects of their role. This includes sharing what is working well, and practice others may find helpful, as well as some of the challenges that a board might be experiencing and hearing about how other governing bodies have managed similar challenges or situations. It can be

inspiring to listen to governors talking about how they work with school leaders and how this contributes to the experience of the children and young people in Suffolk schools. It is also a chance to share great practice.

Last term we invited governors from schools in the South of Suffolk to meet to share thinking and ideas with this in mind. We are planning to build on this in the new school year with a view to facilitating network meetings in different parts of the county. Themes for discussion will include knowing the strengths and areas to develop in your governing body and strategies for recruiting new governors as well as any topics you tell us you would like to discuss.

When you receive an invitation to one of these meetings during the year, we would warmly encourage you to join us to support all governors with moving forward with their work.

Accountability

that drives up educational standards and financial performance.

Headteacher Performance Management

Governing bodies of maintained schools have a legal duty to ensure that effective performance management, including an annual appraisal, is carried out for the teaching staff and Headteacher. Whilst the Headteacher is responsible for carrying out the performance appraisal of teaching staff, the governing body are responsible for the performance appraisal of the Headteacher, which usually takes place during the months of October and November.

The governing body must appoint an external advisor to carry out their Headteacher's performance appraisal. It is important that this is a governing body decision and isn't based on a recommendation from the Headteacher. The Local Authority must also remain impartial and therefore cannot advise on external advisors to appoint. If you're unsure how to find an external advisor we would suggest speaking to other local governing boards to enquire who they use, or have used in the past, and whether they would recommend them.

It is usual for two or three governors to form the Headteacher Performance Review Panel and, whilst it is

up to the Chair of Governors to decide how much input they want to have, it's good practice for the Chair to be involved in the appraisal and conversations with the external advisor as they are arguably the governor with the strongest relation to the Headteacher. Headteacher performance itself should be measured against objectives or success criteria, which may have been adapted due to the current Covid context.

If you feel you, or another member of your governing body, would benefit from training on Headteacher Performance Management Schools' Choice run an Effective Headteacher Performance Management course which can be found [here](#).

Some of the information in this article is included in the National Governors' Association (NGA) Chair's handbook. For further guidance, or to sign up for NGA membership please click [here](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

It's recommended that you replace your external advisor for Headteacher Performance Management every 2 – 3 years.

People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.

We continue to promote diversity on school governing boards inclusive of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability and age.

Support for New Chairs of Governors

Elections for your Chair of Governors and Vice-Chair usually occur annually and many governing bodies choose to hold these elections at their first full governing body meeting of the new academic year.

You may be considering who to elect, or even whether to nominate yourself for one of these roles.

Becoming Chair of Governors can feel daunting and you may feel unsure about nominating yourself because of the increased responsibility and adapting to a potentially unfamiliar situation. Here is a reminder of the support that is available to new Chairs:

- **Chairs of Governors mentoring scheme:** If you are a new Chair of Governors or have been Chair for less than a year you can be paired with an experienced Chair of Governors from another school who will be able to

offer you support and confidentially discuss aspects of governance.

- **The National Governance Association's Development for Chairs programme:** The development programme provides Chairs, Vice-Chairs and future Chairs with opportunities for developing leadership skills and confident governance. More information can be found [here](#).
- **Schools' Choice Training:** Schools' Choice offer the training course "Being an Effective Chair and Leader of Governance". More information can be found in their [online training brochure](#).
- **The National Governance Association and The Key for School Governors:** Both organisations offer valuable governance advice, although both require a paid subscription.

- **The Local Authority Governor Services Team :**
Our team will support you in your role as Chair. Please do not hesitate to contact us

at
governance@suffolk.gov.uk
if you have anything you would like to discuss.

Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements.

Early Career Teacher Model Policy

All schools and settings are required to have a policy setting out their provision and practice for their Early Career Teachers (ECTs). For many schools this will be based on updating their Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) policy.

From 1 September 2021 all recently trained teachers will be known as ECTs rather than NQTs and statutory induction becomes a two-year period for most of them. It will be a requirement for headteachers and principals to ensure that all ECTs have access to an Early Career Framework-

based induction programme throughout the induction period.

A model policy to support schools and settings is available [here](#). This has been shared with institutions that have registered an ECT for September and will be included in a future edition of Suffolk Headlines.

If you have any queries relating to this article please contact Celia Moore, Suffolk ECT and Appropriate Body Officer, at Celia.moore@suffolk.gov.uk .

Enterprise Adviser Network



The Enterprise Adviser Network was established in 2015 to help link schools and colleges to employers to

increase employer engagement for young people.

In December 2017, the government published its Careers Strategy which “aims to meet the skills that the country needs on the whole by

connecting the worlds of education and employment. Included in the Careers Strategy are statutory responsibilities a school should abide by.

Governing bodies have a key role in ensuring schools not only meet their legal requirements, but also equipping their pupils with the tools and knowledge to make informed choices about their futures. They can do this by offering strategic support to school leaders and by holding the headteacher to account for the quality of provision of careers education, information, advice and guidance.

The Enterprise Adviser Network will be facilitating virtual CPD Sessions for Governors including content on the Careers Strategy, statutory responsibilities, and support to achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks. Sessions are held the last Wednesday of every month from 16:00 to 17:00. If you would like to attend a session please contact Glen Todd – Careers Hub Manager at glen.todd@newanglia.co.uk

Headteacher Absence

If your Headteacher is absent for medical leave or for personal reasons for over two weeks, please contact Headships@suffolk.gov.uk so that we

can work with you to ensure that appropriate cover and support is in place.

Other News

Governor Headlines Live – Autumn Term

We would like to invite you to our Autumn term Governor Headlines Live session on **Tuesday 28th September 2021 at 10:00am – 12noon.**

We are very pleased that Adrian Orr, Assistant Director Education Skills and Learning, will join us to introduce the session, and delighted that members of the National Governance

Association (NGA) will also be in attendance. We will also be joined by Izzy Connell, Headteacher Specialist Education Services, who will give an update on whole school inclusion and the changes to the service, as well as two current governors who will share their thoughts about the importance and

benefits of a diverse governing board. A member of the Virtual School will speak about unaccompanied asylum seeking children and the Enterprise Advisor Network will be talking about the role of governing boards in meeting their legal requirements outlined in the government's Careers Strategy. There will also be an update on governor training.

We will welcome questions from governors throughout the session.

If you would like to attend please register your interest by emailing

governorheadlines@suffolk.gov.uk . We will then send you instructions on how to sign in to the meeting. You do not have to have Microsoft Teams to be able to attend.

If you have a question that is relevant to the agenda that you would like us to cover during the meeting please include this in your email when registering your interest. If you are unable to attend but still have a question, or have a question outside of the scope of this agenda please email governorheadlines@suffolk.gov.uk . We do hope you will be able to join us.

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Following the recent call for nominations, it is now confirmed that Sally Evans, Highfield Nursery School and Children's Centre, and Andrew Orves, Carlton Colville Primary, have been appointed to serve as parent governor representatives on the County Council's Education and

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee. Further information about the work of the Committee, including meeting dates and agenda papers can be found on the County Council's website at this link: [Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee | Suffolk County Council](#).

