

Governor Headlines

#60, April 2024



Governor Headlines is a regular newsletter produced by Suffolk County Council's Governor Services team to support you in your role as governors.

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A MESSAGE FROM SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL'S GOVERNOR SERVICES TEAM



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Welcome to the summer term!

We trust you have had a good rest and rejuvenation over the Easter Break and are raring to go for the last push of this academic year. Isn't it lovely to see more daylight and feel the warmth of the sun, even as it struggles to break through the remnants of winter!

Early in March we learned that the Department for Education (DfE) had withdrawn the Competency Framework for Governance and replaced it with new governance guides which have been produced separately for maintained schools and academies. Although there are no major changes to the role of governance, it is worth reading through the new guidance to familiarise ourselves with any new terminology.

Further in this newsletter you will see that registration for our annual governance conference is open and preparations are well under way. We are very much looking forward to seeing you there. Following our last conference, you said you wanted more time for workshops and networking, and this is reflected in this year's program. Please register your attendance as soon as possible, which will help us with planning.

Thank you for all you do for the children of Suffolk. We are here to support governing boards in any way we can, and our contact details are below.

Email: governance@suffolk.gov.uk

Tel: 01473 265987 or 01473 260163

The Knowledge

Please find April's edition of The Knowledge [here](#).

The Knowledge is a half-termly briefing for governors and trustees, keeping you informed of the latest statutory updates.



Spring Governance Conference Tuesday 21st May 2024

This article is for: all governors of maintained schools, all phases.

**REGISTER
YOUR
PLACE**

Our Spring Governance Conference is this year taking place on Tuesday 21 May between 9.30am – 5.00pm at Kesgrave War Memorial Community Centre.

Our keynote speaker is Chris Forrest of Forrest Governance. Workshops will take place during the afternoon.

For further information please refer to the invitation that you will hopefully have already received.

To register your place and choose your preferred workshops, please complete the form at the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/5SNvaS6wY9>


We very much hope you will be able to join us on the day!

Please note that the Spring Governance Conference is open to governors of Local Authority maintained schools only.

Spring Term Tasks

This article is for: all governors of LA maintained schools, all phases.

Statutory tasks are in **bold**.

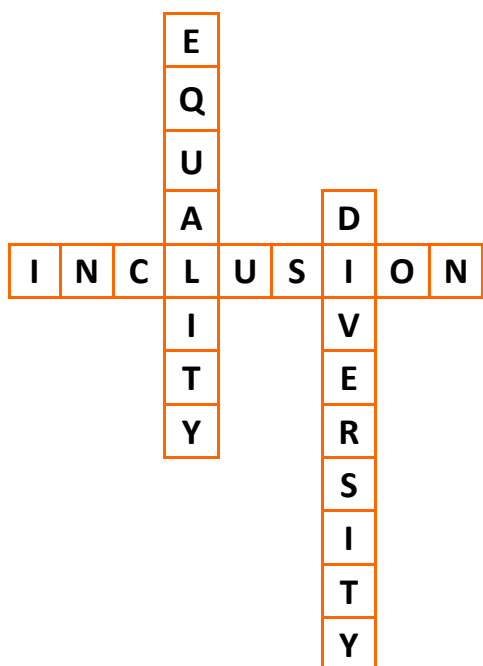


TASK
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the impact of the pupil premium and PE and sport premium (primary schools)
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the school strategy
<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a governing board self-evaluation
<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarise yourselves with the new governance guides. The Department for Education (DfE) withdrew the Competency Framework for Governance on 7 March 2024. Much of the information is now covered in the new governance guides for maintained schools and academies .
<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a governing board skills audit to inform recruitment for next year
<input type="checkbox"/> Review attendance of pupils, staff, and governors over the academic year
<input type="checkbox"/> Review behaviour incidence and pupil exclusions for the year

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES	
30 April	Headteachers who wish to leave at the end of the summer term must have handed in their resignation by this date (check your headteacher's contract as this may vary)
30 April	2024-25 Budget Toolkit with the LA 2024-25 Budget Toolkit (containing the one-year budget) must be with the LA
1 May	Key Stage (KS) 1 test period begins
9 May to 19 June	GCSE exam period
13 May	KS2 tests week begins
13 May to 25 June	GCE exam period
13 May to 28 June	A-Level exam period
16 May	Summer school census day
30 May	3-Year Strategic Plan (2025-26 & 2026-27) Toolkit with the LA 3-Year Strategic plan must be with the LA and signed off by Governors
31 May	Deputy headteachers who wish to leave at the end of the summer term must have handed in their resignation by this date (check your deputy headteacher's contract as this may vary)
10 June	Phonics screening check week begins
12 June	Summer census return deadline
31 July	Deadline by when your primary school must publish details of how it spent its PE and sport premium funding
14 August	Restricted release of GCE results to centres only Restricted release of A-Level results to centres only
15 August	GCE results day A-Level results day
21 August	Restricted release of GCSE results to centres only
22 August	GCSE results day
31 August	Schools that are your own admission authority: set out on your website how in-year applications will be handled.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

This article is for: all governors of all schools, all phases.



Governors for Schools are running an Inclusion Governance campaign to support boards in addressing issues around equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). They have many free resources available on their website, including a video series from Sejal Rabone, a Chair of Governors keen to promote EDI in her school, as well as scenario based learning opportunities.

They also have many webinars available to listen back to on EDI focused topics, including how governors can support LGBTQ+ inclusion within schools and how governors can support schools in developing their provision for learners who use English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Please use the following links to access the information:

[Inclusive Governance Campaign Resources](#)
[Available Webinars](#)

If you have been carrying out a particular piece of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) related work in your school, we would love to hear from you. We're keen to celebrate your successes and hope to share good practice with other governing boards.

Equally, if you would like guidance on an EDI related topic, please get in touch with us. We will aim to offer support in this newsletter as appropriate.

You can reach us at our email address governance@suffolk.gov.uk.

New Governors

This article is for: all governors of all schools, all phases.

The Department for Education's [Maintained Schools Governance Guide](#) states that the first core function of effective governance is to ensure "that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined".

Vision: a statement that clearly states what your school aspires to.

Ethos: the culture of your school and the environment that's created to achieve the vision and implement the strategy.



Strategy: the actions taken to achieve the vision.

The governing board, together with the school leadership team, are responsible for creating and implementing vision, ethos, and strategy. Your vision is what will lead your strategic decisions and drive school improvement. Your school's vision and ethos are used to monitor your school's performance, such as when carrying out a learning walk or asking pupils their perception of the school.

As a new governor, one of the first things you will want to do is familiarise yourself with the school's vision, ethos, and its strategic priorities. You can ask your Chair of Governors, or your mentor on the board if you have one, to explain these to you. If there is opportunity to do so, you may also like to attend a stakeholder event, such as a pupil council or parents' forum, to gain insight into how they perceive the school.

The Schools' Choice "Governor's Role in School Improvement" training, part of their Essential Governance courses, aims to increase understanding governors' strategic role in driving school improvement. The follow up session "Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction" explains further how governors can understand how to set their school's framework, including its vision and strategic priorities.

The National Governance Association's Learning-Link offers two e-learning courses on strategy and vision. Learning-Link is free to access if your board subscribes to Schools' Choice training services.

 <p>E-learning</p> <p>🕒 2hrs</p> <p>Induction Strategy: living your values, reaching your vision, managing the risk</p> <p>This e-learning module explores the board's role in strategy development and processes that ensure a successful approach.</p>	 <p>E-learning</p> <p>🕒 15mins</p> <p>Strategic planning Creating a new vision for your school or trust</p> <p>This e-learning module provides a good understanding of what a school or trust vision should be.</p>
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National Governance Association: Free Resources

This article is for: all governors of all schools, all phases.



Although membership to the National Governance Association (NGA) is a paid for subscription service, they also provide some resources that are freely available.

If you are considering becoming an NGA member, you can find more information on their website at [Membership | National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](https://nga.org.uk) .

Below is a list of recent resources that have been added to their service that do not require a subscription to access:

- Webinar (watch on-demand) - [Governance workload - balancing efficiency and effectiveness](#)
- Blog: [Exploring children's mental health and the art of listening](#)
- Blog: [How to build your board's Ofsted confidence](#)
- Blog: [Governance remuneration - a penny for your thoughts](#)