

Governor Headlines

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

The Governor Services Team can be contacted at:

governance@suffolk.gov.uk

Veronica Mwondela, Senior Governance Advisor – 01473 265987

Lyndsay Cook, Governor Development Advisor – 01473 260163

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A MESSAGE FROM SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL'S GOVERNOR SERVICES TEAM



Veronica Mwondela
Senior Governance Advisor



Lyndsay Cook
Governor Development Advisor

It was such a pleasure to see some of you at our recent Spring Governance Conference in May. From your feedback, it seems that it was valuable to spend the day with other governors pooling ideas and sharing knowledge. We were all agreed that governing has become more challenging, but it was still one of the most satisfying ways to serve our children and our community. Long may you continue!

It is almost unbelievable that we are here, once again, when it's nearly time for our pupils to transition to new year groups. For some, this will mean leaving for pastures anew as they enter secondary school. As governors, we need to assure ourselves that everything is in place to ensure a smooth transition for all our children.

This time of year, is one for reflection on the outgoing year and preparation for the coming one. How closely is your school's performance aligned with what was in the School Development Plan (SDP)? By July 9, primary schools should know the outcomes of the SATs assessments.

Before the end of the summer term, your board should have met with the headteacher and the senior leadership team (SLT) to go over the documents below:

- Pupil performance data
- Financial data
- Results of staff, parent and pupil surveys
- Previous school development plans and their outcomes
- The self-evaluation form (SEF)
- Your last Ofsted inspection report

From these, the key development areas should then be determined, and a draft SDP agreed. Your school's Standards and Excellence Partner will be supporting your Headteacher with this in preparation for the autumn term.

So, quite a few loose ends to tie before we finally kick off our shoes to welcome the summer holidays and hopefully better weather.

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 June'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.



SEND Threshold for High Needs Funding

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

We have received some queries regarding the SEND threshold for High Needs Funding. We hope that the below information, from the School Accountancy Team, will help to explain how this is allocated.

Funding to support pupils with additional needs is broken down in to 3 elements:

Element 1 – Basic per pupil funding or Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)

Primary (Years R-6)	£3,509
Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	£4,969
Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	£5,629

Element 2 funding is based on the National Funding Formula Factors. Factors used to allocate funding to schools through the schools' block include:

- Prior attainment
- EAL
- IDACI (local deprivation index figure)
- Free School Meals
- Mobility

Schools should be using element 1 and 2 funding until they meet the £6,000 threshold for a pupil where they can then apply for **element 3** – Top Up funding for the additional support to meet the needs of the pupil.

Headteacher Performance Management Local Authority External Adviser Package

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

Headteacher Performance Management is an opportunity to have focused discussions about the Headteacher or Principal's ongoing professional development, leading to actions that maximise the impact the school leader has on their school, its staff, and its pupils. Our package will use the existing evidence in the school, gathered as part of the school's ongoing self-evaluation and improvement work.

We recognise that effective performance management is aligned with the school development plan priorities and timescales.

'Effective external advisors have respectful and trusting relationships with the governing body and respectful, yet independent, relationships with the headteacher.'

(DfE Effectively Managing Headteacher Performance, page 9)

Governing boards in LA maintained schools are mandated to seek external independent advice on headteacher performance management, and this is highly recommended for academy and free schools. Officers from the Standards and Excellence Team are now available to act as external advisers on a traded basis.

Our Headteacher Performance Management package includes:

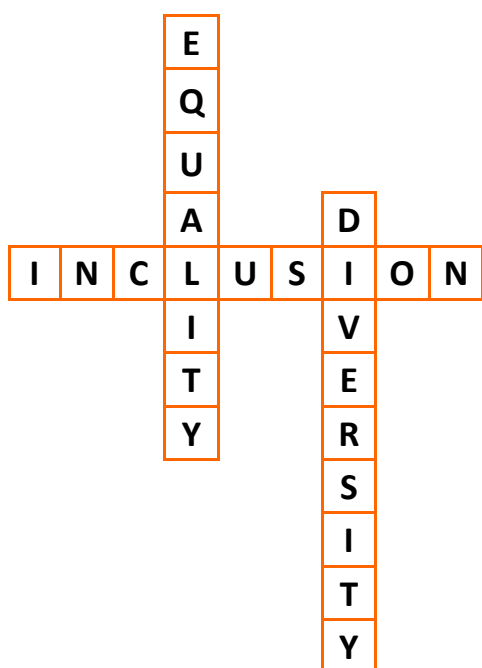
- An initial briefing for governors.
- Access to our headteacher performance management materials.
- Review and objective setting meeting (September/October): a 2.5-hour block of face-to-face time to prepare the governors involved and to carry out the headteacher performance management meeting. This could be on-site or virtual. The final report would be compiled by the officer acting as external adviser.
- Mid-year review (April/May): a 1.5-hour block of face-to-face time. This could be on-site or virtual. The mid-year report would be compiled by the officer acting as external adviser.

The package costs £580 for Suffolk LA maintained schools and £652.50 for Suffolk Academies and Free Schools. Costs are inclusive of VAT.

If you would like further information about the Headteacher Performance Management package please contact Leigh Foster, Regional Lead for Education at leigh.foster@suffolk.gov.uk .

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

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



As part of your school's statutory equality and objectives policy, your school leader will set at least one quality objective. Equality information must be updated and published annually and equality objectives updated and published every four years, with the objectives reviewed yearly.

Equality objectives should be specific and measurable and should be linked to challenges your school leaders have already identified. They can relate to any of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don't
- Fostering good relations across all characteristics, between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic

Examples of a good equality objective include:

- Narrowing attainment gaps between groups of pupils
- Reducing the use of derogatory language
- Improving the engagement of different groups of parents and communities

Your role as a governing board is to challenge and approve the equality objectives that your school leader identifies and ensure they are in line with the vision and values. You'll also need to ensure that the objectives are published and accessible to parents and the local community, usually on the school website.

Equality objectives should be reviewed yearly and governors should question whether progress is being made. It is easier to assess this if objectives have clear measurable goals with a specific target and timeframe.

If you have been carrying out a particular piece of equity, 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

How to Effectively Contribute to Meetings

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

If you are new to your governance role you may find that there is a lot of information to take in. Many governors say it took them the first year of their term-of-office to settle into the role and during this time governing board meetings can feel intimidating. We've shared some tips below for how you can still make a positive contribution to governing board meetings, even if you feel you are still figuring things out:

- Read the agenda, and any other related documents, ahead of the meeting. Take some time to understand as much as you can, but don't worry if this isn't everything.
- If you would like to add an item to the agenda for discussion, do this well in advance by emailing the Chair of Governors and the clerk. This will give them time to prepare any necessary information themselves.
- Speak with other governors ahead of the meeting if you are nervous. If you have been given a mentor as part of your induction, they would be the perfect person, but any governor should be able to offer you support.
- Prepare any questions in advance and remember, no question is a stupid question! As a new governor you will have a fresh perspective on things that may not have been considered by the board.

- Take responsibility for anything that you feel matches your skillset. Even if you might not fully understand the specific action relating to your school, you will give yourself a head start by choosing to take responsibility for something that already matches your skills and experience.
- Don't be afraid to disagree. Good governance comes from a variety of perspectives and debate is welcomed. If you'd like to challenge an agenda item ahead of the meeting you can speak with the Chair or clerk in advance. If you disagree with something during the meeting you can discuss your views with the board and vote against a decision if a vote is taken.
- If you are feeling intimidated by governing board meetings, always reach out to your Chair of Governors or your mentor if you have one. It's their role to make sure your needs are accommodated and that you have the opportunity to contribute your unique skills towards the shared goal of providing the best possible education for the pupils in your school.