



## Gloucestershire Governors' Association

### GGA Open Meetings 2012

- 27th February 2012  
Empowering Governance
- 23rd April 2012
- 18th June 2012 (AGM)

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## Gloucestershire Governors' Association / Local Authority Open Meeting

The next Open Meeting of the Gloucestershire Governors' Association will be held on **Monday 27th February 2012 (NOT Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February** circulated originally by the LA by mistake) from 7.00-9.00 pm at Shire Hall (rear entrance as usual).

### Theme: Empowering Governance

Against the backdrop of less frequent inspections for good and outstanding schools, and increased monitoring for satisfactory schools, there is a greater imperative now for governing bodies to be well versed in the criteria against which schools are

## Calling all ACADEMY Governors!

GGA is organizing a meeting (Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm, rear entrance Shire Hall) for the governors of all academies (sponsored or converting – primary, secondary, special) to discuss matters of mutual interest.

Academy governors will be aware that in many cases there is a lack of clear guidance for their decisions. Therefore this meeting will aim to be a forum to exchange information, experiences and to learn from each

judged. This meeting will provide an opportunity for governors to consider in more depth the key aspects of the new inspection framework and how the framework can be used to support school improvement.

A particular focus will be how we self-evaluate and demonstrate the progress that has been made. We will hear about the experience of being inspected under the new framework from a chair of governors and head teacher of a recently inspected school.

Finally, we will look at the questions inspectors ask

and the questions we should be asking ourselves.

If you wish to attend please contact Jennie Leighton on 01452 425846 or email:

[governor.services@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:governor.services@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
to help us make appropriate arrangements.

other. With this format the agenda will be whatever those coming to the meeting would like to share or ask. It would be helpful if you would indicate your attendance in advance, along with any queries you have, to Ian Marshall ([imarshall@btinternet.com](mailto:imarshall@btinternet.com)).

There will be no 'experts' present to answer questions, just the collective knowledge of us all.

The helpful and supportive LA Governor Services team would like to attend this meeting.

However, the involvement of the LA is a sensitive matter for some academies. It would be helpful to receive any views from those planning to attend in advance of the meeting about whether Governor Services should be invited ([imarshall@btinternet.com](mailto:imarshall@btinternet.com)).

After the meeting GGA will decide if this event was useful and whether there should be any more in the future.

## School Business Managers

At a previous GGA Open Meeting in November ('Supporting your Head with business expertise') the case for more administrative support for all Heads was very clear. Afterwards some governors commented that they would like more information, for example about the practicalities of obtaining access to a SBM.

As part of our continuing collaboration with the Gloucestershire Association of School Business Management there is an opportunity to put your questions to them. Please send in any questions or queries to Ian ([imarshall@btinternet.com](mailto:imarshall@btinternet.com)) and all of these will then be forwarded to the GASBM.

Replies will be sent out individually in due course and a selection of answers which have wider applicability may appear in a future newsletter.

Send in your questions **NOW!**

## Knowing your school – RAISEonline

### RAISEonline

There are two helpful documents, one for primary school governors and another for secondaries highlighting a few key questions which governors should be asking about the data available for their school.

The data in RAISEonline is an important part of the school improvement agenda. A better understanding of what it tells us can only be of benefit to the success of our schools.

Lord Hill, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of

State for Schools, said: "One of the key jobs of the governing body is to hold the head to account for the performance of the school. To fulfil that role, governors need access to reliable information, know how to interpret it and know the right questions to ask. RAISEonline is a vital source of information and I hope that this useful publication will help you to put it to the best possible use.

The Government is committed to publishing more school data and to giving parents more information. I congratulate the National Governors' Association on producing notes on 'Knowing your school' and I welcome this publication on

RAISEonline for primary school governors."

[\(Click here for link to useful documents\)](#)

## National College Membership

For many years the National College has been involved in training and supporting career development for Heads, teachers and Directors of Children's Services. The Secretary of State for Education has recently given the National College a remit to help train and support chairs of governors and so there are a series of new initiatives. These are being developed in collaboration with other partners including the NGA. The College says

"Being a chair of governors is a key leadership role and governing bodies are central to the effective accountability of schools and academies. Leading the governing body and working in partnership with the headteacher, the chair plays a pivotal role in school improvement."

Full Membership of the National College is now open to school governors and is free of charge to individuals in England who have a professional

interest in school and early years leadership.

This means that you now have access to the full range of practical resources and professional development – all you need to do to start using them is to open the home page and click on 'sign in' ([www.nationalcollege.org.uk](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk))

Even if you choose not to become a member you can type in 'chairs of governors' in the search box on the home page

and then access pages giving details of training and support.

These include:

**Leading Governors** booklet. This free booklet explores the role of the chair of governors and provides an overview of the new programme of training and support for this important job.

**Regional Training Workshops** during February and March 2012. The nearest are in Birmingham, 28<sup>th</sup> February and in Exeter, 15<sup>th</sup> March.

## National Leaders of Governance (NLG)

The National College is developing a role where outstanding chairs of governors will work with other chairs to help them to develop and improve. This builds on the work already done to support excellent school leaders to lead beyond their schools in the National Leaders of Education and National Support Schools Programme and the

Local Leaders of Education Programme.

This offers the same opportunity to outstanding chairs. This support will be targeted at specific schools and academies where improvement is needed, and where the chair of governors would benefit from additional support.

All details of these and other support for chairs of governors can be found on the National College website. ([Click Here](#)).

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*'School governors give an enormous amount to the education system in England, yet their contribution is largely hidden from public view'.*

Taken from the 'Hidden Givers' a study of school governing bodies in England

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## Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The National College has arranged for Serco to deliver free training on SFVS (the replacement for FIMSIS) for chairs of governors and Finance chairs between January and March 2012 at a number of workshops (places are

limited). The workshop offers expert practical guidance on the new standard whilst considering how you can best secure value for money at your school. You will be able to understand the challenges that the standards may present to your schools, as well

as the evidence that can be used for the standards and the governing body's obligations. The ones at Cheltenham on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February are already fully booked but there is another here on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

Further afield is one in Bristol on March 1<sup>st</sup> and Swindon on 21<sup>st</sup> of March. ([Click here for more details](#))

## Ofsted to extend 'no-notice inspections'



Ofsted have announced that from September all routine inspections will be conducted on a no-notice basis. Ofsted already carries out some no notice inspections, but this announcement extends

the provision to all routine inspections. The new Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, said that inspectors needed to see "schools as they really are." He noted that with the launch of the Parent View website, parents had the opportunity to comment at any time and this reduced Ofsted's reliance on

questionnaires issued at the time of inspection.

## Ofsted: Three satisfactories = special measures

Sir Michael Wilshaw, the new head of Ofsted, has proposed that both the 'Satisfactory' and 'notice to improve' categories should be abolished and replaced with one new category 'requires improvement'. In particular, he highlighted the fact that too many schools have been judged 'satisfactory' in successive inspections. His view is that if after two inspection cycles schools have not improved then more drastic measures are needed. His proposal is that if a school judged satisfactory/'requiring improvement' in each of its last two inspections has not improved sufficiently to

be classed as good in its next inspection, then in future it would automatically be placed in special measures. The maximum gap between inspections would also be reduced to between 12-18 months. Sir Michael noted that 3,000 schools have been judged satisfactory in their last two inspections and of these 300 are in relatively affluent areas. The Prime Minister, David Cameron, voiced his support for the proposals by saying "I don't want the word 'satisfactory' to exist in our education system. Just good enough' is frankly not good enough. Every teacher, every head and every school should be aiming for excellence – no lower."

Christine Blower, the General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, responded to the proposal by stating that labelling schools as coasting and underperforming was "derogatory and insulting to pupils, teachers, school leaders and governors." The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) announced qualified support for the proposals, but expressed concern about the fact that the changes had been announced without warning when a new framework had only just been implemented.

## Statutory Policies Update: just because something isn't on the list doesn't mean you don't have to do it

Members have been contacting the NGA about the DfE's new list of statutory policies querying some omissions from the list – the most glaring of these was the lack of reference to a child protection policy. The list provided by the DfE includes only those policies or documents which are specifically referred to in legislation. A child protection policy is not one of these – BUT and it is a big but – it is referred to in the statutory guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education which

governing bodies have to have regard to. In addition, the Education Act 2002 states that “The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.”

Likewise NGA have been asked about the lack of a mention of a collective worship policy –there is no requirement for a policy on collective

worship, simply a statutory duty to ensure that the daily act of collective worship takes place.

The DfE published list was a list of statutory policies, not of statutory duties.

Apparently the DfE is planning to release an additional list of policies which are mentioned in statutory guidance as opposed to legislation. The link for statutory policies - ([Click Here](#))

## New Performance Management and Capability Regulations

The DfE have issued the revised regulations for teachers' and headteachers' performance management and the new model policy on teacher appraisal and capability. It will come into effect from September 2012 and includes:  
 ■giving schools more freedom over managing their teachers through

simpler, less prescriptive appraisal regulations;  
 ■removing the three-hour limit on observing a teacher in the classroom;  
 ■a requirement to assess teachers every year against the new Teachers' Standards;  
 ■allowing poorly performing teachers to be removed in about a term – the process can

currently take a year or more;  
 ■an optional new model policy for schools that deals with both performance and capability issues, and represents a reduction in the number of pages of guidance.

Chair - Ian Marshall  
Highnam C/E Primary Academy  
Andoversford Primary School  
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Treasurer—Sue Padfield  
Christchurch C of E Primary School,  
Cheltenham  
suepadfield@btinternet.com

### Have your say.....

We would be delighted to receive your comments, ideas or articles for future publications of the GGA newsletter.

Please contact Craig Guthrie by email: [craig.c.guthrie@sky.com](mailto:craig.c.guthrie@sky.com)

**The Gloucestershire Governors' Association** exists to serve the governors and, hence, the schools and children of Gloucestershire. It is affiliated to the National Governors' Association (NGA).

It holds a termly Open Meeting to which all governors of all Gloucestershire schools are invited.

Affiliated schools pay a small annual subscription (used for the running of the GGA); governors from these are able to stand for election to the Executive Committee and a representative of each affiliated school may vote at the AGM.

Joining the GGA/attending its meetings gives a governor the opportunity:

- to hear professional speakers on topical issues affecting the governance of schools
- to obtain information and advice about topical issues
- to share anxieties, information and good practice

For more information visit our website - [Click here](#)

## Head Teacher Recruitment—FREE Training

One of the most important responsibilities of a Governing Body is to appoint the Head teacher. If you think you will need to recruit a new head teacher within the next 6 months then this training is essential to:

- prepare the governing body for head teacher recruitment

- find out more about succession planning
- find out more about models of leadership

Date: Wednesday 22nd February 2012  
Venue: The Milestone School, Gloucester, GL2 9EU  
Time: 5.00 - 7.30 pm (tea/coffee from 4.30 pm)

To book a place/places please email Governor Services ( [Click Here](#) )

## Gloucestershire Governors' Association (GGA)

At this time of year schools begin to think about which of the LA Traded Services their school buys into for 2012-2013.

The decision is often made by the Head and then reported to and sometimes discussed by the Governing Body. The annual subscription to GGA is collected for convenience as a Traded Service.

For yet another year the costs have not changed, £11 annual subscription for Primary and Special Schools and £16 for Secondaries. Note that the

Traded Service for Gloucestershire Governors' Association (GGA) is separate and different from buying into the LA Governor Services package.

We hope you feel the service you get is worth your support with our Open Meetings, newsletter and website ([www.glogsgovs.org.uk](http://www.glogsgovs.org.uk)).

We appreciate the pressure on all our budgets but hope you will continue your membership through Traded Services. Please check that your head includes

GGA as part of your Traded Services application. It is encouraging that at present 97% of Gloucestershire's schools/academies belong to GGA which gives us a strong voice to speak on behalf of all governors.

We welcome your views on GGA and all offers of support (why not join the Executive Committee?). This is your independent governor voice, run by volunteers like you for the benefit of all governors.