

# GOVERNOR HEADLINES

Welcome to the first edition of "Governor Headlines". I hope that this newsletter will be the start of our monthly communications from the Leadership and Governance team within Education and Learning.

The team embraces the key strands of support for Statutory Governance, Headteacher Recruitment, Headteacher Wellbeing, Newly Qualified Teachers and the School to School Support Partnership which encompasses the 10 Teaching Schools in Suffolk and other strong partnerships.

The purpose of the newsletter is to complement the information that you receive in **The Knowledge** with the very latest updates and key issues that governors need to know. You will continue to receive **The Knowledge** which will be embedded into Governor Headlines every term.



What's new this month - April 2017

### **Joanna Howell - Senior Governor Development Advisor**

Congratulations to Joanna Howell in her new role as Senior Governor Development Advisor.

Joanna has worked for Suffolk County Council for the last 11 years in a variety of different roles. She has been a governor in a Suffolk school and has a wealth of experience in recruitment and project management.

Joanna began her new role in January of this year and has been planning the Governor Recruitment Campaign to be shared with you all at the start of the Summer term.



## Helping you to...

### **Deal with Complaints**

We have been giving a lot of advice out recently to both parents and governing bodies regarding the handling of complaints. Your school complaints procedure should be up to date and reflect how complaints are handled by the school. It is imperative that the process as defined in the policy is followed to the letter to ensure that the complaint is handled within timescales and by the right people within the organisation. This will keep everybody involved in these situations safe and secure, whilst avoiding delays and unnecessary stress.

### **Undertake formal hearings**

If you are needing to undertake a formal hearing, disciplinary or complaint hearing a small panel should be established comprising of governors that haven't been involved in any of the preliminary discussions or investigations. However, in a school with a small governing body, this can be tricky. If you do not have enough governors or enough "fresh" Governors you can do one of the three following things:

- Co-opt new governors into existing vacancies; this can be by "borrowing" Governors from another local school on a reciprocal basis but does require the vacancies to be available in the first place. You will need to specify how long these co-opted Governors will be on the GB for and they must be formally recorded in the minutes at a full governing body meeting.
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- Your Instrument of Government can be amended to create additional places on the governing body but this does require time.
- Finally, you could form a joint hearings committee with a neighbouring school and populate it with governors from both schools. This will need acknowledging formally with suitable terms of reference, but allows flexibility for both schools to use this as appropriate at any time.

If you need any further advice please do not hesitate to get in touch with Joanna Howell at [Joanna.howell@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.howell@suffolk.gov.uk) 01473 263972

### **Recruit a Headteacher**

Recruiting a Headteacher can be an unsettling time for a school and a governing body. Help is at hand from the Headship Recruitment team.

If your Headteacher has resigned you need to contact the Headship Recruitment team within the Local Authority as soon as possible - 01473 263943 or email

[Headships@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Headships@suffolk.gov.uk)

This also applies to any other changes to a Headship position, for example if your Headteacher is absent from school due to illness or is wishing to change their existing contract arrangements it is vital to ring this number 01473 263953 to ensure the necessary due diligence is undertaken.

### **Prepare for Ofsted**

The Education and Learning team are planning to hold a series of seminars for those schools that are imminently expecting an Ofsted inspection. These seminars will be specifically for Chairs of Governors or Vice Chairs to help them prepare for the conversations that they will need to have with Ofsted inspectors. Chairs of Governors will be receiving a letter of invitation to these events at the start of the Summer term.

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## Strategy for Governance

The strategy, as you may be aware following the Governor Briefings in January 2017 and through our consultation with governors, includes the key priorities for 2016-2020. You can view the strategy [here](#).

## Where are we now?

### **The Recruitment Strategy**

From the start of the Summer term 2017 you will receive through Governor Briefings and through additional communications the information regarding the recruitment strategy which is the key priority for us all.

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**Achieving Outstanding Governance**  
**Governor Conference 2017: “Safe & Sound”**

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**Thursday, 11th May 2017**  
**4.30pm onwards (network /tea & coffee)**  
**5.00 to 7.00pm**

**Suffolk One, Scrivener Drive, Ipswich**  
**IP8 3SU**

**A must for all governors: 100 Free Places available**

Safeguarding is a critical, sensitive and highly important area of responsibility for all our schools and its governors. The conference will focus on this subject in a highly informative and practical manner.

Our guest speaker is, **Andrew Hall, Specialist Safeguarding Consultant, Success in Schools Ltd.** Andrew will offer insights and advice on the latest national thinking and developments around safeguarding.

**Protecting Children: Reducing Risk**

Specifically the conference will:-

- Help Governors understand their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding.
- Promote the importance of a good safeguarding culture in schools/academies
- Consider aspects of grooming and the associated risks to children and young people in Suffolk
- Identify key priorities for safer recruitment.

The conference will also provide networking opportunities and flag up other safeguarding issues and approaches enabling governors to be fully aware of

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and able to fulfil their responsibilities.

**Please apply as early as possible and by 28 April 2017 at the latest, stating your name, email address and the name of the school/ academy at which you are a governor to:-**

[swiss382@gmail.com](mailto:swiss382@gmail.com)

**Joining details will be sent to you after 28 April 2017. If you need any further information this is also available from the above email address.**

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Dear Colleague, You will be receiving a copy of "Governor Headlines" each month. As appropriate "The Knowledge" will be embedded within it. Your email address is part of The Suffolk County Council database in your role as a governor.

**Our mailing address is:**

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