

GOVERNOR HEADLINES

Welcome to issue #10 of Governor Headlines.

This month's newsletter contains important information about the Local Authority 'Higher Level Action Process' as well as guidance on Headteacher absences, early years funding, data protection and a range of other topics.

As always, if you have any thoughts or suggestions regarding Governor Headlines please contact governorheadlines@suffolk.gov.uk.

What's new this month - February 2018

Local Authority "High Level Action Process" - A Summary for Governors

Local Authorities have a statutory role in ensuring that all pupils receive a good standard of education.

In Suffolk, LA maintained schools are supported and challenged to ensure they provide a good education for all pupils through regular visits from a LA Standards and Excellence Officer (SEO).

Sometimes these visits evidence that there are areas of concern where things are not going as well as they should be and the school is not providing the good standard of education to which pupils are entitled.

If this happens, the Standards and Excellence Officer will make their concerns clear to the Headteacher and will record the evidence and their evaluation of it, in the rolling record of their visit.

Senior officers in the Local Authority are alerted and if appropriate the high level action process is triggered in line with the Suffolk School Improvement Strategy.

The purpose of the high level action is to add additional support and challenge for school leaders including governors in bringing about the improvements needed.

To continue reading about this process please click [here](#).

Attending SEO Meetings and Rolling Records

We would like to remind Chairs of Governors that they are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings at the school with their Headteacher and Standards and Excellence Officer (SEO). Details of these meetings are logged on a "rolling record" on the Perspective Lite website and your Headteacher will be able to provide access to this. We would encourage governors to be aware of the rolling record in holding school leaders to account.

Qualified Teacher Status and Career Progression for Teachers

Department for Education consultation: Strengthening Qualified Teacher Status and improving career progression for teachers.

Closing date: 9 March 2018

It is the responsibility of governing bodies to ensure schools are compliant with the Newly Qualified Teacher statutory guidance (England). The Department for Education are seeking to consult with all interested parties, including governing bodies, to consider proposals to strengthen Qualified Teacher Status and career progression.

The consultation closes on 9 March 2018. To ensure your voice, or the voice of your school is heard, please follow this [link](#) to the consultation.

Following the link will give you access to a PDF of the consultation document which is available at the bottom of the page.

If you have any queries please contact Celia Moore by emailing celia.moore@suffolk.gov.uk.

Application Process to the LA for Costs of Redundancy to be Met

The purpose of this letter is to update and clarify the process that all maintained schools must follow should they need to make staffing reductions.

Please click [here](#) to read the letter.

Early Years Funding for 3-4 Year Olds

Following the January Schools Forum meeting, I am pleased to confirm that from April 2018, the base rate for all childcare providers will be paid at £4.00 per hour, per child. This has been agreed to give providers the highest possible base rate whilst enabling the council to provide services to you and meet its statutory duties.

There will also be changes to the way that Deprivation and the Inclusion Fund are allocated.

Deprivation will be allocated as an hourly rate of 31p per eligible child and will be based on the actual number of hours a child attends a setting as opposed to the current lump sum. The Inclusion Fund will be targeted to meet the needs of individual children. The total amount of funding allocated for Deprivation and the Inclusion Fund will not reduce to fund the higher base rate.

As you may be aware, Suffolk County Council is one of only 25% of authorities to see a reduction in funding following the Early Years Funding reform. From April 2018, the funding we receive from the Government will reduce further.

The council currently retains 6.3% of funding received from the Government to carry out statutory support services for parents and providers. 93.7% is passed on to providers. From April 2018, 96.2% of the funding the council receives from the Government will be passed on to providers through the base rate of 4.00 per hour per child, plus the Inclusion Fund and Deprivation supplement.

The authority will retain 3.8% to carry out its statutory support services. This means there will be changes to the support the Early Years and Childcare Service can provide to you. These changes will be outlined following a staff consultation exercise which will be commencing soon.

If you have any queries please contact Christina Lewis by emailing Christina.lewis@suffolk.gov.uk or calling 01473 265360.

Headteacher Absence

If your Headteacher is absent for medical or personal reason for more than a two week period please contact Headships@suffolk.gov.uk so that we can work with you to ensure that the appropriate cover is in place.

Data Protection - Privacy Notice Model Documents

Please click [here](#) for suggested privacy notices for schools and Local Authorities to issue to staff, parents and pupils about the collection of data, in anticipation of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Part-time Timetables

SENCOs are often working with other professionals and parents to support a pupil to remain in school. Part-time timetables are often used as a key strategy, but are you aware of the legality of this decision?

Within the FAQ's contained in the School Attendance guidance one key question raised is ***"Can a school place a pupil on a part-time timetable?"***

The answer provided is:

"As a rule, no. All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence."

Exclusions

As you may be aware, the Department for Education recently published an update of its exclusion guidance: www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion.

We would like to draw your attention to two non-statutory guides, one for Headteachers and the other for parents/carers (Annexes B and C respectively). These guides cover how Special Educational Needs and disabilities might be relevant to a school's decision-making.

[Please click here to read more](#)

There has been a national rise in permanent exclusions (PEX) and this is also reflected in Suffolk with the number of permanent exclusions increasing by 21% from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018.

There is no doubt that children and young people's needs are becoming more complex. This is evidenced and reflected in both national and local data. The number of pupils identified with SEND is rising. In Suffolk we are forecasting a year on year rise of 4.8%. This rise places considerable pressure on school budgets and support systems. As an authority, there are a number of initiatives underway to support the challenge of meeting the need of SEND and vulnerable CYP across Suffolk:

- Within Inclusive Services we are currently developing a SEND sufficiency strategy, through which we aim to commission a continuum of provision to meet the range of needs of Suffolk CYP, to ensure all pupils have access to appropriate provision. In response to the immediate pressures, a commissioning process will begin early in the Spring term 2018 to secure short term interim provision.
- Work is underway to establish Assessment Centres across Suffolk (extending the model already set up in the north of the county) to ensure, where appropriate, early assessment of the needs of CYP, so that the appropriate support and provision can be identified.
- The County Inclusion Support Service will be piloting Inclusion Surgeries in parts of Suffolk in February with the aim of providing early intervention advice and guidance on a regular basis to schools. More information about the Inclusion Surgeries will be made available once details have been finalised.
- We are also working closely with the Youth Offending Service to identify where we can support schools and young people with regards to drugs and alcohol misuse.

New Online Education, Health and Care (EHC) Hub

A new online tool is currently being developed that will give young people, families and practitioners live access to the progress of an EHC Needs Assessment. Once live, the EHC Hub will allow the progress of an assessment and any information and advice submitted to be tracked at any time.

As part of its development, the tool is currently being tested with a small number of families and professionals. The testing has helpfully identified areas that require further development, which we will be working on over the coming few months. We hope to be able to launch the EHC Hub for all EHC needs assessments early in the Summer 2018 term.

Key features of the EHC Hub will be:

- Young people and families will be able to submit their views online and upload additional information, including photographs and images that are important to the child or young person
- Practitioners will be able to submit information and advice online avoiding any unnecessary delays with the delivery of paper-based reports
- Young people and families will be able to view who has been asked for information and advice and can let the Local Authority know if someone has recently become involved
- Young people and families will be able to view information and advice at the same time as the Local Authority receives it
- Correspondence between the Local Authority and the young person and family will be held on the EHC Hub so decisions are shared immediately
- When a draft EHC Plan is issued, young people and families can give feedback via the EHC Hub on each section.

Once all EHC Needs Assessments are being processed through the EHC Hub, we will be looking to test the use of the EHC Hub for annual reviews of EHC Plans.

Inspecting Governance Webinar Resources

Please find below two links to useful resources following the Inspecting Governor Webinar held on the 27 November 2017.

[Inspecting Governance](#)

[FAQ](#)

Keeping Us Informed

It is vital that you report any changes to your governing body to governance@suffolk.gov.uk so that we're able to amend our records accordingly. This especially includes any governor resignations, new appointments and reappointments as, if we don't have this information, we are not able to support you to the best of our ability.

To make it easier for you to keep us up to date we've created the below forms which can be filled in and emailed back to us by your Chair of Governors or other member of the governing body, your Clerk, a member of staff or by the governor in question.

[Report a New Governor Appointment/Reappointment](#)

[Report a Governor Resignation](#)

These forms are also available on our webpage at www.suffolk.gov.uk/govern under 'Information, policies and documents for governors'.

Please can we also remind you that, as Schools' Choice have divested from the Local Authority, updates regarding your governing body that are shared with them will not be passed to us unless requested by governors.



Govern Suffolk Schools
Recruitment Campaign

Help someone else put their skills into a Suffolk school by sharing the information below or by directing them to: www.suffolk.gov.uk/governsuffolk.

A governor can make a really important contribution to a child's life, whilst developing personal and professional skills at the same time. Being passionate about improving outcomes and opportunities for children and young people is essential.

You can really make a difference.



Emma Oddie is a School Governor from Sudbury and said:

“I became a governor because I wanted to give something back to my community. I am able to use my strategic thinking and previous experience working in education and business to make a difference to my local school which is really rewarding.”

Watch Emma’s story and see how other people across Suffolk are putting their skills into schools [here](#).

If you, or someone you know, would like to learn more about the role and how to apply, please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/governsuffolk .

Alternatively, you can Call: 01473 263972 or Email: governance@suffolk.gov.uk.
