**BELS Director’s Report to Governors**

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| AUTUMN 2024 ***DEVELOPING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF***  ***YOUR GOVERNING BOARD*** | | CONTENTS    1. **MESSAGE FROM BELS CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING** 2. **GOVERNOR TRAINING PROGRAMME** 3. **GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS AUDIT** 4. **CHAIR SUCCESSION PLANNING** 5. **SEND UPDATE** 6. **ONLINE SAFETY TRAINING FEATURING THE BRECK FOUNDATION** 7. **HOW TO BE A GREAT GOVERNOR OR A TRUSTEE (GOAT) – BOOK RELEASE** 8. **NEW DFE GOVERNANCE GUIDES** 9. **SCHOOLS FORUM VACANCY** 10. **SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS PROJECT UPDATE** 11. **THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSISTANT (MLA) SERVICE** 12. **DFE BUILDINGS UPDATES** 13. **ACADEMY TRUST HANDBOOK UPDATE** |  |
| **1.** | | **MESSAGE FROM BELS CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING** | |
| **Summary** | | Welcome to the 2024/25 Academic Year.  I hope you all managed to find time to relax and enjoy the summer break. Apart from a potential right wing demonstration in Finchley over the holidays (which never materialised), it was a relatively calm summer in Barnet. However the Southport tragedy has seen racist violence and Islamophobia across the country, which has been a collectively very distressing time for so many people. In addition we have the anniversary of the attacks on Israel on 7th October and I am sure all these events will have an impact on your school community. We have circulated available resources to your school leaders that may help support your community during these difficult times. Please do get in touch if you require any bespoke support.  The announcement about an agreement for teachers pay was welcome news as was the indication that this would be fully funded for schools. As you are aware, the Government has accepted the School Teachers’ Review Body's (STRB’s) recommendations in full for 2024. This is for a 5.5% pay award to all pay points and allowances for both teachers and leaders. The statutory consultation process continues to be followed before the pay award can come into effect. The Statutory consultation deadline is on 7 October 2024. Once the Government has had time to consider the consultation responses, the final STPCD 2024 will be laid in parliament for a 21-calendar day ‘praying period’. The DfE have estimated this will take place in mid-November 2024. ***It is anticipated that the teachers’ pay award will be implemented for December 2024 payroll, backdated to 1 September 2024.***  **Ofsted**  One big announcement at the beginning of this term was the changes to Ofsted inspections for state schools. The single judgement for Overall Effectiveness has been removed but the separate judgements for the four separate areas of the framework (plus Early Years for primaries and Sixth Form for secondaries with a Sixth Form) remain. This was as a direct result of the Inquiry into the death of Ruth Perry and the subsequent “Big Listen” where the new Chief Inspector of Ofsted, Sir Martyn Oliver south views from the school community. He has said: “You have spoken, we have listened, and now it is time to act.”  As well as the removal of the single judgement the other main changes are:   1. **‘The call’ will come on Monday** - A key change will see Ofsted give leaders notice of all routine, graded and ungraded, inspections on a Monday, in new a approach set to be piloted over Autumn term. So, heads will know by Monday afternoon if an inspection is planned for that week. Inspectors will then visit schools on a Tuesday and Wednesday and write reports on Thursdays. On Fridays, Ofsted bosses will “lead a rigorous consistency review of inspection finding” and activities such as lead inspector training will also take place. 2. **New ‘phase-appropriate’ frameworks… -** Ofsted has pledged to consult “later this academic year” on creating a reformed education inspection framework (EIF) for schools, early years and FE and skills. Ofsted said it wanted to “introduce rubrics that offer clear criteria for inspections and can support leaders to self-evaluate their practice” as part of the EIF reform. The inspectorate also wants to make inspection more collaborative and supportive, a key issue flagged through the consultation, by using these “rubrics” to guide chats between inspectors and leaders about a school’s strengths and areas for improvement. 3. **but ‘excellent’ curriculum focus to stay** - However, Oliver wants to avoid “change for change’s sake” and intends for “excellent” aspects of the EIF, such as focus on the curriculum and early reading, to be kept. Oliver said Ofsted will start informally consulting on report cards from today, working on this through autumn to develop a model. He hopes to formally consult between January and Easter and for Ofsted to do piloting and training of its workforce after Easter. 4. **Reports will show ‘area insights’…**The new report cards will include “area insights”. The service will “visualise local area data” across all areas Ofsted inspects and regulates, to give parents more information and to help inspectors understand local context. Ofsted wants the service to set out what it is like to be a child in any area, from childminder provision and both school phases, all the way up to a post-16 provider or a training provider.   It hopes the service will identify places that need extra help from the government to support vulnerable children.   1. **…and new inclusion ‘criterion’** Ofsted will consult on introducing a“criterion”, understood to be Ofsted’s new word for sub judgments, for inclusionwithin the report card. This will “evaluate whether schools are providing high-quality support for disadvantaged and vulnerable children”. 2. **Grace period for safeguarding fixes** - If a school is ‘good’ or better in all other areas but fails in safeguarding, and inspectors think the leadership has the capacity to fix this, they can call the inspection incomplete and return within three months to complete it, withholding judgment in the meantime. This won’t involve “reopening and rejudging the areas that we have found to be good or outstanding elsewhere,” Oliver said. But Ofsted will only allow this if school leaders agree to send a letter, which Ofsted will produce, to parents, explaining the situation. The report cards will also include “a separate safeguarding criterion”, distinct from leadership and management.   The inspectorate said its “most challenging” Big Listen feedback was about its culture. A NatCen survey, commissioned by Ofsted, of 4,349 parents and carers, found a quarter disagreed that the inspectorate could be trusted. Just 49 per cent said it could be. Schools were much less likely to say Ofsted “achieved its ambition of being trusted” compared to other providers, according to findings by IFF Research. Just 29 per cent of schools agreed with the statement compared to 47 per cent for teacher development providers, and up to 72 per cent for social care. A clear culture change is needed!  The updated Inspection Handbook has been published[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/school-inspection-handbook-for-september-2023](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fschool-inspection-handbook-eif%2Fschool-inspection-handbook-for-september-2023&data=05%7C02%7CNeil.Marlow%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C35411e85b6e4424d06dc08dcd66e8452%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638621017353733613%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=44duvyf54qr3Q4FZW5IKW37k%2BR4fd2Y93jflvmPVr5U%3D&reserved=0)  Graded Ofsted Inspections resumed this year on 23rd September with Ungraded Inspections (now not including Deep Dives) resuming on 7th October. Last academic year we had 40 Ofsted Inspections of Barnet Schools with all of these being judged either Good or Outstanding (8 Outstanding, 2 Good+ and 30 Good). As usual we will have an item on Ofsted at the upcoming Director’s Briefing with Chairs and Vice Chairs (10th October), covering the main changes to the Framework and Handbook plus some Chairs giving feedback about their recent Ofsted experiences.  **New headteachers/principals**  This year there are only eight Barnet schools with new headteachers/principals, either permanent or interim (there were 13 this time last year!). The new headteachers/principals are:   * **Su Reddy** – who is the new Principal at Ark Pioneer Academy Secondary School. Su is new to Barnet, joining from Ark Greenwich Free School * **Dr Ruth Hills** – who is the new Headteacher at Christ’s College Finchley Secondary School. Ruth is new to Barnet, joining from Ruislip High School in Hillingdon * **Emma MacLeod** – who is the new Headteacher at Henrietta Barnett Secondary School. Emma is new to Barnet, joining from Queens' School in Bushey * **Deborah Denan** – who is the new Headteacher at Noam Primary School. Deborah is new to Barnet, joining from Gateshead Jewish Primary School * **Clare Power**  - who is the new Headteacher at Oakleigh Special School. Clare is new to Barnet, joining from Woodlands Special School in Harrow. * **Nick Read** – the new Principal at Parkfield Primary School. * **Monica McCarthy and Daniela Sulis** – Interim Executive Headteacher and Acting Headteacher at Blessed Dominic Primary School. Daniela was previously Deputy Headteacher and Co-Headteacher at Blessed Dominic and Monica has been seconded from St Vincent's' School in Ealing * **Chris Donaghy** – who is the Interim Co-Headteacher at Woodridge Primary School, alongside Colin Dowland. Chris has been seconded from Queenswell Junior School.   In addition:   * With the formation of the Flourishing Schools Federation with Northside Primary, Queenswell Infants and Queenswell Juniors, **Liz Longworth** becomes the Executive Headteacher of the federation. Liz was previously Headteacher at Northside Primary School. * **Sarah Simmons** is now the Executive Headteacher of Rimon Primary School and Sacks Morasha Primary School * **Bell Lane,** following the academisation of the school into the Saracens MAT is now known as **Saracens Bell Lane.** Violeta Tudorache is the Principal. Violeta was previously at Broadfields School but was seconded by the school to be the Acting Head of School at Bell Lane for the past year.   It is really pleasing to see that the six permanent headteachers have been recruited from outside of the Borough; a demonstration of the strong reputation that Barnet and Barnet Schools have across London and the country. As I have said many times before, Barnet education continues to flourish due to the strong relationships and partnerships between schools and between schools and the Local Authority. As you know, in BELS we are here to support your school’s vision, support your school improvement needs and help the school get through the challenges and stresses.  Thank you to those of you who volunteer to be on a Board or Committee enabling us to evaluate successes, be aware of challenges and co-produce the ways forward with you. These Boards/Committees which have governor involvement include the:   * Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee * Schools Forum * Schools in Financial Difficulty Panel   **Achievement in Barnet**  Before the end of last term we received information about the achievement of pupils in Barnet primary schools. It was really pleasing to see that the attainment at Early Years (Good Level of Development) was further above national compared to 2023 (having been below national in 2022). There were also pleasing results in Phonics, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Well done to all the pupils and the teachers and staff involved in these impressive achievements. Thank you to the primary schools for giving the Year 6 pupils such a solid foundation, enabling them to successfully move on to secondary education this year.  Also congratulations to all the Barnet Year 11 and Year 13 students on their achievements over the summer. The early indications are that A Level results were well above national once again and there have been significant improvements in vocational results. At GCSE, results in so far show that Barnet is well above national and back in line with the results pre pandemic (2019). We wish those students every success in the next phase of their learning or employment.  There is an item about Achievement in Barnet Schools 2024 at the upcoming Director’s Briefing with Chairs and Vice Chairs.  **Attendance and Exclusion**  Despite Barnet’s Attendance and Exclusion rates being relatively strong compared to other Local Authorities nationally we are always striving to find ways of making these even stronger. This year we are running a pilot project aimed at improving the safeguarding, health, welfare and attendance of children across Barnet. We will be working with Studybugs, <https://studybugs.com/> who are able to facilitate delivery of live pupil attendance information to the education and safeguarding teams at Barnet. This will enable us to focus our resources where they’re most needed, intervene sooner where necessary (including those who have had repeated fixed term suspensions), and make a positive impact for the benefit of all. Schools also get access to this information enabling you to better support pupils and help you in your creation of attendance reports. To do this we require only your school’s agreement and 10 minutes of your IT person’s time.  **Please** [**visit this website**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstudybugs.com%2Fla%2Fbarnet%2Fregister&data=05%7C02%7CNeil.Marlow%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Ca26798f748dc45eda4b608dcab09cf8c%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638573305827097280%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Br1mkd1EYtIO40a9UdH6r1MwqKnkVGFEttXpl6dUI0A%3D&reserved=0) **for more details and to register to participate.** We welcome any questions you have about this initiative and thank you for your support. We have spoken to other LAs who have commissioned Studybugs and they have been extremely positive about the impact it has made.  **Budget Challenges**  The biggest challenge in education continues to be funding. We hope that the new government find the resources to inject further funding into the education system; they clearly have realised already it is much needed. The huge increase in children with complex needs and the falling rolls in some parts of the Borough have added to these challenges.  Barnet Council is facing significant financial challenges as well. I wanted to update you on Barnet Council’s financial position. Like all London boroughs, Barnet is facing an increasing and pressing demand for statutory services we have a legal duty to provide, such as Adult Social Care and Temporary Accommodation, while the council’s budget has reduced in real terms by over 50% since 2010.  Following early monitoring of the Council’s 2024/25 budget, the Council are now projecting an overspend of around 5% of their general budget (around £20m).  Over the summer, the Council has been working on actions to bring in-year overall spend back within budget and to review what changes need to be made to next year’s budget. This is likely to include making some spending cuts and increasing income, as well as using new technology to transform services and reduce overheads.  For this year, the Council will be applying rigorous spending controls on all non-essential discretionary spend and the signing of any contracts. These controls will cover all areas of the council, including ring-fenced funds and to capital and revenue expenditure.  As a Local Authority Controlled Company, BELS is supporting the Council in making cost savings and increasing income where possible. However, be assured, this will have minimal impact on the services and support that BELS delivers to your schools and settings this year. Your continued support in purchasing traded services from BELS obviously helps our underlying financial stability.  The Council is still working through the implications for next year’s budget, and they will keep partners and stakeholders informed of any changes they propose which may impact them.  If you are concerned about the implications for your school, please do not hesitate to contact me.  While the Council appreciates this is unwelcome news, they hope you will understand they have a duty to stay within budget and to ensure they provide best value to residents.  **Support**  Thank you, once again, for the determination and unwavering focus you show, as governors and volunteers, to do the very best for your children, young people, staff and communities.   The strong partnership between schools in Barnet and between the schools and the LA/BELS is very special and talked about by many other LAs both in London and nationally and by the DfE, Ofsted and the different Diocesan Boards. Therefore, I very much look forward to working with you again this year, visiting your schools and seeing you at Chairs and Vice Chairs Briefings and other meetings during the course of the year.  Remember, we are here to support you so please get in contact with George Peradigou or your Learning Network Inspector or other members of the BELS Team if you have any concerns or want to seek advice.  A reminder that the Director’s Briefing with Chairs and Vice-Chairs is taking place on Thursday 10th October 6.00-8.00pm. Agenda items will include:   * General BELS and schools updates inc Achievement in Barnet Schools 2024 * Governance Effectiveness Audit - Emerging Themes * Annual Buildings Compliance Return * SEND Update * School Places Update * Support for Young Carers * Ofsted Update * Ofsted Experiences – standing item   Please also diarise Thursday 6th February at 6pm for the Spring Term Director’s Briefing.  I hope you have an enjoyable and successful first term of the year. | |
| **Governors’ Role** | | To note the above information. | |
| **For action by** | | All Governors | |
| **Contact** | | Neil Marlow  Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [neil.marlow@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:neil.marlow@barnet.gov.uk) | |

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| **2.** | **GOVERNOR TRAINING PROGRAMME** |
| **Summary** | The Governor Training Programme has been updated with the new batch of courses for the coming terms and can be found [HERE](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/governorservices).  Please see Appendix 1 for help to create an account and begin registering for courses. If you require assistance, please contact [BELS.Training@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:BELS.Training@barnet.gov.uk).  Courses this term:  [Introduction to Finance – Part 1](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/232378) - Mon, 14 Oct 2024, 18:30-19:30 (joint session)  [Governors' Responsibilities for Online Safety and DfE Standards for Cyber Security](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231849) - Tue, 15 Oct 2024, 18:00-19:30  [The Ofsted Framework](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231844) - Mon, 21 Oct 2024, 18:00-19:30  [Discussion Forum for Chairs and Vice Chairs](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231848) - Wed, 06 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:30 | The Bohemia Pub, 762-764 High Street, North Finchley, N12 9QH  [Ofsted Ready: Interview Prep](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231846) - Mon, 11 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:00  [Safeguarding: Safer Working Practices and Reporting Concerns](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231850) - Tue, 12 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:30  [SEND Responsibilities for Governors](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231872) - Wed, 13 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:30  [New and Aspiring Chairs](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231834) - Mon, 18 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:30  [School Buildings: The Governor's role in ensuring Health & Safety](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/237668) - Tue, 19 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:30  [Safeguarding: Safer Recruitment](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231839) - Thu, 21 Nov 2024, 18:00-20:30  [Induction for Newish Governors](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/233885) - Mon, 25 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:30  [Complaints Handling, Panel Hearings and Appeals](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/238731) - Wed, 27 Nov 2024, 18:00-19:00  [High Quality EYFS and Governor Oversight](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/234677) - Tue, 03 Dec 2024, 18:00-19:30  [Action Planning and Evaluation for Governing Boards](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/223750) - Wed, 04 Dec 2024, 18:00-19:30  [Safeguarding for all Governors](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231851) - Mon, 09 Dec 2024, 18:00-19:30  *Note: Any price shown on the portal for subscribing schools will reduce to zero upon checkout.*  According to DfE Governance Guides, governing boards should be “providing an **induction** for new governors”, and all school governors and academy trustees must have **safeguarding** training, including **online safety** training to fulfil the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). We recommend that new governors enrol onto these sessions **within 6 months of their start date**. The guidance suggests updating this training regularly. We recommend this be done, at least, every two years. This will ensure that governors are able to oversee safeguarding policies and procedures.    Following Induction and Safeguarding Training, **further training** will depend on the governor’s designated area of responsibility and the committees they have been assigned to.  The **DfE lists a lack of training as grounds for suspension** of a governor. This reflects the importance of ensuring governors are upskilling. Your code of conduct should highlight this expectation. We recommend that boards **appoint a designated governor for training** and that a training log is updated to record courses undertaken.  By ensuring governors are upskilling, the Chair will build an effective board, from which future leaders can emerge, thus also helping with chair and vice chair **succession planning**. Chair-specific training should also be undertaken to develop existing and future Chairs/Vice Chairs (eg: Newish and Aspiring Chairs, Chair & Vice Chair Forum, Chairs & Vice Chairs Briefings, etc.).  The annual Governance Audit / skills audits can also be used to evaluate skills gaps and training needs. Appointing a Designated Governor for Training to keep track of this is advised.  Subscribing schools also have access to our advice service, including procedural and constitutional advice, termly governor updates, support with elections, governor recruitment, chair mentoring, etc. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **3.** | **GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS AUDIT** |
| **Summary** | Last term, we circulated the updated Governance Effectiveness Audit, which had been cut down from 45 questions to 8 RAG-rated themes.  Thank you to those governing boards who submitted their audits by the deadline date. You will have received your feedback by now and it is recommended that you use this to feed into your boards training and development.  The audit should be used to self-evaluate the effectiveness of governance year-on-year and track improvements with clear evidence to support each judgement.  As well as helping us understand the effectiveness of governance, emerging themes also help determine both recruitment and governor training requirements for your board.  At this term’s Director’s Briefing to Chairs and Vice Chairs (6pm Thursday 10th October), we’ll be summarising the emerging themes from this year’s collective audits and offering some suggestions on how to overcome common challenges. We have circulated the meeting link already but if you need it again, please get in touch. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **4.** | **CHAIR SUCCESSION PLANNING** |
| **Summary** | From our Audit Moderation, it is clear to us that Chair Succession Planning is still a concern for many governing boards. This also continues to be a national concern for schools across the UK, as confirmed by the NGA and through joint committees I attend with counterparts from other boroughs. Below are some updated tips to aid you with succession planning:  **Delegation:** The main concern is usually capacity. This can be alleviated by demonstrating that the role is manageable through delegation and upskilling through training.  **Governor Training:** By ensuring governors are upskilling, the Chair will build an effective board, from which future leaders can emerge. A training log can be used to record training undertaken. The annual Governance Audit / skills audits can be used to evaluate skills gaps. Appointing a Designated Governor for Training to keep track of this is advised.  **Chair-Specific Training:** This should be undertaken by Chairs and Vice Chairs on a regular basis (courses such as: ‘New and Aspiring Chairs’ and ‘Chairs & Vice Chairs Discussion Forum’, as well as the termly ‘Director’s Briefing to Chairs & Vice Chairs’).  **The Vice-Chair’s Role:** The Governing Board should elect a Vice Chair it feels would be a good candidate to take over as Chair. The Chair should delegate leadership tasks and bounce ideas off the Vice Chair. Closely shadowing the Chair will ready the Vice Chair to step up when necessary. Some schools have also benefited from rotating Vice-Chairs to build up the leadership experience of more governors.  **Co-Chairing:** This shares the leadership burden and is a viable option where two governors have the necessary collective skills but not enough time. It reduces the risk of disruption if the chair resigns unexpectedly (chairs should give ample warning). Communication is the key to keep decision making lines clear.  **Chair Mentoring:** Thanks to some of our more experienced Chairs who have volunteered, new chairs can access mentoring for added support. The Chairs and Vice Chairs Discussion Forum is also a great platform for mentoring and sharing good practice.  **External Recruitment:** DfE funded agencies, such as Governors for Schools, can help widen the search. Sign up, create an advert, and specify your desired skills/experience. This is free and they usually have prospects within your area.  **Commissioning a Chair Recruitment Service:** Governors for Schools is offering a dedicated Chairs recruitment service where they will recruit a Chair for you at a price.   * Price: £500/700+Vat (depending on whether your schools budget is under or over £2.5m). * They train up their prospective chairs (they could have access to our training programme too of course). * If Chair resigns within 6 months, a new Chair would be found free of charge.   **Succession Plan:** Agree a Succession Plan which encompasses all of the above before the position becomes vacant. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **5.** | **SEND UPDATE** |
| **Summary** | Karen Flanagan (BELS Director of SEND and Inclusion) will be giving a SEND Update to both Headteachers/Principals and Chairs and Vice Chairs on Thursday 10th October.  A SEND Update Report will be circulated following these briefings. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | Karen Flanagan  Director of SEND and Inclusion,  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [karen.flanagan@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:karen.flanagan@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **6.** | **ONLINE SAFETY TRAINING FEATURING THE BRECK FOUNDATION** |
| **Summary** | As you may recall, last term, the Breck Foundation presented an item at the Director’s Briefing regarding the well-known story of Breck, who was a victim of online targeting. This term, our Online Safety Session will be attended by representatives from the Breck Foundation to dive deeper into Breck’s story and lessons to be learned for ensuring online safety. This will take place virtually on Tuesday 15th October at 6-7.30pm. Please register via: [**Governors' Responsibilities for Online Safety and DfE Standards for Cyber Security**](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/231849)  **Breck Foundation: Who are we?**  We are a Southeast-based charity, founded in 2014 in response to the tragic loss of Breck Bednar, a 14-year-old boy who was groomed and murdered by an online predator. We reach thousands of children and young people in schools and other community settings with Breck's story every year.  Our talks and educational resources empower children to be better digital citizens and protect their wellbeing whilst staying safe from online abuse, exploitation, and grooming. Our founder, Lorin LaFave Gordon, believes that if her son Breck had heard the talks we deliver he would still be alive today.  **We help cover the UK curriculum**  Our main teaching for all ages shows how to spot the signs of grooming and how to report concerns but for different age groups we also touch on related topics such as Nude Selfies, Grooming through gift-giving, and County Lines Gang Recruitment – we can also deliver satellite presentations on Fake News, Wellbeing and Digital Citizenship. If your school has a specific issue you would like us to incorporate, we can do so.  We have tailored age-appropriate presentations for ages 5 and upwards till the end of year 13. Our speakers get brilliant feedback from children, teachers and parents.  If you are interested in booking with us or just finding out a little more, please do not hesitate to contact Yanika – details below. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | Yanika Bateikina  Project Manager  Breck Foundation  Email: [yanika.bateikina@breckfoundation.org](mailto:yanika.bateikina@breckfoundation.org) |

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| **7.** | **HOW TO BE A GREAT GOVERNOR OR A TRUSTEE (GOAT) – BOOK RELEASE** |
| **Summary** | **A new book for governors and trustees from one of our own**  One of Barnet’s most experienced Chairs, Ian Phillips, has written a book that shares many lessons and observations from over 20 years as a school and college chair, governor, trustee, member, National Leader of Governance, and consultant. **"How to be a great GoaT – a guide to being a brilliant Governor or a Trustee"** is for school and college governors and trustees, Chairs, and trust members, as well as governance professionals.  It’s short and easy to read. Not about rules or procedures, rather, it answers the all-to-rarely posed question: ‘How do I do this job?’ by focusing on attributes (Independence; Challenge; Listening; Support; Curiosity; Humility; Conscientiousness; Pessimism; Intolerance; Resilience; Self-improvement; Self-criticism) of a great GoaT - and how they function across the key theatres of governance, illustrated by examples drawn from personal experience.  *GoaT* helps experienced GoaTs improve, and new ones understand the scope of the role, so that all enjoy a rich and rewarding experience while adding real value to our schools and colleges.  Here’s what people are saying about it:  ‘*How to be a great GoaT* is really a triumph. An education masterclass for anyone serving as a member of a board of governors, or contemplating it. It’s a deep well of that scarce and precious commodity we like to refer to as common sense, and is full of real life practical examples of where governance has been critical to success, and where it has not. Easy to read but highly analytical. Ian Phillips’ extensive experience of governorship across education shines through every page.’ Entrepreneur, serial Chair, author, ex-FE governor  "I think it’s a really great book. It’s concise and simple in the best sense of that word. It would be just as useful for anyone serving on a board in the public sector - NHS, voluntary organisations, etc - as for school/college governors so I hope it gets promoted as widely as possible as some in other sectors will think, ‘not for me’. (Long-standing sector chair & leader)  "I really enjoyed reading your book, *How to be a great GoaT*. I was elected as a parent Governor a year ago, and it’s been a very steep learning curve as I have not worked in education. Reading your book has given me great insight to a much more experienced governor, thank you."  "Just finished the book and it's fantastic. I think every GoaT should read this as induction, congratulations on producing such a critical piece for the sector." (Ex-governance professional and presently a GoaT recruiter)  **"How to be a great GoaT "** can be ordered from your local bookshop, or through Amazon in hard copy or as an e-book by clicking on the cover below:  [A book cover with a goat head  Description automatically generated](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1839527919/ref=sr_1_1?crid=151RG0XZXYOJ2&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9._MEOrsUIPHpQYZ-7DguPj8w3ntoLTxq3jTPnYKbxafTGjHj071QN20LucGBJIEps.I1j9htlHR0ZyokzFEz4w0-p35FuSIfIMXnUjP9wSHUo&dib_tag=se&keywords=How+to+be+a+great+goat&qid=1717096634&s=books&sprefix=how+to+be+a+great+goat%2Cstripbooks%2C81&sr=1-1) |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **8.** | **NEW DFE GOVERNANCE GUIDES** |
| **Summary** | The new DFE Maintained School Governance Guide can be found [here](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fgovernance-in-maintained-schools%2F2-strategic-leadership&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cb7e1eac3236a4b5aca4b08dcccebec07%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638610560853624310%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=n2USMHwLM7fed1aqRKu3noM0WYZ%2BlcCumdZNMV%2B8J4k%3D&reserved=0), alongside the Academy Trust Governance Guide, found [here](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2F-governance-in-academy-trusts&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cb7e1eac3236a4b5aca4b08dcccebec07%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638610560853637764%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2aQF258%2FNBX1ZWPyj%2FRf8zZzhD%2BlbL8QmCulx2GtGD0%3D&reserved=0).  These non-statutory guides replace the Governor Handbook 2019 and are now the main guidance on strategic leadership for local-authority-maintained school governance and trust governance.  The guidance provides essential information from a range of sources on the board’s roles and legal responsibilities. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **9.** | **SCHOOLS FORUM VACANCY** |
| **Summary** | We have the following vacancy on the Schools Forum:   * **Maintained Primary School Governor**   If you’d like to put yourself forward for this vacancy, please express your interest to myself at [George.Peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:George.Peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) by the end of term.  **Background Information:**  The Schools Forum is an important statutory consultative body which advises on and makes decisions regarding the schools funding formula and the Dedicated Schools Grant.  It is made up of Headteachers and governors representing both the academy and maintained sector as well as some non-school representatives. Non-school’s members may number no more than a third of a school’s forum's total membership (excluding observers).  LA officers attend the Forum and prepare the papers, but do not vote.  Meetings are held termly during normal working hours (usually starting at 4pm). Meetings are held virtually via Microsoft Teams. There are 3-4 meetings per year. Recent agenda items have included:   * Review of the funding formula * Schools with deficits and large balances * Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget Monitoring * Changes to the Scheme for Financing Schools   For more information, please contact [George.Peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:George.Peradigou@barnet.gov.uk). |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **10.** | **SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS PROJECT UPDATE** |
| **Summary** | The Barnet Public Health-led School Food Standards project aims to improve school food standards adherence and support schools to provide high-quality food provision and school food environments. A local school food audit was conducted last year between August to November. Below are some examples of key findings:   * 73% of schools provide breakfast to pupils. * Most schools do not have a named lead governor for school food. * 43% of Barnet schools currently grow food. * Within most observed secondary schools, water was not provided freely to students.   More details can be found in the [School Food Audit Report](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwwc.barnet.gov.uk%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fhep_report_barnet_school_food_audit.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cac4f209a26b147cbd24108dc9438bf62%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638548218690719219%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=IiIu3M6Hg95EyukKSwqAPJl5DvanzU6vHij2SieuQc4%3D&reserved=0).  Training and Resources:   * Local research has also highlighted challenges that schools face when choosing and managing school food catering contracts. Considering this, two school food contract management webinars were organised. Access the webinar recordings: 1)[**Primary**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.research.net%2Fr%2FCatering_PRIMARY&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cac4f209a26b147cbd24108dc9438bf62%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638548218690732817%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=BESINHPjkaqhbZ%2F%2BkaFRZOyv8EH65d4f9J98ygy7H04%3D&reserved=0)2) [**Secondary**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.research.net%2Fr%2FCatering_SECONDARY&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cac4f209a26b147cbd24108dc9438bf62%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638548218690741293%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=4i%2FOtO3LqciDh229R88JOtFJ7V0N0pAhUZsn%2BVB70fY%3D&reserved=0)**.** * A useful [**packed lunch toolkit**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2Fe%2FUpebzKxfJ0&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cac4f209a26b147cbd24108dc9438bf62%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638548218690747387%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=7N5ZZulghzK9zlaVhQwP%2F5u2CT7K8ajTU68kPeE8tRY%3D&reserved=0) containing guidance, posters, lesson plans, activities, etc., is available to download to help you improve packed lunches in your school. [**Download the toolkit.**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2Fe%2FUpebzKxfJ0&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cac4f209a26b147cbd24108dc9438bf62%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638548218690752930%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=VvosFm1qxsgLIU2UqTSwjwQmQ7tCjS7p3rJDiaSDePI%3D&reserved=0)   *For questions/queries please contact Michelle Leon <*[*Michelle.Leon@Barnet.gov.uk*](mailto:Michelle.Leon@Barnet.gov.uk)*>, Health Improvement Officer, Barnet Public Health. Please visit the* [*Supporting Health and Wellbeing webpage*](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwwc.barnet.gov.uk%2Fworking-children-barnet%2Finformation-schools%2Fsupporting-health-and-wellbeing&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cac4f209a26b147cbd24108dc9438bf62%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638548218690758453%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LNrZAWikcb6zXzcQbWp81%2B%2BPuNkZHiyhbhCNsLBlIn8%3D&reserved=0) *for more information on the Barnet School Food Standards project.* |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | Michelle Leon Health Improvement Officer  Public Health Directorate Email: [michelle.leon@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.leon@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **11.** | **THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSISTANT (MLA) SERVICE** |
| **Summary** | The MLA programme is open to both primary (who now have to teach a language) and secondary schools. It is delivered by Des Georgiou, MLA Programme Facilitator. MLAs (employed from October to May), are native speakers of French, Spanish, German and Italian who have been carefully selected to ensure they provide the best support to teachers and pupils to raise the standards in MFL.  Des works very hard to facilitate a local sharing arrangement for schools wanting an assistant for less than 12 hours a week but also works with schools that want an assistant for up to 18 hours. This flexible approach ensures schools are able to receive the right amount of support for their teachers and pupils.  The presence of an MLA in the classroom has shown to have a lasting impact: improving pupils’ intercultural skills and awareness, increasing language ability and confidence among pupils and teachers, and leading to greater pupil attainment and motivation to learn new languages.  *'Pupils gain so much: cultural insights; increased motivation to learn languages; benefiting from building a relationship with a "real" person from the country; up-to-date knowledge about current events and culture.'*  Do have a look at our web page which provides an overview of the programme:  [Modern Language Assistants (MLAs) | BELS | Barnet Education and Learning Service (belstradedservices.uk)](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.belstradedservices.uk%2FServices%2F6797&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Ce06fd39deb6441cf65fb08dcd7d31b0e%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638622548887275588%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=t5wTFf2jpUjhDDw%2FR%2BzLNLUCDP66vD22T%2F7Gu39obYY%3D&reserved=0) |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | Des Georgiou Modern Language Assistant (MLA)  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [des.georgiou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:des.georgiou@barnet.gov.uk) |

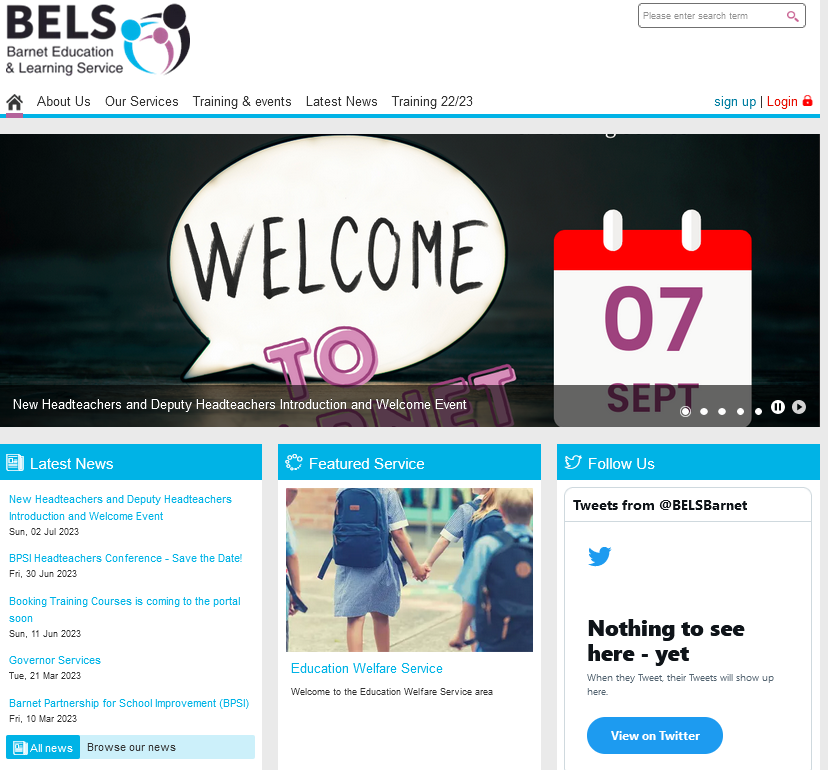
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| **12.** | **DfE BUILDINGS UPDATE** |
| **Summary** | The below updates have been made to DfE Guidance documents related to school buildings:  **Updated Guidance: Managing Older School Buildings**  The Department for Education has released new [guidance](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fmanaging-older-school-buildings&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cd81d1bdf17b147a1101208dc856c6223%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638531947740556962%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=r%2B2iPV82i9rzaT756utEETiTzX7SmRphWVB8hy%2FXKHg%3D&reserved=0) designed to assist schools in managing their buildings more effectively. This guidance outlines the various construction types commonly found within the school estate and details the maintenance practices associated with each type. It aims to enhance the understanding schools and trusts have of the materials and construction methods used in their buildings. This knowledge is crucial for planning effective maintenance and for early detection of potential deterioration. Schools are advised to use this guidance alongside the existing DfE guidelines on [good estate management](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fgood-estate-management-for-schools%2F&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cd81d1bdf17b147a1101208dc856c6223%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638531947740568101%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=cwr8pB5YVH2fXQvfxFeEeBf1st9SVhRmySpuFxt%2F3yg%3D&reserved=0).  **Updated Guidance: Enhancing Security in Educational Settings**  The DfE has issued new [guidance](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fprotective-security-and-preparedness-for-education-settings&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7Cd81d1bdf17b147a1101208dc856c6223%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638531947740576605%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=n7saPsxwOaBzP0MTK0Qwto93aWlmGllDb7vBp0vuM74%3D&reserved=0) focused on protective security and preparedness for educational environments. This guidance is designed to assist schools and trusts in strengthening the safety and security of their premises. With the safeguarding of pupils, staff, and school property primarily resting on the shoulders of governors and trustees, it is vital that board members actively ensure the implementation of robust security measures and comprehensive emergency response strategies. We encourage you to consult the new guidance to understand how you can proactively evaluate and enhance your schools’ and trusts’ security protocols. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **13.** | **ACADEMY TRUST HANDBOOK UPDATE** |
| **Summary** | The [Academy Trust Handbook has been updated,](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Facademy-trust-handbook%2Facademy-trust-handbook-2024-to-print&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C6b562c8a603449ba238808dcdd5358c1%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638628597238356001%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=4T6wz6cY0hnc%2B%2FUL0fF8tgAupGquu4MKv5495JnbwS4%3D&reserved=0) with changes coming into effect from 1 September 2024. This year's revisions introduce more flexibility in finance leasing and new rules for internal scrutiny. Here’s a summary of the main updates:   * Finance Leases: Trusts can now enter finance leases for assets on a new DfE-approved list without needing prior approval from the ESFA. This aims to streamline the process for improving facilities. * Internal Scrutiny: Trusts with an annual revenue exceeding £50 million will need to employ either an in-house internal auditor or an external audit service starting from September 2025. * Qualifications for Internal Scrutiny: The new guidelines specify that those conducting internal scrutiny must have relevant professional qualifications or experience. Trustees or peer reviewers involved must also have appropriate qualifications and/or experience. * Intervention Powers: The ESFA is now empowered to issue a Notice to Improve (NtI) if a trust fails to manage its school estate properly. * Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice Schemes: Trusts must obtain ESFA approval before implementing new electric vehicle salary sacrifice schemes or adding employees to existing ones. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | George Peradigou Governor Services  Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS)  Email: [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) |

**Appendix 1**

**BELS Online Portal Guide**Logging on for the first time.

[**www.BELSTradedServices.uk**](http://www.BELSTradedServices.uk)



* Click on Login at the top right of the website.

The login button will take you to the login page with Username and Password fields. This is the same page that everyone uses to login to the SLA Online system and you are now within a secure area.

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated**Logging in for the first time**

An account has been set up with your email address but on your first visit to the portal, you will need to re-set your password.

* Click Forgotten Password?
* Enter your email address in the top box
* Click the Reset button

The system will forward a temporary password to the email address entered above (if this is a

registered address).

This will be delivered from **BELS | Barnet Education and Learning Service <support@frontlinedata.co.uk>** so you may with to save this as a contact to ensure the notifications don’t go into your junk!

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generatedYou will receive a confirmation message that you have been sent a temporary password.

* Please copy the temporary password and return to the website
* Paste the temporary password in the password box and hit Login
* You will be prompted to enter a new password and then Hit ‘Save’

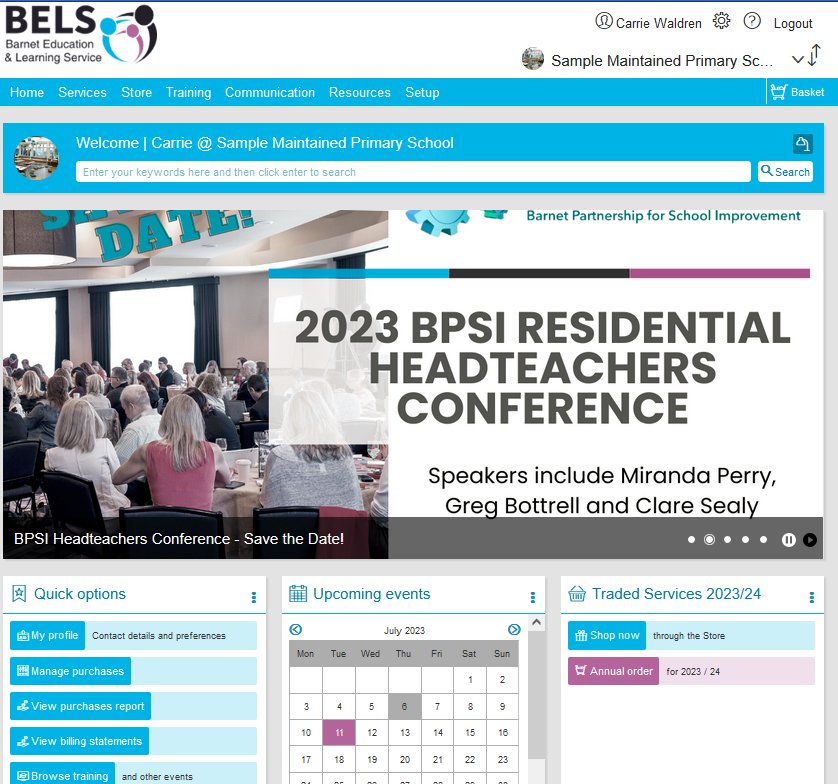
**Graphical user interface, text, application, email

Description automatically generated**

**Privacy and Security Statement**

On your first log-in you will be asked to tick that you have read the Privacy and Security Policies. Both can be view and downloaded if you choose.

**Welcome to the portal - you are now logged on!**



If you have any issues with logging on, please contact [BELS.Training@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:BELS.Training@barnet.gov.uk)