

Education and Skills Director's Report to Governors

SUMMER 2014

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***DEVELOPING THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF
YOUR GOVERNING BODY***

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Summary

In November 2013, Ofsted issued “Pupils Missing out on Education”, building on its 2010 report on Children Missing from Education. The latter addressed the core issue of local authorities providing a framework to ensure all children are suitably enrolled, while the former looks at vulnerable groups of pupils such as excluded pupils and those with mental health issues whose education is interrupted or diminished, among others.

While Ofsted rightly pointed to lost opportunity to achieve, it also reminded us of the safeguarding dangers of non-engagement with education, where the welfare of those absentees becomes all the more doubtful.

Barnet has a robust system of dealing with the wide range of children who miss out on education, with CME officers working to ensure children are enrolled quickly and ensuring that no child is removed from schools’ rolls inappropriately. The Pupil Placement Panel monitors progress on the full range of vulnerable pupils. This protective framework is completed by the processes of the In-year Fair Access Panel working to guarantee education to both challenging and vulnerable pupils across our school community.

In case we should feel complacent, however, the Children’s Commissioner for England, Maggie Atkinson told a recent national conference on CME that illegal exclusions and other actions by schools persist in contributing to children failing. Her challenge was, in effect, that even the most difficult of children are *entitled* to an education as an inalienable right and it is our responsibility as educators and administrators not to put our organisations’ best interests before that right.

In practical terms, adhering to regulations and procedures, taking advice and avoiding the pressure of statistics or inspections, are essential for all children to thrive.

The conference, attended by CME professionals from across England discussed misuse of registration codes to enhance statistics, as well as alternative provisions where no-one checks if the child is actually there. Schools will find that Ofsted will ask serious questions about where the vulnerable pupils are and whether we know or not.

The Children’s Commissioner’s report on illegal exclusions is called ‘Always someone else’s problem’, but that perception must, of course, change.

Information can be found via the following links:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/pupils-missing-out-education>

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/>

http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/creating-a-fairer-and-more-equal->

[society/supporting-pages/the-United-Nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-uncrc](https://www.barnet.gov.uk/society/supporting-pages/the-United-Nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-uncrc)

Governors' Role Governors to note the information above

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Reconstitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools 2014-15

Summary

In a recent consultative document, the Department for Education signalled its intention to enable more effective governance by requiring all Governing Bodies of maintained schools to reconstitute in line with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012. The document containing these amendments to the regulations is shortly to be laid before Parliament and will take effect soon afterwards. This means that by September 2015 *all* Governing Bodies of maintained schools must be reconstituted.

The consultative document can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/maintained-school-governing-body-constitution-regulation-changes>

The government is concerned that the number of governors should be no more than necessary and that every governor should have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

It is suggested that Governing Bodies of maintained schools, which have not already reconstituted in line with the School Governance (Constitution)(England)Regulations 2012, should consider reconstitution during the Autumn Term 2014. Governing Bodies should use this opportunity to review their structure and practices.

Please note that this does not apply to academies and free schools.

Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

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All Governors of maintained schools, which have not already reconstituted in line with the School Governance (Constitution)(England)Regulations 2012

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