**BELS Director’s Report to Governors**

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| SUMMER 2025 ***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. **SEND UPDATE FOR GOVERNORS** 5. **COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT** 6. **ALL ABOUT PERIODS CAMPAIGN – SCHOOL TOOLKIT** 7. **DFE ADVICE ON GOVERNORS LEADING CLIMATE CHANGE** 8. **JUST ONE TREE: UNITING FOR A GREENER FUTURE** 9. **ESFA UPDATE FOR ACADEMIES** 10. **SCREEN ADDICTION** |  |
| **1.** | | **MESSAGE FROM BELS CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING** | |
| **Summary** | | Welcome to the last term of this academic year. This year has, once more, brought huge challenges to the education sector and to Barnet; increasing financial challenges, increase of number of children with complex needs and falling rolls in some parts of the Borough. These are putting a huge strain on the system.  It is fair to say that all areas and agencies related to the delivery of education are facing huge financial challenges currently and everyone is having to make the necessary savings in order to be financially sustainable. School budgets are stretched, the Dedicated Schools Grant is stretched, particularly the High Needs Block, and Councils do not have the necessary resources. To add to the challenges, the make up of our schools is becoming more complex, with greater and more complex needs to have to meet and the responsibilities and duties (both statutory and moral) are becoming greater for local authorities without the increased funding to be able to meet these. Barnet Education and Learning Service’s (BELS) income primarily comes from the Council (around 88%) with a small amount coming from Traded Services and Grants that we have been successful in receiving. Due to inflation we have had to increase the price of our Traded Services to schools by 2.5%. We recognise that this has a knock-on effect on your schools, and we know we run the risk of losing trade simply because your schools cannot afford to buy our services. However this then has a knock-on effect on us. The Council has a significant budget gap so does not have the available resources to make up these losses. The Council values education and is proud of the quality of its schools and settings but it has so many other areas of expenditure that are equally as important. As you can appreciate, budget setting is becoming just as hard for BELS as it is for schools, for settings and for the Council. The Satisfaction Surveys, that we send out every October, demonstrates how much you value the services we provide, both statutory and traded. We really do appreciate you continuing to trust in BELS, and working in partnership with us, to deliver the best possible services to you.  **Education Standards in Barnet 2024**  Barnet is well known for the excellent quality of its schools and settings and the diversity of its educational offer. These are at the heart of Barnet’s continuing success as a desirable place where people want to live, work and study. Excellent educational outcomes and ensuring children and young people are successful as they move into adulthood, equipped to meet the needs of employers and able to participate in their communities are vital to Barnet’s future success. I would like to thank you, once again, for the role you play as governors/trustees of our Barnet family of schools, in ensuring that your schools are able to deliver the best possible education to your pupils.  In March I presented the Education Standards in Barnet 2023/2024 report to the Council’s Children and Education’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee (following the publishing of the data by the DfE). The report can be found at Agenda Item 7 in the Committee’s Agenda pack  <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1007&MId=11749&Ver=4>  This report demonstrates the high standards achieved by Barnet schools from Early Years right up to Key Stage 5. Thank you for the work you do, year on year, to achieve such strong outcomes.  You may also be interested in Agenda Item 8, where Kim Miller, Interim Director for SEND and Inclusion presented a SEND and Alternative Provision update.  **Ofsted Inspections**  As you are aware, Ofsted will be working under a new inspection framework from November 2025. The consultation about this framework closed on 28th April; I hope governors and schools responded and gave their views.  We have had 21 schools inspected in Barnet this year so far under the current framework. (4 Secondary, 1 all through, 13 primary, 3 special). Four of these have been Graded Inspections and 17 have been Ungraded Inspections The outcomes for inspections over the year are shown in the tables below:      As you can see, all of the inspections in Barnet so far this year have had a positive outcome. Three of these schools will be feeding back at the upcoming Director’s Briefing with Chairs and Vice Chairs. I know governors find these feedbacks really useful.  **Executive Director for Children and Families (Director of Children’s Services)**  As reported in the Spring Term Director’s Report **Chris Spencer** has been the Interim Executive Director for Children and Families (DCS) in the Council since January. When he took up the post he made it clear that he was only available until the end of June. Therefore the Council have been recruiting for a permanent replacement. The recruitment has gone well and final interviews took place in early May. I hope to be able to announce the new postholder at our Briefing on 15th May.  **BELS Senior Staff Changes**  **Kim Miller** stepped up to the role of Interim Director of SEND and Inclusion in BELS when Karen Flanagan left BELS in March ’25. These interim arrangements will be in place for six months, after which we will look to recruit a permanent postholder.  In April ’25 we said “goodbye and good luck” to our BELS Director of Finance, Darren Turnpenney who made the decision to retire. We were successful in recruiting a permanent replacement; **Jacob Davies**, who will start with us in June.  This Director’s Report to Governors and the Briefing with Chairs and Vice Chairs on the 15th May includes some really important items which hopefully support you in the role that you undertake with governors. We would welcome feedback on anything that you think we have not covered or you need more support with. Please send any comments to [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk)  A reminder that the Director’s Briefing with Chairs and Vice-Chairs is taking place on Thursday 15th May 6.00-8.00pm. Agenda items will include:   * **Exclusions Update –** how we can all work together to reduce suspensions and permanent exclusions * **SEND Update –** a lot of changes are happening in SEND and Alternative Provision. This is an opportunity to hear about these and to ensure you understand your role as governors in supporting inclusion in your schools. * **Deficit Budgets and Support Available** – with more schools setting deficit budgets what support is available from the Borough and what are the expectations * **Education Landscape** – continuing the discussion from the last meeting about schools considering amalgamation, federation or joining a Multi Academy Trust * **Ofsted Update and Ofsted Experiences**   I hope you have an enjoyable and successful final 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 a log-in. If you require assistance, please contact [BELS.Training@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:BELS.Training@barnet.gov.uk).  Governor Training this term:  [Induction for Newish Governors – Part 1 and 2](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263667) – Mon 9 Jun 18:00-19:30  [Safeguarding: Safer Working Practices and Reporting Concerns](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/265092) - Thu 12 Jun 18:00-19:30  [The Ofsted Framework](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/265571) - Tue 17 Jun 18:00-19:30  [Wellbeing: The Governors Role in Ensuring the Wellbeing](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263674) - 18 Jun 18:00-19:30  [Discussion Forum for Chairs and Vice Chairs](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263669) - Thu, 19 Jun 18:00-19:30 (In Person)  [The Role of the Committee Chair](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263677) - Tue 24 Jun 18:00-19:30  [Ofsted Ready: Interview Prep](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/265575) - Thu 26 Jun 18:00-19:00  [Evaluating SEND to ensure Good Practice](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263663) - Mon 30 Jun 18:00-19:30  [Safeguarding for all Governors](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263670) - Mon 07 Jul 18:00-20:00  [Complaints Handling, Panel Hearings and Appeals](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263673) - Thu 17 Jul 18:00-19:00  *Any price shown on the portal for subscribing schools will reduce to zero upon checkout.*  The importance of governor training is reflected in the fact that the DfE lists a lack of training as grounds for suspension. It is essential to ensure your governors are upskilling and your Board’s code of conduct should reflect this.  Upskilling governors also helps with succession planning as it creates a board from which future leaders can emerge. A training log can be kept in order to monitor uptake of training and the annual governance audit, or a skills audit, can be used to evaluate training needs. Appointing a Designated Governor for Training is recommended.  Subscribing schools also have access to 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 |
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| **3.** | **GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS AUDIT** |
| **Summary** | As usual, the Summer Term means we are circulating the Governance Effectiveness Audit (see Appendix 2) for completion by the end of term (Friday 25 July).  We previously surveyed school which had not returned their audit. The main reasons given were around the lack of time to do so.  The boards which did complete the audit last year and responded to the survey circulated gave the following reasons as to why they found it had a positive impact:   * Over 65%: Helps us identify skills caps to address * Over 65%: Year-on-year comparison helps us track progress and areas for development * Over 65%: Feedback given is useful * Unsurprisingly, 0% enjoyed completing audits!   We ask that governing boards of maintained schools complete and return the audit to [george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:george.peradigou@barnet.gov.uk) by the end of term. We also welcome responses from academies and free schools. If submitted on time, written feedback will be offered.  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.  Audits can be undertaken as a collective board exercise or a delegated sub-set of governors (rather than by the Chair or Headteacher alone) to assess the current state of governance.  Following moderation of the audits we’ll be able to summarise emerging themes in next term’s report. As well as helping us understand the effectiveness of governance, emerging themes also help determine governor training requirements. |
| **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.** | **SEND UPDATE FOR GOVERNORS** |
| **Summary** | **Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities: Guidance for School Governing Boards**  This new [guidance](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fsen-and-disability-duties-guidance-for-school-governing-boards%2Fspecial-educational-needs-sen-and-disabilities-guidance-for-school-governing-boards&data=05%7C02%7CJoann.Moore%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C679a68ce24a641983ce608dd88f2d53c%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638817298724998880%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=r3C73XaGSHTINXhB3XkbuYmVkrnIKj6bm7O1k2mkhYA%3D&reserved=0) is designed to support school governing boards in understanding their role and responsibilities regarding children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. It aims to empower governors and trustees to hold their schools accountable for providing the best support for these pupils.  Boards are accountable and responsible for what the school does, and it is crucial that they actively support and challenge to ensure the school meets the needs of students with SEN and disabilities. This guidance outlines the statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010.  **The Role and Responsibilities of the Governing Board**  The governing board is responsible for setting the values, culture, and tone of the school, ensuring an environment where all pupils can thrive. Key responsibilities include:   * Establishing School Policy and Strategy: The board works with senior leaders to define and implement policies that address the needs of pupils with SEN and disabilities. * Oversight of SEN Provision: A lead governor or sub-committee should have specific oversight of SEN and disability arrangements, ensuring the school supports pupils effectively. * Equality Duties: Responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 should be integrated into the same oversight, where appropriate.   Governors should ensure that appropriate and regular training is provided to enable effective oversight of SEN and disability matters, and they should be familiar with the relevant legal duties.  **SEN and Disability Checklist**  Governors and trustees should ask key questions to ensure the school provides appropriate support for pupils with SEN and disabilities, including:   * Does the school promote an inclusive culture for all pupils? * How does the school communicate with parents and ensure their involvement in the review of SEN and disability policies? * How does the school monitor progress and ensure effective support for pupils with SEN and disabilities? * Are staff sufficiently trained to support pupils with SEN and disabilities, and does the school access external expertise when necessary?   **Use of Data**  It is important for boards to analyse school performance data to monitor SEN and disability provision. Useful data might include:   * Percentage of pupils with SEN or disabilities * Breakdown of pupils by type of need * Data on SEN funding, its spending, and impact   This data should inform the board’s strategic decisions and ensure funding is targeted to improve outcomes for pupils with SEN.  Barnet SEND Governors had the opportunity to discuss this advice and consider how it impacts on their schools. The SEND Governor Questions and Support Documentation has been updated to reflect this guidance and is available following attendance at the termly SEND Governor training led by Joann Moore.  **Inclusion Projects and Other News**  BELS continues to work with schools and the integrated therapies team to deliver the Communication Sensory and Functional Skills Project. There is now a suite of resources available to schools to access which includes pre-recorded training, slide decks, resources, and structured teaching activities to support the development of functional, communication and sensory skills. Check with your school SENCo that they have registered to receive the free resource.  Schools have piloted the DfE Early Years Assessment guidance. BELS has developed resource materials to support SEND assessment in the Early Years and for those who are at the early stage of education. This is available on the local offer  [Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Senco Zone / Early Years](https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/pages/senco-zone/early-years)  PINS - Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools. We are coming to the end of our first year of the PINS project. There have been many highlights, and we are delighted that we can continue the project for another year.  SENCo Training and SENCo Summer Term Conference, 24th June.  Please encourage staff to attend. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | Joann Moore  Strategic Lead Inclusion Advisory Team/ Head of Service Barnet Early Years SEND TeamSpecialist Inclusion ServicesBarnet Education and Learning Service  [Joann.Moore@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:Joann.Moore@barnet.gov.uk) |

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| **5.** | **COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT** |
| **Summary** | We have noticed an increase in the number of complaints leading to schools having to commission professional independent investigators to conduct stage 1 investigations - especially where complaints are against the entire governing board (meaning none of the school's own governors can conduct the investigation).  For some complex complaints, paying for a professional external investigator cannot be avoided. However, some straight-forward complaint investigations can be dealt with without incurring high costs – for example, by sourcing governors from neighbouring schools who can lead the investigation.  The suitability of an externally sourced governor to conduct an investigation is determined by the governing board itself.  As part of our service, we would like to establish a network of those governors who have undertaken training or have experience in complaints management. This way we will be able to signpost schools to impartial governors who are willing and able to help other schools when these situations arise.  We host Complaints Management Training each term and we highly recommend that all governors undertake this training. The training also dives into details around the stage 1 investigation and how this should be conducted. Attending this training will help avoid the rush and panic when a complaint requiring investigation does come in.  This term, the training is scheduled to take place on Thursday 17th July at 6-7pm and you can register [here](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263673). |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
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| **6.** | **ALL ABOUT PERIODS CAMPAIGN – SCHOOL TOOLKIT** |
| **Summary** | The Barnet All About Periods campaign aims to tackle period poverty and period stigma amongst local children and young people. A useful School Toolkit has been developed to assist with delivering high-quality period education and a period-friendly school environment in your setting. PSHE experts, healthcare professionals and local young people helped to shape the toolkit.  What’s included:   * A resource list * Best practice recommendations * Visual teaching aids * Winning competition campaign poster * And much more…..     [**Download the All About Periods School toolkit**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2Fe%2Fy1GnB2P2Ha&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C04dca79d8f3648af057a08dd705467c4%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638790229993634113%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=YJ1YKs00kWs5eL1emq%2FJsPeSmJuA6aWfI9XfbNq6K%2FY%3D&reserved=0)    We would also encourage your school to take advantage of the [**Department for Education funded period product scheme**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fperiod-products-in-schools-and-colleges%2Fperiod-product-scheme-for-schools-and-colleges-in-england&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C04dca79d8f3648af057a08dd705467c4%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638790229993678768%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=0b%2Fz90A17PMwHnm3Muz9SgK7p1U6q96EV5QsdX2SULE%3D&reserved=0). State-funded settings in England can order free period products, from the [PHS Group](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.phs.co.uk%2Fequality%2Fperiod-poverty%2F&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C04dca79d8f3648af057a08dd705467c4%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638790229993710294%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ch2qnhNVIUe7iLlSpiKkTG%2F%2FDP1tmypcZZfpVgNKdWg%3D&reserved=0) (the suppliers for this scheme). A handy [period products brochure](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.phs.co.uk%2Fmedia%2F2935%2Fphs-group-period-equality-brochure-2022-23.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C04dca79d8f3648af057a08dd705467c4%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638790229993737956%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=lfdG%2FkhV6aKBoviJ19vco%2FbLSUJiiQ5LIhWCiMx2LGU%3D&reserved=0) has been created to provide an overview of what is on offer. There is a wide range of products to meet the needs of your students. |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
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| **7.** | **DfE ADVICE ON GOVERNORS LEADING CLIMATE CHANGE** |
| **Summary** | There are new sustainability expectations for schools. This includes having a nominated sustainability lead and developing a Climate Action Plan (CAP). For governors, this represents an opportunity to actively support this vital work, contribute positively to climate goals, and preparing young people for the future.    The DfE has confirmed the government’s continued focus on environmental sustainability. As such, it is recommended that schools start work on this.  **What are CAPs and sustainability leads?**  The DfE’s environmental sustainability strategy describes a CAP as a detailed, whole-setting plan to enable a nursery, school or college to commence sustainability initiatives in a way that is unique to their context. CAPs cover four ‘pillars’ of adaptation, biodiversity, climate education and green careers and decarbonisation. Sustainability leadership could be a group of people or an individual responsible for the development and implementation of a CAP.  **Sustainability matters**  Climate change is causing disruption to schools, with increasing closures due to extreme weather events like overheating during heatwaves and flooding from heavy rainfall. With schools and universities also representing approximately one-third of public sector building emissions in England and Wales, this makes the education sector a key player in tackling the effects of climate change. Through a proactive and structured approach to sustainability, schools can help mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change while also bringing significant benefits, environmentally, financially and in terms of equipping our children and young people with knowledge and skills for the future workforce.  “The education sector is a key player in tackling the effects of climate change”.  **The role of Governance**  As governors, you are ideally placed to champion sustainability within your setting. Your leadership can ensure that schools meet their environmental obligations while also encouraging a culture of climate awareness. Here’s how you can get started:   * Encourage a whole school approach: Check whether your school leadership team has appointed a sustainability lead and are working on creating and delivering a CAP. Embedding sustainability across the entire school – from the curriculum to the way schools are run – helps to foster a learning environment that embodies and inspires sustainability. * Take a leadership role: You can help by encouraging this work or taking specific responsibility for sustainability governance. Whether it’s through a specific committee or as a point of contact for the sustainability lead, you can play a pivotal role in ensuring the school’s plans are aligned with national climate goals, and wider learning and wellbeing benefits are achieved. * Support, not overburden/overload: While the drive for sustainability is urgent, it should come as part of everyday school life. There is already a wide range of support mechanisms from the DfE to help schools at every stage of the process. * Raise awareness: As a governor or trustee, you can act as an advocate for sustainability within your local community and beyond. Sharing resources, news and information with staff, parents and local networks is essential.   **Nature Park transformations**  As the first major initiative launched by the DfE on environmental sustainability, the initiative aims to embed nature-based learning in the curriculum and encourage children and young people to take action to improve their site for people and wildlife. Involvement in this free initiative can see benefits beyond the curriculum, improving school and trust campuses, cultures, wellbeing and stakeholder engagement.  **Accessible support**  These resources are designed to help schools and trusts develop effective CAPs and take climate action. They aim to make the process as streamlined and accessible as possible, ensuring that schools are not burdened with additional administrative challenges but, instead, are empowered to take meaningful action. They include:   * Self-service tools: Sustainability Support for Education will guide schools through the process of creating a CAP relevant to their context, helping them to find the right resources to be able to take their next step, regardless of their starting point. * Specialist support: Schools can also access tailored support from climate action advisors or climate ambassadors. They can assist in the development and implementation of CAPs or with technical expertise and advice, from energy audits to engaging whole school assemblies. You may also consider becoming a volunteer climate ambassador yourself! * National Education Nature Park: A key initiative in the delivery of the education, skills and environment elements of a CAP. Being part of the nature park is free and inspires young people to connect with nature, boost biodiversity and leave a legacy for our understanding of urban habitats. Certain schools are also eligible for up to £10,000 in grant funding.   As we move towards the 2025 deadline, it’s crucial that governors and trustees take a proactive and supportive approach to climate action. By championing sustainability at governance level, encouraging the development of CAPs and utilising the resources and support available, you can help ensure your schools and trusts not only meet DfE expectations, but lead the way in creating a more sustainable future.  **Resources**  Sustainability Support for Education: [sustainabilitysupportforeducation.org.uk](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sustainabilitysupportforeducation.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C5fd86b9e1ea14e739a5708dd5cb0ab29%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638768636027885996%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=v4oN%2BRdaJFXn%2FjGjuKGwZgCuyTTiUlvVxyWPBDk%2FB0s%3D&reserved=0)  Climate Ambassadors: [climateambassadors.org.uk](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.climateambassadors.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C5fd86b9e1ea14e739a5708dd5cb0ab29%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638768636027912600%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jGcrWlrmp9wSfqf5iLn0sHbqiZmQ8afgN0KV8%2Fz4TF4%3D&reserved=0)  National Education Nature Park: [educationnaturepark.org.uk](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.educationnaturepark.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7CGeorge.Peradigou%40Barnet.gov.uk%7C5fd86b9e1ea14e739a5708dd5cb0ab29%7C1ba468b914144675be4f53c478ad47bb%7C0%7C0%7C638768636027927899%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=VS%2FfWLMLpUemr89JPhDzSQjGimC53aSt%2Fmb8liUKTJ0%3D&reserved=0) |
| **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.** | **JUST ONE TREE: UNITING FOR A GREENER FUTURE** |
| **Summary** | You may recall that, at last term’s Director’s Briefing, we had a presentation from Amanda Bronkhorst, Founder of Just One Tree on the ongoing work of her organisation. She wanted to follow this up with the below message to Governors in Barnet:  **Uniting for a greener future: 1/4 of a million pupils take climate action with JUST ONE Tree Day.**  Help your school and its pupils take action for a greener future with JUST ONE Tree Day. Reduce climate anxiety, empower your students, access free environmental teaching resources, fund a forest for your school, be part of a worldwide schools’ action and tackle climate change head on – all this in one global non-uniform day, taking place on 17th October 2025.  It’s a stress-free day for teachers, costs nothing for schools to take part and includes free teaching resources for the big day.  The award-winning JUST ONE Tree makes it simple: with a tree planted for every £1 raised, in countries where they will make the biggest difference. The non-profit focuses on removing CO2 from the atmosphere and reversing biodiversity loss through global reforestation. Working across both land and oceans, they empower local communities, shape the next generation of planet-conscious thinkers and are proud partners of the UN’s Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.  This worldwide schools’ day of action has already planted over 380,000 trees, transforming lives and landscapes. Make sure your school is part of shaping a better future.  [www.justonetree.life/schools-sustainability](http://www.justonetree.life/schools-sustainability)  Just £1 plants 1 Tree |
| **Governors’ Role** | To note the above information. |
| **For action by** | All Governors |
| **Contact** | Amanda Bronkhorst CEO & Founder [www.justonetree.life](http://www.justonetree.life)  [amanda@justonetree.life](mailto:amanda@justonetree.life) |

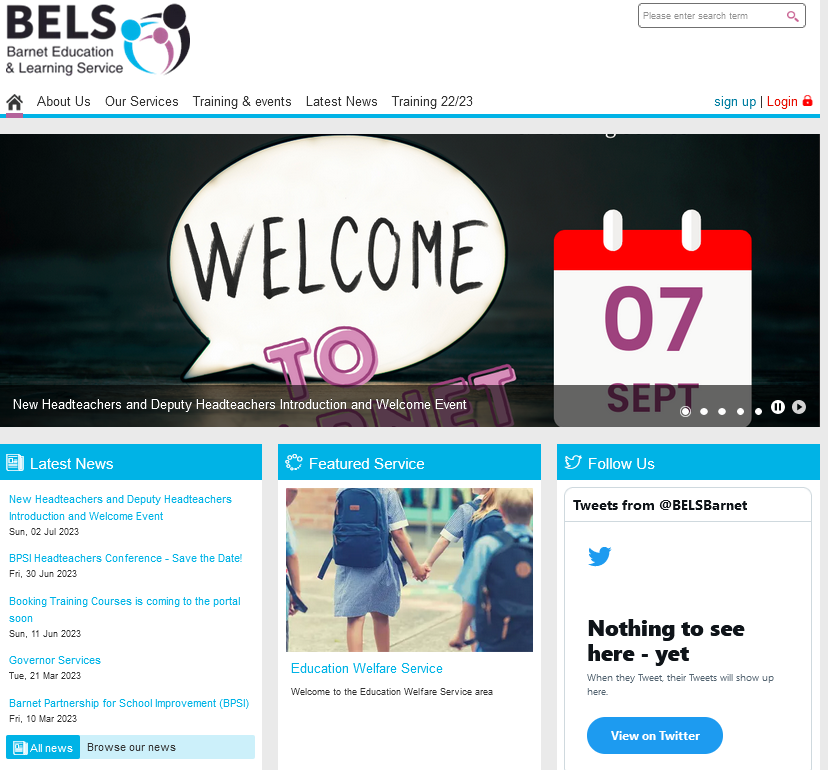
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| **9.** | **ESFA UPDATE FOR ACADEMIES** |
| **Summary** | The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has published the academy general annual grant (GAG) allocation guide for the 2025 to 2026 academic year. This guide applies to mainstream academies, free schools, university technical colleges, studio schools, special and alternative provision academies, and special free schools.  Key Points from the Academy General Annual Grant (GAG) Allocation Guide for 2025-2026   * The GAG allocation guide for the 2025-2026 academic year provides essential details for both existing academies and those opening between April 2025 and March 2026. This guide ensures all types of academies, including mainstream, special, and alternative provision academies, understand their funding distribution and eligibility for the upcoming year. * For academies that have been established before February 2025, the pre-16 GAG allocation statements will be issued by the end of February 2025, with the process expected to be completed by the end of March 2025. These statements provide a breakdown of funding for students under the age of 16 and are crucial for academies to properly allocate resources. * The government is moving towards a more efficient digital system, with digital statements being distributed via the Manage Your Education and Skills Funding (MYESF) portal. Academies will need a valid DfE Sign-in account, and must also add the ‘view allocation statements’ sub-service to their account in order to access the funding information. This move aims to improve accessibility and transparency in the allocation process. * Detailed instructions on setting up the MYESF service are available on the academies revenue funding page. These instructions guide academies through the necessary steps to register for the portal, view their statements, and manage their funding effectively, ensuring a smooth process for all involved. * This system aims to simplify the GAG allocation process, allowing schools to access their funding information quickly and easily, and to plan their budgets with confidence as they prepare for the next academic year. The digital approach is designed to save time and reduce administrative burden while improving overall transparency. |
| **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.** | **SCREEN ADDICTION** |
| **Summary** | In the Spring 2025 term, BELS Staff received “Screen Addiction” awareness training. There were some shocking statistics that were reported by Munur Shah, the trainer, and we thought to share these with governors to couple with the Safeguarding Training all Governor should be undertaking:   * Plastic surgery has quadrupled in 3 years with surgeons citing patients undergoing cosmetic surgery for the sake of looking good on social media. The greatest increase is in patients under the age of 30, particularly teenagers. * 27% of boys aged 9-12 years use adult dating apps, often exposing themselves to adult sexual predators. This shows how easily children can sidestep the simplistic safety procedures & age restrictions platforms use. * In 55% of cases where children reported or blocked aggressors, the perpetrators quickly found them again either by creating a new account on the same platform or via a different platform. * 55% of 13–21-year-olds say it’s “normal for people my age to share nudes with each other.” * 1 in 3 teen girls have been approached by adults asking for nudes. 1 in 6 girls aged 9 -12 years have interacted sexually with an adult on these platforms. 1 in 2 participants (50%) (20%) said they felt uncomfortable, been bullied, or had a sexual encounter online   BELS is supporting the move to smartphone-free schools in order to make our schools smartphone free by September 2025 and we are encouraging parents to delay granting their children access to their own smartphone (age 14 for a smartphone and age 16 to access social media).  Online Safety is discussed in our Safeguarding courses. This term we have two safeguarding sessions programmed for you:     * [Safeguarding: Safer Working Practices and Reporting Concerns](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/265092) - Thursday 12 June 18:00-19:30 * [Safeguarding for all Governors](https://www.belstradedservices.uk/Event/263670) – Monday 7 July 18:00-20:00 |
| **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’

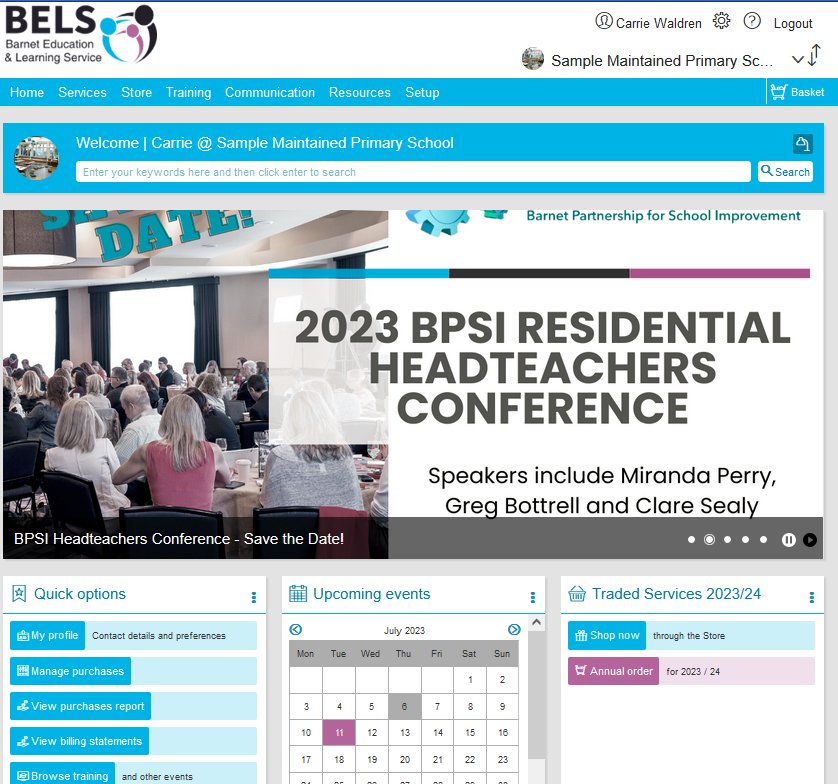
**Graphical user interface, text, application, email

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)

**Appendix 2**

**GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS AUDIT**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of school** | **Name of Chair and Vice Chair** | | | **Email addresses** |
|  |  | | |  |
|  | | |  |
| **Theme** | | **RAG Rating (Red, Amber, Green)** | **Provide evidence for the RAG rating and identify actions required** | |
| 1. **Effective Governance:**  * Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the board and its three core functions. * Governors challenge and support the headteacher to ensure that pupils receive a high-quality education. * Minutes effectively capture the key points of meetings, particularly the quality of challenge. * Progress towards strategic goals is monitored routinely. * Governors stay informed about key themes of national education policy and the local education context. * Agenda setting is driven by the strategic planning cycle and develops the school’s vision and ethos. * Governors contribute actively to school improvement. * Governors abide by the principle of collective decision-making and stand by the decisions of the board, even where their own view differs | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |
| 1. **Governance Leadership:**  * The Chair provides effective leadership. * The board is reflective and pro-active in identifying areas for development. * Succession planning and induction prepares governors well for new roles. * Annual individual skills audits identify skills gaps and inform recruitment and training. * The Board formally evaluates its performance to inform a governance development plan. * Regular review of designated governor areas of responsibility. | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |
| 1. **Commitment to the Role:**  * Regular review and adherence to the Board’s Code of Conduct. * Commitment to Training and Ongoing Professional Development. * Every Governor makes a regular contribution. * Regular visits to the school. * Strong attendance at meetings * Willingness to take on governance leadership roles * Attendance at Induction training and Safeguarding for Governors within the first 6 months in the role. * Read the regular circulars from the LA and DfE on statutory and legal responsibilities | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |
| 1. **Governance Regulations:**  * Governors understand the legal, regulatory, and financial requirements. * All statutory requirements are fulfilled. For example, safeguarding requirements under Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2022 and responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010. * The governance structure of the organisation is understood. * The size, composition and committee structure of the governing body is fit for purpose. * The board and committees are correctly constituted, and chair and committee chairs are re-elected each year. * There is clear delegation of governance functions. * Effective monitoring of risk. | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |
| 1. **Quality of Education:**  * Governors hold leaders to account for the quality of education within the school and know what is being done to improve it. * Governors understand and monitor the school’s curriculum. * They know the rationale for the curriculum and how it has been adapted to the needs of the school. * Governors understand how internal assessment informs pupil next steps and how the school is enacting these | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |
| 1. **Behaviour:**  * The school’s behaviour policy is understood, and governors receive regular monitoring data. * Robust monitoring of attendance and attendance data. * Governors dealing with exclusions undertake appropriate training and understand the law around this. | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |
| 1. **Resource Management:**  * Understanding of the financial policies, procedures, and financial accountability of the organisation. * Utilisation of funding streams, including robust monitoring of pupil premium and sports premium and ensuring the best value for money. * Oversight of organisational staff performance management. * Approval of annual pay recommendations for all staff. * Conducting the headteacher’s annual performance management. | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |
| 1. **Community Engagement:**  * Governors champion wellbeing across the whole school community and take positive steps to improve and manage wellbeing and mental health. * Governors maintain positive working relationships with staff. * The board is proactive in consulting and responding to the views of stakeholders so that these views inform decision-making. | |  | **What’s working well:**  **Areas for development:** | |

**Local Authority Feedback:** Written feedback will be sent to all Governing Boards which have submitted their audit by the given deadline.