

## **Learning and Children's Services**

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### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO SCHOOL GOVERNORS FOR THE SPRING TERM 2011**

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## 1. WHITE PAPER AND IMPLICATIONS FOR GOVERNORS

### THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING – THE SCHOOLS WHITE PAPER 2010

The Schools White Paper was published in November 2010 and sets out a radical reform programme for the school's system. The key themes that run throughout the paper focus on greater autonomy for schools, improving standards, particularly in teaching and a reduction in bureaucracy.

The plans contained in the White Paper are set out in the following summary and there is a section on school governance under Accountability.

The summary below is not a critical analysis and includes direct quotes from the White Paper. There will be a discussion about the proposals at the Governors' Partnership meeting in January.

The full text can be accessed at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/b0068570/the-importance-of-teaching/>

### TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP

Continue to **raise the quality of new entrants to the teaching profession**, by: ceasing to provide Department for Education funding for initial teacher training for those graduates who do not have at least a 2:2 degree; expanding Teach First; offering financial incentives to attract more of the very best graduates in shortage subjects into teaching; enabling more talented career changers to become teachers.

**Reform initial teacher training**, to increase the proportion of time trainees spend in the classroom, focusing on core teaching skills, especially in teaching reading and mathematics and in managing behaviour.

Develop a national network of **Teaching Schools** on the model of teaching hospitals to lead the training and professional development of teachers and head teachers, and increase the number of **National and Local Leaders of Education** – head teachers of excellent schools who commit to working to support other schools.

Sharply **reduce the bureaucratic burden** on schools, cutting away unnecessary duties, processes, guidance and requirements, so that schools are free to focus on doing what is right for the children and young people in their care.

Recognise that **schools have always had good pastoral systems** and understand well the connections between pupils' physical and mental health, their safety, and their educational achievement and that they are well placed to make sure additional support is offered to those who need it.

## **BEHAVIOUR**

**Increase the authority of teachers** to discipline pupils by strengthening their powers to search pupils, issue same day detentions and use reasonable force where necessary.

**Strengthen head teachers' authority** to maintain discipline beyond the school gates, improve exclusion processes and empower head teachers to take a strong stand against bullying, especially racist, homophobic and other prejudice-based bullying.

**Change the current system of independent appeals panels for exclusions**, so that they take less time and head teachers no longer have to worry that a pupil will be reinstated when the young person concerned has committed a serious offence.

Trial **a new approach to exclusions** where schools have new responsibilities for the ongoing education and care of excluded children.

Improve the quality of alternative provision, encouraging new providers to set up alternative provision **Free Schools**.

**Protect teachers from malicious allegations** – speeding up investigations and legislating to grant teachers anonymity when accused by pupils.

**Focus Ofsted inspection** more strongly on behaviour and safety, including bullying, as one of four key areas of inspections.

## **CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS**

**Review the National Curriculum**, with the aim of reducing prescription and allowing schools to decide how to teach, while refocusing on the core subject knowledge that every child and young person should gain at each stage of their education.

Ensure that there is support available to every school for the teaching of **systematic synthetic phonics, as the best method for teaching reading**.

Ensure that there is **proper assessment** of pupils at each vital transitional stage of their education, to provide information to parents about how well their child has done and about the effectiveness of schools, and objective evidence for teachers: at age 6, a simple test of pupils' ability to decode words; at 11, as pupils complete primary education; and at 16 as pupils complete compulsory schooling.

Introduce the **English Baccalaureate** to encourage schools to offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16, whether or not students then go down an academic or vocational route.

Hold an independent **review of key stage two testing**, seeking to retain a strong basis for accountability and information to parents and secondary schools, while alleviating the damaging effects of over-rehearsal of tests.

Give the independent regulator, Ofqual, the task of making sure that **exam standards** in this country match the highest standards overseas.

**Reform vocational education** so that it supports progression to further and higher education and employment, and overhaul our vocational qualifications following Professor Alison Wolf's review to ensure that they match the world's best.

**Raise to 17 by 2013 and then 18 by 2015 the age to which all young people will be expected to participate in education or training.**

## **THE NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**Increase freedom and autonomy** for all schools, removing unnecessary duties and burdens, and allowing all schools to choose for themselves how best to develop.

**Restore for all Academies the freedoms they originally had** while continuing to ensure a level playing field on admissions particularly in relation to children with Special Educational Needs.

Ensure that the **lowest performing schools**, attaining poorly and in an Ofsted category or not improving, are considered for conversion to **become Academies** to effect educational transformation.

Dramatically **extend the Academies programme**, opening it up to all schools: already there are 347 Academies, up from 203 in July.

Ensure that there is support for schools increasingly to **collaborate through Academy chains** and multi-school trusts and federations.

Support teachers and parents to set up new **Free Schools** to meet parental demand, especially in areas of deprivation.

Give **local authorities** a strong strategic role as champions for parents, families and vulnerable pupils. They will promote educational excellence by ensuring a good supply of high quality school places, co-ordinating fair admissions and developing their own school improvement strategies to support local schools.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Put far **more information** into the public domain, so that it is possible to understand a school's performance more fully than now.

Place **information on expenditure**, including the amount allocated per pupil, online.

**Reform performance tables** so that they set out our high expectations – every pupil should have a broad education (the English Baccalaureate), a firm grip of the basics and be making progress.

Institute a **new measure of how well deprived pupils do** and introduce a measure of how young people do when they leave school.

**Reform Ofsted** inspection, so that inspectors spend more time in the classroom and focus on key issues of educational effectiveness, rather than the long list of issues they are currently required to consider.

Establish a **new ‘floor standard’** for primary and secondary schools, which sets an escalating minimum expectation for attainment.

Make it easier for schools to adopt models of governance which work for them including **smaller, more focused governing bodies**, which clearly hold the school to account for children’s progress.

**We will help governing bodies to benefit from the skills of their local community in holding schools to account.**

School governors are the unsung heroes of our education system. They are one of the biggest volunteer forces in the country, working in their spare time to promote school improvement and to support head teachers and teachers in their work. To date, governors have not received the recognition, support or attention that they deserve. We will put that right.

The time and expertise of governors needs to be better respected and deployed. Sometimes governing bodies lack the information or training to challenge effectively and support the head teacher and senior leadership of a school to improve.

We will work with the National Governors Association and others to **clarify governing body accountabilities and responsibilities** to focus more strongly on strategic direction, and encourage schools to **appoint trained clerks** who can offer expert advice and guidance to support them.

We will make it easier for governors to set high expectations and ask challenging questions, by giving governors **easier access to data** about how their school compares to others, and the **National College will offer high-quality training for chairs of governors**.

Governing bodies benefit from having people with business or management experience as members, and employers find that their staff benefit from and enjoy serving as school governors.

We will work with the Education Employer Taskforce, Business in the Community, the Institute for Education Business Excellence, the School Governor’s One Stop Shop, and others to **encourage business people and professionals to volunteer as governors**.

Many of the most successful schools have smaller governing bodies with individuals drawn from a wide range of people rooted in the community, such as parents, businesses, local government and the voluntary sector. Smaller governing bodies with the right skills are able to be more decisive, supporting the head teacher and championing high standards.

**We will legislate in the forthcoming Education Bill so that all schools can establish smaller governing bodies with appointments primarily focused on skills.**

From early 2012, we will allow all schools to adopt this more flexible model of school governance if they choose to, while ensuring a minimum of two parent governors. Schools which currently have a majority of governors appointed by a foundation (often faith voluntary aided schools) will continue to do so.

**We will remove prescription on school governing bodies, simplifying the list of decisions that they are required to take.** We will allow them, for example, to take decisions about the length of the school day in whatever way they consider appropriate.

### **10 Key questions for governors to ask:**

1. What are the school's values? Are they reflected in our long-term development plans?
2. How are we going to raise standards for all children, including the most and least able, those with Special Educational Needs, boys and girls, and any who are currently underachieving?
3. Have we got the right staff and the right development and reward arrangements?
4. Do we have a sound financial strategy, get good value for money and have robust procurement and financial systems?
5. Do we keep our buildings and other assets in good condition and are they well used?
6. How well does the curriculum provide for and stretch all pupils?
7. How well do we keep parents informed and take account of their views?
8. Do we keep children safe and meet the statutory health and safety requirements?
9. How is pupil behaviour? Do we tackle the root causes of poor behaviour?
10. Do we offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities which engage all pupils?

### **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

Make clear **that schools – governors, head teachers and teachers – have responsibility for improvement.** We will end the requirement for every school to have a local authority school improvement partner (SIP) and end the current centralised target-setting process.

Instead, increase the number of **National and Local Leaders of Education** – head teachers of excellent schools committed to supporting other schools – and develop Teaching Schools to make sure that every school has access to highly effective professional development support.

Make it easier for schools to learn from one another, through publishing **'families of schools' data** for every part of the country, setting out in detail how similar schools in a region perform, so that schools can identify from whom it is possible to learn.

Make sure that schools have **access to evidence of best practice, high-quality materials and improvement services** which they can choose to use.

Free **local authorities to provide whatever forms of improvement support they choose.**

Ensure that schools below the floor standard receive support, and ensure that **those which are seriously failing**, or unable to improve their results, are transformed through conversion to **Academy status.**

Encourage local authorities and schools to bring forward applications to the new **Education Endowment Fund** for funding for innovative projects to raise the attainment of deprived children in underperforming schools.

Establish a new **collaboration incentive**, which financially rewards schools which effectively support weaker schools and demonstrably improve their performance.

## **SCHOOL FUNDING**

Target more resources on the most deprived pupils over the next four years, through a new **Pupil Premium**. In total, we will be spending £2.5 billion per year on the Pupil Premium by the end of the Spending Review period.

Consult on developing and introducing a clear, transparent and fairer **national funding formula** based on the needs of pupils, to work alongside the Pupil Premium.

In the meantime, increase the **transparency** of the current funding system by showing both how much money schools receive and what they spend their funds on.

**End the disparity** in funding for 16–18 year-olds, so that schools and colleges are funded at the same levels as one another.

Take forward the conclusions of the **review of capital spending**, cutting bureaucracy from the process of allocating capital funding and securing significantly better value for money.

**For further information on the above please contact: Hatija Bhatia, Principal Admissions & Governance Officer on 0208 547 5284, or email: [hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## **2. SIP PROGRAMME**

The White Paper ‘The Importance of Teaching’ indicates that the national School Improvement Partner programme will end. Kingston’s programme has regularly been recognised as outstanding by government agencies and twice by central government. It has been evaluated highly by Headteachers and Governors who reported that they appreciate how well their SIP understands their school and provides support and challenge. Schools have benefited from the knowledge of their SIP prior to and during Ofsted inspections.

The requirement that Governors use the SIP to advise on Headteacher’s performance management is statutory and underpinned by an expectation that the SIP programme will ensure that the SIP has sufficient knowledge and understanding to advise wisely. As the White Paper is not statutory and the law is not expected to change until later in the year Kingston intends to continue the programme. This will ensure that, if necessary, the Autumn Headteacher performance management meetings can be conducted in an informed way.

In the coming months officers will consult with schools and governors about the longer-term future of school improvement. The White Paper makes clear that the schools – Headteacher, staff and governors – have responsibility for school improvement and intends that they will have the freedoms to succeed. Local Authorities will have a strategic role as the champions of excellence and ensuring a good supply of high quality

school places. They are to intervene as appropriate in maintained schools and raise issues of concern with non-maintained schools e.g. academies. This will clearly require Local Authorities to know the quality of their schools. LAs are free to define what role they will play in supporting school improvement because grants to do this work have largely ceased.

In educational research, the success of schools is widely recognised as due to the quality of school leadership and in Kingston we are fortunate to have strong Headteachers and expert and committed governors. However, 'no school is an island' and the importance of the partnerships across schools and between schools and the Local Authority is a significant contributor to Kingston's success.

We hope in the coming months to work in partnership with Headteachers and Governors to agree a way forward for school improvement in Kingston. Headteachers have already begun discussions and this will continue, including a half day meeting on the 'Importance of Teaching, Learning and Leadership' with the Department for Education's Chief Advisor for School Standards in March. The Governors' Partnership meeting will be used as an opportunity for consultation with Governors and schools will be formally consulted when appropriate. New arrangements will need to be in place to satisfy the 2012/2013 budget.

**For further information on the above, please contact: Tina Herring, Service Director for Learning and School Effectiveness on 020 8547 5288, or email: [tina.herring@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:tina.herring@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

### **3. BUDGETS**

#### **SCHOOLS BUDGET AND LEARNING AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUDGETS**

This year's consultation on the 2011/2012 Schools Budget will end on 24<sup>th</sup> January. Governors' contributions to the consultation questions are important and welcomed.

Individual school budgets are expected to be available as usual in February. Where possible the Local Authority has tried maintaining stability as the White Paper confirms that next year school budgets are expected to be decided by a national funding formula. Nevertheless, the cost of inflation and school's additional costs will not be funded. Discussions also continue about the future of capital funding as government cuts in this area could have a significant impact on schools. The additional pupil premium payment will be based on the actual numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, those children who are Looked After and children of service families.

Learning and Children's Services are facing significant savings requirements. Current estimates are that the budget of approximately £40 million will need to be reduced to £32 million. The local authority is also trying to maintain stability and proposals to save £1.8 million in 2011/2012 will keep structures and systems largely in place. This will provide sufficient time to make the more significant changes that the financial challenge requires safely through consultation.

**For further information on the above, please contact: Martin Longhurst, Finance Strategic Manager, Learning and Children's Services on 020 8547 5277, or email: [martin.longhurst@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:martin.longhurst@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

#### **4. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) ALLOWANCES**

Special Educational Needs (SEN) allowances are payable to teachers who spend a significant amount of time teaching pupils with statements of special educational needs. The criterion for how these payments are allocated has recently changed.

As at September 2010, Schools will need to determine the value of each SEN allowance from within a range. The range is from £2,001 and £3,954. In previous years, there were two levels of SEN allowance (referred to as SEN1 and SEN2).

This new range is based on the old SEN1 and SEN2 allowances, increased by the 2010-2011 salary increase. Unlike TLR payments, there is no requirement to have a minimum difference between the value of SEN allowances awarded. Schools must be able to justify why different values have been awarded.

When setting the level of the allowance the School must take into account the following factors:

- whether any mandatory qualifications are required for the post
- the qualifications or expertise of the teacher relevant to the post
- the relative demands of the post

Any teacher who loses a SEN allowance or has the value reduced as a result is entitled to safeguarding for up to three years from 1 September 2010.

**For further information on the above, please contact: Kate Cockle, HR Business Partner, Learning & Children's Services 020 8547 4604, or email: [kate.cockle@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:kate.cockle@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

#### **5. GOVERNOR UPDATES**

Currently the DfE is consulting on:

(place the mouse over the title of each consultation and hover over title for website link):

- [Tackling Child Poverty and Improving Life Chances: Consulting on a New Approach](#)

The Government launched a consultation on its approach to ending child poverty and improving life chances. Developing a long-term strategy to tackle decades of inter-generational disadvantage requires new approaches and depends on everyone working together.

**Closing Date:** Tuesday 15 February 2011

- **[Key Stage 2 Testing and Accountability Review - Call for Evidence](#)**

The Secretary of State has commissioned Lord Bew to lead an external review which will look broadly at the testing and accountability system for primary schools. Lord Bew is keen to gain views from a wide variety of stakeholders in order to inform the review, and has launched this Call for Evidence.

**Closing Date:** Thursday 17 February 2011

- **[Year 1 Phonics Screening Check Consultation](#)**

The Government is committed to raising children's achievement in reading, and has expressed the intention to establish a phonics screening check for children in Year 1. This will be a short, light-touch screening check designed to confirm that children have grasped the basics of phonic decoding and to identify those pupils who need extra help at an early stage, so that schools can provide support. The results of the screening check will provide valuable information to parents. The screening check will be part of the arrangements for the statutory assessment of children in respect of the first Key Stage. This consultation seeks views on proposals around the purpose, structure and administration of the screening check.

Many experts in the teaching and assessment of reading fear that a test which focuses only on sound recognition is too limited because by age 6 children are using a range of skills to understand text. Proposals to possibly include nonsense words (e.g. 'wigh' to be read by a child as 'why') will disadvantage some six year olds who will say 'I can't read that word because it is not a word'.

Please make your views known.

**Closing Date:** Monday 14 February 2011

- **[Pupil Premium and Changes to grant funding for Early Intervention](#)**

Please find below a link to Michael Gove's letter of 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010 introducing the Pupil Premium and the Early Intervention Grant:

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/m/michael%20goves%20letter%20to%20local%20authorities%20%20%2013%20december%202010.pdf>

**For further information on the above please contact: Hatija Bhatia, Principal Admissions & Governance Officer on 0208 547 5284, or email: [hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 6. GOVERNOR TRAINING

Please find listed below the Governor training courses that are available for the remainder of the Spring Term 2011 and the Summer Term 2011. Please reserve your place by speaking to your CPD coordinator and/or Headteacher depending on what the arrangements are for booking courses at your school.

Further details about the courses can be viewed on KIMS at the following link: <http://www.rbksch.org/KIMS/> click View Courses, click Governor Training and Development, click on course. The venue for all training is the King Charles Centre, 19.00pm – 21.00pm unless otherwise stated.

### **HEALTHY SCHOOLS FOR GOVERNORS - ~~CANCELLED~~**

<i>Date</i>	26 January 2011	19.00 – 21.00	King Charles Centre
<i>Course Code</i>	G10/020		

### **NEW GOVERNOR INDUCTION COURSE**

<i>Date</i>	29 January 2011	09.30 – 16.00	King Charles Centre
<i>Course Code</i>	G10/008B		

**Governors to bring with them on the day, a copy of the School Prospectus, a copy of the School Development Plan and the sheet 'Powers and Duties of Governing Bodies Quiz' which was forwarded to participants separately. This course is being covered in a single day session and not as 3 separate evening sessions.**

### **TO OUTSTANDING AND BEYOND**

<i>Date</i>	3 February 2011	19.00 – 21.00	King Charles Centre
<i>Course Code</i>	G10/011		

**Governors to bring with them on the day their most recent inspection report, current SEF and current SDP.**

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT FOR GOVERNORS**

<i>Date</i>	5 February 2011	09.30 – 17.00	King Charles Centre
<i>Course Code</i>	G10/014B		

### **THE FUNDING FORMULA AND SETTING THE SCHOOL BUDGET**

<i>Date</i>	15 February 2011	19.00 – 21.00	King Charles Centre
<i>Course code</i>	G10/016		

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING**

<i>Date</i>	7 March 2011	09.30 – 16.30	King Charles Centre
<i>Course code</i>	M10/010B		

### **INCLUSION: PUPILS AT GREATER RISK OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT**

<i>Date</i>	9 March 2011	19.00 – 21.00	King Charles Centre
<i>Course Code</i>	G10/007		

### **PRIMARY SCHOOL SRE - ~~CANCELLED~~**

*Date* 4 May 2011 09.30 – 16.00 King Charles Centre

*Course code* PDW10/019

**VETTING AND BARRING FOR GOVERNORS**

*Date* 5 May 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre

*Course code* G10/013B

**SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING (for Headteachers, Governors and Staff)**

*Date* 10 May 2011 09.30 – 16.30 King Charles Centre

*Course code* M10/010C

**PREMISES MANAGEMENT**

*Date* 12 May 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre

*Course code* G10/006B

**NEW GOVERNOR INDUCTION COURSE**

*Date* 21 May 2011 09.30 – 16.00 King Charles Centre

*Course Code* G10/008C

**Governors to bring with them on the day, a copy of the School Prospectus, a copy of the School Development Plan and the sheet 'Powers and Duties of Governing Bodies Quiz' which was forwarded to participants separately. This course is being covered in a single day session and not as 3 separate evening sessions.**

**INFORMATION SHARING AND INTEGRATED WORKING**

*Date* 24 May 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre

*Course code* G10/001

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

*Date* 8 June 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre

G10/022

**MONITORING THE SCHOOL'S BUDGET**

*Date* 14 June 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre

*Course code* G10/018

**COMMUNITY COHESION**

*Date* 23 June 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre

*Course code* G10/012

- *SEF – Self Evaluation Form*
- *SDP – School Development Plan (also known as the School Improvement Plan)*

For further information on the above please contact: Hatija Bhatia, Principal Admissions & Governance Officer on 0208 547 5284, or email:

[hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)