**Schools Bulletin – November**

**Save the date –Haringey Governance Conference – 25 March 2017**

The theme for this year’s conference is “Looking to the future – Sustainable Governance” to which we are delighted to inform you that Maggie Farrar, from the Education Development Trust will be speaking about the work that she is doing on  school-led models of school improvement. In addition Andrew Dodge, an independent trainer who delivers our well received new governor induction will be talking about academies and academy conversions.

So please save the date in your diary- Saturday, 25 March 2017. Further details will follow.

**National Governors Association - Outstanding Governance 2016-17 now open**The NGA national awards for outstanding governance are now open. These awards  
celebrate the unique and inspiring contribution that school governors and  
clerks make every single day in schools around the country. Please get  
nominating and encourage others to do the same. It’s completely free.  
Visit:[www.nga.org.uk/awards](http://www.nga.org.uk/awards" \t "_blank)   
  
Closing date is 1 December 2016 at 23.59

#### Government drops Education for All Bill

The Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening, has announced that the government will not be bringing forward the planned Education for All bill in this parliament The bill, [announced in the Queen’s Speech in May](http://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-Newsletters/January-August-2016/Newsletter-20-05-2016.aspx#1), was expected to include provisions to convert schools to academy status in “underperforming” or “unviable” local authorities (LAs) and to set out a “new role” for LAs. It was also initially expected to include provisions relating to the national funding formula but it was [announced in July that this would be delayed until 2018-19](http://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/May-Sept-2016/Funding-reform-delayed.aspx).

Announcing the Technical and Further Education bill, Ms Greening said: “Our ambition remains that all schools should benefit from the freedom and autonomy that academy status brings. Our focus, however, is on building capacity in the system and encouraging schools to convert voluntarily. No changes to legislation are required for these purposes and therefore we do not require wider education legislation in this session to make progress on our ambitious education agenda”.

Although no new legislation will be brought forward in this session (until May 2017), the minister’s statement makes clear the “ambition” that all schools should convert voluntarily. Therefore, it is possible that further legislation to facilitate a fully academised system will be presented in the medium term.

#### More information on “coasting” schools definition published

The Department for Education (DfE) has published more information regarding the definition of “coasting” schools. This year, the Education & Adoption Act introduced new provisions to define schools that are “coasting”. In March 2016, the government published its response to the consultation on coasting schools. This confirmed that a “coasting” school was one where data showed that over a three-year period, the school had failed to ensure that pupils reached their potential.

A [technical guide](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/563176/Primary_school_accountability_in_2016_technical_guide.pdf) for primary schools published this week defines the “coasting” progress threshold as below -2.5 in reading, -2.5 in mathematics or -3.5 in writing. Schools have to be below at least one of these thresholds and have fewer than 85% of children making the expected progress to meet the definition in 2016. To be defined as “coasting”, they have to meet the definitions for three consecutive years.

[Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561003/Progress-8-school-performance-measure-18-Oct.pdf.pdf) published this week for secondary schools places the Progress 8 threshold for “coasting” in 2016 below -0.25. Again, secondary schools are only “coasting” if their performance is under the progress thresholds for 2014 and 2015, which do not refer to Progress 8.

#### New Department for Education guidance: what maintained schools must publish online

The Department for Education (DfE) has edited its [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online) on what maintained schools must publish on their websites. The update clarifies what voluntary aided schools must publish in terms of their admissions criteria.

Governing boards are reminded that the DfE amended the School Information (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2016. This introduced a number of changes to what schools need to publish on their website, including additional information on the pupil premium and changes to assessment information.

**Preventing Fraud in Schools**

Governors in maintained schools and trustees/directors in academies and free schools are reminded of the need to ensure that there are effective procedures in place, within their schools, to detract and deter fraudulent activity both from within the school and to protect it from external threats.

The Department for Education (DfE) has added a new module to its Procurement Training for Schools section of the Schools Financial Health and Efficiency Toolkit, on 21st October 2016. The [toolkit](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency) is aimed at school leaders, including School Business Managers and governors/trustees/directors. The new module is titled Fraud Awareness and includes PowerPoints, trainers notes and other guidance materials and resources.

Schools are operating under tighter financial constraints each year and it is vital that all schools know with certainty that appropriate safeguards and procedures are in place to protect public funds.

 The toolkit can be a valuable resource for all governors, trustees and directors but those who sit on the Resources/Finance Committee should ensure it is being used, within their school.