

Wishing you a Happy New Year!

Welcome back to the new school term and to our Spring term ebulletin.

"I've always been interested in education and wanted to volunteer as a governor. I didn't realise when I first started how interesting and rewarding the work can be. I would love to encourage more people to get involved; as a Governor you can really make a tangible difference, and it's lovely to see how your work can directly benefit the pupils"

Julie Barton, Governor, Rhondda Cynon Taff

Do you have any comments that you would like share with about your experiences of being a governor in Wales? Email or tweet us! smacnamara@governorswales.org.uk / @governorswales

BOOK NOW TO ATTEND OUR NATIONAL CONFERENCE **"IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE"**

The Village Hotel, Swansea
Friday 23 March 2018
9.00am – 3.00pm

At the end of the conference, governors will:

- understand how to develop a positive outlook and turn ordinary governing bodies into winners!
- know how to be the best that they can be
- be able to reflect on the experiences of highly effective practitioners
- explore ways of developing the governing body's way of working

SPEAKERS: Yan James, ERW, Achievement for All (AfA), School Practitioners from Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan, Estyn, Eteach *And more!*

[BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW](#)

GOVERNORS WALES' ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Fact file on Policies (Revision 18) – added Looked After Children policy to recommended list

[PLEASE CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL LIST OF OUR PUBLICATIONS](#)

Helpline Update – 0845 60 20 100

Governors Wales' confidential helpline provides independent advice, support and guidance on any issue concerning school governance. However complex or straightforward your query may be – we are here to help you fulfil your role effectively and efficiently. Examples of areas in which we can help:

Disciplinary / Complaints procedures
Appointment of Headteacher
Meetings and minutes
Committees
Elections
and many more ...

The most frequent topics on which advice has been sought during Autumn 2017 are:

- Complaints procedures
- Election / appointment of parent governors
- Procedures for meetings / minutes
- Election of chair / vice-chair
- Disqualification
- Disciplinary procedures

We receive many calls on the helpline regarding complaints procedures in schools; how to deal with a complaint, timescales, complaints about governors etc. We have produced a bank of FAQs to help you with this process via the following link: <http://www.governors.wales/faqs/complaints-procedures/>

If you have received a complaint and unsure of how to deal with it, call our confidential Helpline (0845 60 20 100) for some advice. Too busy in work? Don't panic... try our 'out-of-office' helpline and call at a time that suits you!

The helpline is available from 9.00am to 8.00pm during weekdays. All calls to the helpline are charged at local rate and a bilingual service is available.

NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY SELF-EVALUATION

The template has now been amended to reflect Estyn's new Common inspection framework. Some changes to the text in the template have been made as a result. The self-evaluation template is divided into 6 sections:

Part A	The initial 'Preparation for Self-Evaluation – Documentation Check and Statutory Requirements' focuses on the statutory requirements to ensure that governing bodies are fulfilling their legal and regulatory functions.
Part B	How good are standards
Part C	How good are wellbeing and attitudes to learning?
Part D	How good are teaching and learning experiences?
Part E	How good are care, support and guidance?
Part F	How good are leadership and management?

Governing bodies need to challenge themselves to be the best they can be - governing body self-evaluation that is robust, systematic and well established is essential if governors are to ensure that their school achieves the highest standards of education and wellbeing for pupils.

CYNNAL (a company that provides ICT support to schools in North Wales), in partnership with Governors Wales and Governor Support Officers in North Wales, have developed an online self-review portal based on the national self-evaluation template. This is an exciting initiative to enhance and support the work of governing bodies. For further information please contact leuan on leuan@cynnal.co.uk

We would love to hear from your experience so far. Please take a moment to complete our short survey via this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BWLW7YM>

HAVE YOUR SAY ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EDUCATION

[The Education \(Amendments Relating to Teacher Assessment Information\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2018](#)

From 2018/19 Welsh Government will stop routinely publishing teacher assessment data and National Reading and Numeracy Tests data below the national level. These data will not be included in the School Comparative Reports and All Wales Core Data Sets. **The deadline for responses is 30 January 2018. Please send your views to CurriculumReformLegislation@gov.wales**

Estyn wants your views on Denbighshire education services

Estyn has launched a survey on how well Denbighshire council supports its schools and youth services. If you're a parent, carer, learner or work/are involved in education in Denbighshire, Estyn wants your views to help inspectors judge how effective the council is at ensuring young people receive the education to which they are entitled.

[Take part](#)

Merthyr Tydfil School Governors' Association

Article by Laurence Matuszczyk, Chair

The Merthyr Tydfil School Governor Association was started in the 1980's but the involvement declined over the years when a small but dedicated management group met regularly and contributed their views over various matters. As the number of management members fell the groups activity decreased until it ceased to operate in 2013.

In March 2015 the Local Authority consulted with governors regarding the potential relaunch of the Association, which led to the Association holding an AGM in November 2015 where the new officers were elected and a new Constitution was agreed.

The objectives of the Association are to: -

- a) Promote best practice in governance in all schools within Merthyr Tydfil;
- b) Promote partnerships amongst schools in the County Borough;
- c) Represent school governors' views on issues relating to school governance and the management and resourcing of schools to relevant authorities and organisations.

Members of the Association are selected to sit on the Merthyr Tydfil admissions forum, school budget forum, the Learning and Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People scrutiny committee and the Central South Consortium steering group.

Since the relaunch of the Association, the focus of the keynote presentations at the termly meetings have been the provision of practical guidance on the current practices governing bodies should be embedding in their work to meet their statutory responsibilities. These have included:

- the governing body committee structure and associated terms of reference
- governing body self-evaluation; and
- the school complaints procedures.

The role of the Central South Consortium and the Challenge Advisors in supporting schools in the borough, whilst meeting the demand of Welsh Government to drive improvement was the latest presentation in the recent AGM.

The Association took a very active role in providing feedback on the consultation on the Reform School Governance Regulatory Framework. At the special meeting held to look at the proposed reforms a lively discussion ensued between the association members and a representative from Welsh Government. The major emphasis on the recruitment of 'skilled professional' people as opposed to well-motivated, committed, 'willing to learn' individuals was questioned, as well as the availability of the recommended skilled people.

There is an excellent working partnership between the Local Authority and the Association. The secretary of the Association is the Lead Governor Support Officer of the authority, which is a great help and asset. Also, the officers of the Authority's Education department are very supportive and willing to attend meetings, providing expertise and information as required.

The Merthyr Tydfil School Governors Association closed Facebook group has proven to be extremely useful for sharing information and obtaining comments from members in a timely way.

Update on the new curriculum

Click icon below to view Issue 1 of the **Education Reform Update** newsletter



Education Reform Update - Issue 01 - De

Sexting: Responding to incidents and safeguarding learners

Sharing images has become commonplace with the ease of modern technology. Photos and videos can be shared very simply through text messages, email, social media or increasingly via mobile messaging apps, such as Snapchat, WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger. The guidance has been produced to support schools, colleges and other educational settings in developing procedures to respond to incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery. It also signposts sources of resources and support. This advice is non-statutory and should be read alongside the Welsh Government's statutory guidance [Keeping Learners Safe](#).

Making a difference – A guide for the designated person for looked after children in schools

This statutory guidance is for governors, headteachers, teachers and local authorities, and applies to maintained schools. It relates to the duty of governing bodies of all maintained schools to appoint a designated person for looked after children on the school roll. 'Making a difference' focuses primarily on the designated person role in primary, secondary and special schools, but also covers the transition of looked after children and young people from pre-school to compulsory education and to further and higher education. The good practice contained in this guide also has relevance for post-16 education settings where there is a designated person for looked after children, young people and/or care leavers.

Anti-bullying

Every learner in every school has the right to learn, free from the fear of bullying, whatever form that bullying may take. Everyone involved in a learner's education should work together to ensure that learners are free from bullying and schools take an active approach to tackle all forms of bullying, preventing bullying behaviour, as well as responding to incidents. For learners to fully benefit from their school experience, they must feel safe and properly supported. There are a number of new bullying playlists that were created as part of an online safety programme, for primary and secondary learners, parents and carers, education practitioners and governors – links below:

[Online bullying \(Primary\)](#)

[Online bullying \(Secondary\)](#)

[Online bullying \(Parents and carers\)](#)

[Online bullying \(Education practitioners\)](#)

[Online bullying \(Governors\)](#)

Reducing workload for teachers and headteachers

This guide represents a joint commitment endorsed by Estyn, regional education consortia, local authorities, Education Workforce Council, unions representing the education workforce and the Welsh Government to support teachers and leaders to deliver effective learning and teaching.

ALN Bill

The National Assembly for Wales passed the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill in December 2017. It is anticipated that the Bill will receive Royal Assent this month. The Bill will be backed up by an ambitious wider programme of reforms. The new Bill, which affects nearly every education setting in Wales and focusses on the needs of children and young people aged 0 to 25, means:

- The replacement of the terms 'special educational needs' and 'learning difficulties / disabilities' with the new term, 'additional learning needs';
- The creation of a single statutory plan, the Individual Development Plan (IDP) for learners;
- Increased participation of children and young people, ensuring they are at the centre of the planning and decision making process;
- Prioritising high aspirations and improving outcomes, focusing on the child or young person's achievement of their full potential;
- Providing a simpler and less adversarial process, ensuring learners' needs are at the centre and are continually met;
- Creating new statutory roles within health and education to ensure collaboration and integration so that learners' needs are met;
- Focusing on earlier disagreement resolution, with disagreements resolved at the most local level possible;
- The introduction of clear and consistent rights of appeal where disagreements cannot be resolved at a local level;
- The introduction of a strengthened Code, which will sit alongside the Bill, with mandatory requirements and statutory guidance to support the primary legislation.

Further information about the proposed implementation plan for the [new additional learning needs system in Wales can be found here](#).

Supporting Young Carers in School – Wales

A step-by-step guide for leaders, teachers and non-teaching Staff, Wales's edition. This resource has been written in association with teachers and school staff to help make the identification and support of young carers in schools as easy as possible. It forms part of the Young Carers in Schools programme, a free England and Wales wide initiative making it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers and awarding good practice. Together with the programme's free tools and resources, the Step-by-step Guide will help schools achieve National Young Carer recognition.

What does the Step-by-step Guide offer your school?

Many schools are delivering exceptional practice, making a real and positive difference to the young carers they support. Other schools have told us they want to achieve these excellent outcomes, but don't know where to begin. This Step-by-step Guide sets out ten key steps to implementing effective identification and support for young carers in schools. Like other aspects of school life, the development of effective support for young carers is reliant on regular reviews of current provision and the identification of areas for continual improvement. The steps are therefore a cyclical process, which schools should engage with throughout the school year.

New guidance – Effective management of school workforce attendance

The effective management of workforce attendance is fundamental to ensuring positive learner outcomes, as well as monitoring and improving the health and well-being of the education workforce. Local authorities, regional education consortia, school staff responsible for arranging cover, governing bodies and commercial supply agencies should read this document to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities in the effective management of workforce attendance.

Achievement for All – 100 million minutes reading challenge



100 Million Minutes Reading Challenge

From **Thursday 1st March 2018**, children and young people will try to collectively read 100 million minutes in a week!

If you're an **early years setting, school, college, parent, carer, childminder** or other **community group** across England and Wales you can register for the challenge and be in with a chance to win some amazing prizes!

Why 100 Million Minutes?

Up to two in five children in disadvantaged communities across the UK have difficulties with literacy.

At **Achievement for All**, we know that introducing all children and young people to the habit of reading in everyday life can improve communication skills and brighten future prospects, unlocking new worlds and possibilities.

10 minutes of reading a day can make a huge impact to a child's development, so imagine what **100 million minutes** can achieve.

Taking part in the challenge is completely free, so what are you waiting for? Sign up today and let the challenge commence!

[Register](#) [Login](#)

REGISTER VIA THIS LINK - <https://millionminutes.afaeducation.org/#signUp>

Newsletters and bulletins

Governors Wales - [You can view our last e-bulletin here](#)

Central South Consortium - produce newsletters every month. The newsletters are available [via the following link](#). If you would like to join the Consortium's e-mail communications list, [please sign up here](#)

EAS - [Click here for the EAS Summer term 2017 newsletter](#)

ERW - [Sign up to receive email updates](#) and to hear what's going on with ERW

GwE - Sign up for GwE newsletters [via this link](#)

Estyn - Subscribe to Estyn's monthly e-newsletter for the latest inspection news, reports and case studies. [Sign up here](#).

DYSG – Sign up to The Welsh Governments' weekly newsletter

[Post-11 newsletter](#)

[Pre-11 newsletter](#)

If you have any comments about the contents, or ideas for future use, please do not hesitate to contact us. There are approximately 21,500 governors in Wales, it would be great to think that all governors in Wales have joined our mailing list, so why not spread the word to your colleagues ...!

Sign up to the mailing list via this link - <http://eepurl.com/bz3m4T>