



# The RAG

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019

## In This Issue:

- [Happy New Year!](#)
- [Governor Survey](#)
- [High Needs Funding](#)
- [NGA Autumn Conference Roundup](#)
- [Cultural Enrichment Opportunities](#)

**Book a place at the Conference [here](#)**

**To take the Survey [Click here](#)**

---

## Happy New Year! from Richard Rolfe

RGA Officers would like to wish all our fellow governors in Reading a Happy New Year, and I hope we can all support each other to improved learning and outcomes for ALL Reading's children in 2019.

RGA's AGM and Conference is fast approaching on **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February** and our key theme this year will be 'Mental Health in Schools from a Governance Perspective' with speakers from The Mental Health Foundation. We will also have an update from RBC and Brighter Futures for Children about 'Now is the time' Reading's strategy for improving outcomes across the borough. Also, did you know that Reading Rotary club are keen to work with schools to help bring about improvements on a voluntary basis? They will be speaking too.

---

## Governor Survey by RGA Officers

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! RGA want to make sure that our activities and events are as relevant and suitable to governors' needs as possible. Please take a couple of minutes to complete our online survey. Just click this [link to survey](#).

---

## High Needs Provision by Richard Stainthorp

At the RBC Policy Committee on 26th November I asked the following question of Ashley Pearce, the new Lead Councillor for Education about the provision for students with Special Educational Needs:

*The Government's own figures show over 4,000 children with Education, Health and Care Plans have no educational provision, the number of children with complex needs is rising, demand for special school places is rising all at a time when Government funding for education per pupil has been falling. Can you update me with what provision is being made in Reading to help our students with Special Educational Needs?*

and received the following answer:

*Reading Borough Council have been very closely involved in the development of strategy for SEND to help prepare for Reading children's needs into the future. This has involved a careful analysis of data which is recording the changing SEND needs of pupils in the borough. It has also involved discussion and planning for the expansion of provision in Reading for those children in Reading who have a range of complex SEND*

needs. We are currently working with The Blessed Hugh Farringdon School on a capital build programme to double their provision for autistic pupils. We have agreed an extension to provision at The Avenue Special School for a further 25 students. We have advanced plans for the relocation and expansion of Phoenix College to increase numbers, and also to enable the school to admit female students. In October this year, ACE agreed a plan to increase the number of places for autistic children in mainstream primary schools by opening two mainstream autism units to enhance the current single provision we have at Christ the King Primary School. Schools are currently considering submitting expressions of interest to host these. The local authority has also, with the support of both Wokingham and West Berkshire Councils, put a case to the government for funding for a new 150 place special school to be hosted in Reading, and that will commission places from our neighbouring local authorities but also with a significant number of places for Reading children.

All these projects will collectively provide an additional 170 specialist places for Reading pupils within the borough over the next 3 years. This will have a significant impact on improving the diversity of provision, and range of places locally for our children into the future. We are working to improve school capacity to support children with SEND and challenging behaviours in all our schools and are, as part of our strategy, launching a major initiative with schools based around a therapeutic approach to managing behaviour in schools. This builds upon our cross service work with the police and other agencies and aims to reduce the risk of exclusion of those pupils with multiple and complex needs.

---

## NGA – Autumn Conference Roundup by Julia Cottee

### Highlights from the speech by Emma Knights, NGA CEO

Governance has an increasing profile with the DfE and the Secretary of State, with many good and bad stories reaching the national media. Ethical leadership should be at the absolute centre of what we do, and we must endeavour to make our voices heard by government.

Funding, especially for SEND, is reaching crisis proportions. Many boards report that balancing the budget is their biggest challenge. Only 1 in 5 report that they are spending within their means. The NGA is making evidence-based representations to government to make a case for a Comprehensive Spending Review. ***Do you have any stories which you can share with the NGA, to help inform this process?*** Whilst there needs to be a forensic case for a CSR, it must include emotions to resonate with the policy makers. ***Why not invite your MP in to your school, to hear from you and see the impact that funding, and lack of it, is having in your school?***

Current NGA projects:

- The NGA is working with the DfE on new complaints guidance.
- Could our responsibilities as staff employers be one of our core functions? We should be leading the way to being exemplary employers.
- The NGA contributed towards the lobby to restrict data responsibilities for teachers.
- Your Vision and Ethos must not be constrained by the Ofsted framework: there must be a culture shift from fear of Ofsted to courage and confidence.
- ‘Governance’ should include MAT executives and DfE officials. In a system which promotes the value of knowledge, several are not bothering to avail themselves of basic governance knowledge.
- 2019 campaign: school CPD leaders should govern in other schools.

Current NGA offers:

- Governance in MATs is trickier, and the risks are greater. The NGA is prioritising

Julia’s full summary of the presentations to conference can be read as a word document [here](#) or as a PDF [here](#)

Full presentations can be found on the NGA Website [Click here](#)

development programmes for MAT governors. **Every MAT and Federation is entitled to a £2,000 grant for training: claim this from the DfE now!**

- Refer a friend scheme to Inspiring Governance.
- Clerks' conference in February: details [here](#). The NGA Clerking Matters campaign is running in conjunction with ICSA. We need to increase the supply of clerks - could this be pay-related?

The values of the NGA are to magnify collective wisdom and experience.

**Highlights from the speech by Professor Mick Waters, former Director of Curriculum at the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)**

A school's curriculum must have balance in all respects and avoid shifts in fashion. Done well, it can affect issues such as attendance.

**What is your students' view of your curriculum? If your students were your future jurors in court, would you be comfortable with their ability to try you properly?**

In order for our students to contribute to, and belong in, our future society, we should be promoting the following in our curricula:

Autonomy: taking part, responsibility, thinking afresh

Belonging: well-being, caring, investing

Generosity: influencing, helping, contributing

Proficiency: know, understanding, can do

Governors: look at your school's logo. Now look at your meeting agenda items. Consider the latter in the light of your logo.

**Highlights from the speech by Carolyn Roberts, ASCL Leadership Commission**  
**What kind of people are we? The work of the Ethical Leadership Commission**

School is where society chooses to look after its young. As a state parent, we must be a 'good parent'.

**THE FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION**

Values	Virtues
1. SELFLESSNESS	a. TRUST
2. INTEGRITY	b. WISDOM
3. OBJECTIVITY	c. KINDNESS
4. ACCOUNTABILITY	d. JUSTICE
5. OPENNESS	e. SERVICE
6. HONESTY	f. COURAGE
7. LEADERSHIP	g. OPTIMISM

*The framework is reproduced in detail in Julia's full report.*

**Summary of speech by Nick Brook, NAHT Deputy General Secretary**

**Holding schools to account for standards: are current arrangements doing more harm than good?**

How have accountability measures driven behaviour in schools?

- We are reporting more...
- Ofsted now drive some of the most important decisions we will make
- Ofsted have had a positive impact, however in the vast majority of schools, more harm has been done than good, albeit unintended
- 'Family\* of schools' data group is more meaningful [\* with similar environments/communities]
- There is a level playing field for staff

3 barriers:

1. HMIs: increase in turnover over years. This position used to be the pinnacle of

one's career; a job one would retire from. Now, many serve less than 2 years. Ofsted cannot currently challenge large MATs (capacity and capability). If we expect more from HMI, we must pay more for HMI.

2. Ofsted: yes, the ambition of the new framework is less data driven, but the timescale for implementation means that schools won't know before the summer term what they will be held accountable for from that September. Why don't we pause the framework now until January 2020?
3. Under-performance of pupils: there are wider factors at play, yet if pupil performance fall short, the school is blamed. There is a lazy assumption that schools are part of the problem, not the solution. What if we produced data outcomes by residence and not by school and then sent that to our MPs? Wouldn't that promote better conversations about outcomes versus context?

---

## Cultural Enrichment Opportunities by Richard Stainthorp

Many Reading-based organisations are keen to enrich the school curriculum - if any schools have specific requirements, I may be able to help, but here are two that could be applicable to any school.

### Potts VC Trust Educational Outreach

We have run Trooper Potts Victoria Cross (VC) mornings for children at various schools. We start with students from Reading College explaining about the First World War, Gallipoli and the story of Trooper Fred Potts VC & Trooper Arthur Andrews. The Curators from the Berkshire Yeomanry Museum explain about Gallipoli and the story and the Yeomanry in general, they read out letters from the men at the front back home. The children are able to touch and try on kit of the period. We cover the meaning of Remembrance. We ask the children to do some work around the subject; drawing of the rescue of Fred Potts, to write a letter home to mum from the field hospital, to imagine they are a journalist writing up the story, to write a poem about the events. The students completing the best work are awarded a VC Certificate by the Brigadier of 94 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Signal Squadron and Anne Ames - Fred Potts' Granddaughter. At the end of the morning we run a shovel relay race to enable the children to understand how difficult the rescue would have been.

At senior schools we have delivered 10 minute presentations in Assemblies and 1 hour sessions for A level classes. For social clubs we deliver a 45 minute presentation.

For more information please contact Richard Bennett via the link.

### The Rock Academy Foundation

We have over 5 years' experience of running successful band experience programmes, after school clubs, music tech workshops, studio installs, ensemble sessions and graded guitar and drum courses for schools in the local area.

The Rock Academy Foundation is very keen to support schools in providing extra curriculum support for music composition, performance and graded exams in guitar, bass and drums.

For more information about our school support services please click the link.

**To contact Potts VC  
Educational  
Outreach**

[Click here](#)

**To contact Rock  
Academy  
Foundation**

[Click here](#)