



# The RAG

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019

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See our events brochure [here](#)

## Welcome

It's been the start of another busy year, with a lot of changes to the RGA, and to our new collaborative partner, Brighter Futures for Children. We wish a warm welcome to Professor Doctor Kate Reynolds, the new Director of Education for Reading, and hear that she is steadily visiting schools throughout the borough to build knowledge and relationships. We look forward to working closely with her and other BFFC colleagues on school improvement over the coming years.

Sadly, we had to cancel our Autumn event due to low pre-booking. Please make sure to book in advance to avoid any future cancellations. We hope to see you at our next event on 27th February. Click on the link on the left to see our annual brochure of events. You can book for this, and other future events, NOW via our website (see below).

It was great to launch our new networks this term - a long-held ambition of ours. See below for our reports from these evenings. Next meetings start in January, so please book now.

## Have you seen our new website?

Our new website [www.therga.org.uk](http://www.therga.org.uk) was launched earlier this year, but we know that many of you haven't seen it yet. We've designed it to be a one-stop-shop for governors in and around Reading, so please take a look and let us know what you think.

## Governor Survey

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 the link on the left to survey.

Take the Survey  
[Click here](#)

Full presentations  
can be found [here](#)

## Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Clerks Network

The main focus of this meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> September was the new Ofsted framework. Colleagues from Caversham Primary and The Willink schools had undergone pilot inspections in the summer, and reported back in some detail on their experiences, both from a school and a governance perspective. It was a very clear and helpful session, recounting the specific questions asked of governors, and highlighting the CPD next steps for school staff.

The outline of the inspection was explained, from the initial phone call, to the feedback meeting at the end. With the curriculum taking centre stage, 'Deep Dives' are new this year, and involve middle leaders to a greater extent, even than the senior leaders. The '3 Is' [Intent, Implementation and Impact] underpinned everything, and data, other than that already published, was ignored. Inspectors also spent more time with children, and where they found problems, looked at whether there was a systematic issue, or just inconsistency of application. The format of the new reports was outlined, together with changes to how the final feedback meeting is now conducted.

Having deliberately scheduled this meeting very early in September to help colleagues who were at imminent risk of a visit, we were pleased to read Thameside Primary's great report from 5<sup>th</sup> December, and hope that our support to their governing body was useful.

Chris Robinson then led a session on self-evaluation of governance: why we should we do it and suggested some ideas of how to approach it. Other colleagues then shared their approaches, and examples of these can be obtained from us: please email [clerk@therga.org.uk](mailto:clerk@therga.org.uk) to request them.

Many thanks to Jo Hackett, Clerk at The Wren, for taking detailed notes on this session. These can be found on our website - see the link on the left.

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## Safeguarding Network

Despite initial teething problems with the technology, a small yet perfectly formed group of safeguarding governors launched the new network meetings on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Julia Cottee has recently taken on the role of Safeguarding Governor for the first time, following on from a highly experienced colleague who is the DSL at a local federation. She shared extensive notes on his handover of the role, covering the preparation for the link visits, who to meet with, what to look at and ask, and how to report the findings. Attendees discussed different approaches across schools, but agreed that for governors who are not educationalists, this comprehensive approach provided them with a great deal of comfort that they were monitoring safeguarding well.

The group also discussed the child protection software [CPOMS](#), the entire governing body's responsibilities regarding safeguarding, and the latest NGA outlines of the Safeguarding Governor and Health and Safety Governor roles. All resources can be found on our website - see the link on the left.

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## Disadvantaged Network

Alice Boon, the Pupil Premium lead from Brighter Futures, led the inaugural session of the Disadvantaged Network on 28<sup>th</sup> November. With reports out last week showing that the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers is growing ever wider, this challenge is proving to be a particularly tough nut to crack. It is increasingly important that we meet regularly to share knowledge. This group will also be the primary forum where we monitor governors' contribution to, and assessment of, the Reading-wide Therapeutic Behaviour Approach, which has had such a transformational effect on the children in other local authorities.

Alice talked about the importance of planning the Intent and Implementation of your curriculum with the most disadvantaged at the centre. If the Impact on them is strong, you know you've got the curriculum right. Plan back from the end points you want to achieve and think carefully about sequencing so that the learning is re-enforced and retained. Reading is vitally important as strong readers can access future learning on their own, focus on accelerating attainment of your bottom 20%. We also reflected on the importance of thinking about what it is like to be a disadvantaged child in your school... what might cause them to feel different/less welcome? Alice also shared some useful resources and best practice on planning how to spend your pupil premium grant. You can access the full presentation by clicking the link on the above left.

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## Local cultural opportunities

There are many arts, cultural and heritage organisations in Reading that would like to work with schools - some will visit your school whilst others offer educational resources out of school that teachers and children might not be aware of. Here are two that provide cultural enrichment in regard of the heritage we have in Reading.

### The Trooper Potts VC Memorial Trust Outreach

Since 2012 the Trust has delivered Trooper Potts VC Mornings to local primary schools. The events take the form of an introduction about the Great War, Gallipoli and this local story (delivered by students from Reading College). In addition the Curators of the Berkshire Yeomanry Museum give a ½ hour presentation to the kids about the history of the Yeomanry and the battle in Gallipoli, they bring along kit of the period to show children and let them try on/ handle (including a disarmed rifle and pistol). This is followed by activities in class where the children are asked to do work (drawing, writing etc.) based on what they have been told, supported by the college students. At the end of the morning, if the school has a field, they ask the teacher if shovels can be brought in and they organise a shovel relay race; this gets over to the children how difficult the rescue would have been. The children judged to have completed the best work are presented with a VC Certificate by the Brigadier. The Trust is able to adapt the presentation to a schools requirements; in primary schools it has delivered to single classes of 30 or to 3 classes of 30; to secondary schools events to Year 10, the Lower 6<sup>th</sup> and whole school assemblies have been shorter (15 minutes to an hour).

For further information contact the Chair of the Trust Richard Bennett 0118 959 5350: [bennettbaker@msn.com](mailto:bennettbaker@msn.com).

Website: <http://pottsvctrust.org/> Facebook [www.facebook.com/TrooperPottsMemorialTrust](http://www.facebook.com/TrooperPottsMemorialTrust)

### Young Friends of Reading Museum Network

Children aged 7 to 11 can become Young Friends of Reading Museum. Meetings are held normally on the second Saturday of every month during term time, and give children the chance to glimpse 'behind the scenes' at one of Berkshire's finest historical institutions, learn the skills real curators use to handle artefacts and have a lot of fun. Through exciting activities, the sessions are intended to teach children that history doesn't just come from textbooks - it's the result of studying ancient mysteries, secret tombs, medieval battlefields and, maybe, a century old fruitcake!

All sessions are overseen by DBS checked volunteers and cost £1.

For further information contact Caroline Hewitt at [carolinehewitt4@gmail.com](mailto:carolinehewitt4@gmail.com).

If you would like a list of other Reading based organisations that are eager to work with schools please contact Richard Stainthorp at [richard.stainthorp@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:richard.stainthorp@hotmail.co.uk).