

• GOVERNORS BULLETIN •

Governor of the Year

The Learning Trust will be hosting its first awards party on 29 March 2004. It will be held at the newly-refurbished Hackney Empire and proceeds from the evening, along with donations from business, will go towards bursaries to help Hackney students access higher education.

Twenty accolades for individuals and teams will be presented across Hackney's learning community. Awards include outstanding new teacher (primary and secondary), the award for school involvement in the community and Governor of the Year. The Governor of the Year award will recognise the outstanding contribution made to a school's life by a governor. Parents, staff, the DfES and other stakeholders will be represented on the judging panels.

Headteachers and governors may nominate colleagues for the Governor of the Year award by requesting a nomination form from Mark Brownlow, Governor Support Manager on 020 8820 7206, or e-mail mark.brownlow@learningtrust.co.uk. Nominations close on 30 January 2004.



LEA Ofsted Inspection

Many thanks to those governors who took part in the Ofsted inspection of the LEA. We have yet to receive the final report, but expect that it will be published by Ofsted towards the end of January 2004.

New Telephone Numbers

Telephone numbers are changing at The Learning Trust. From 2 January where the extension begins with '7' you will need to replace the 020 8356 prefix with 020 8820. However for all extensions not starting with a '7', please call the main switchboard on 020 8820 7000 who will put you through and let you have a full list of changes.

Although we know it may be inconvenient at first, this change will help improve both working practices and cost efficiency at the Trust.



City Academies in Hackney



We've heard a lot about them in the local and national media, but just what are City Academies? Here Peter-John Wilkinson, the Trust's Director of Pupil Services, explains.

What are Academies and how do they differ from other schools?

- They are all-ability schools established by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups working in partnership with central Government and local education partners.
- They are publicly funded independent schools - their independent status allows them flexibility to be innovative and creative in their curriculum, staffing and governance.
- Sponsors and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) provide the capital costs for the Academy.
- They are a central part of the Government's plans to meet the London Challenge. The aim is to establish at least 30 Academies in London by 2008.
- Located in areas of disadvantage, they either replace one or more existing schools facing challenging circumstances or are established where there is a need for additional school places.
- While intended to provide the best opportunities for their pupils, they also have a key part to play in the regeneration of communities. A new Academy will be a significant focus for learning for its pupils, their families and other local people.

What about funding?

- They receive most of their ongoing funding direct from the DfES. The amount is determined by consideration of the local funding formula, so

they are funded at a similar level to comparable maintained schools.

- They are eligible to receive Standards Fund grants from the LEA in which they are situated.
- Academies are subject to financial controls set out in the funding agreement and are accountable to the Secretary of State.

Are they selective schools?

- Academies may select up to 10% of pupils based on aptitude for the Academy's specialism (except where the specialism is English, maths or science).
- Academies are required to have a specialism and may specialise in any subject or combination of subjects agreed by the Secretary of State.
- An Academy's specialism will complement the range of specialisms already available and contribute to the diversity of provision.
- Like other specialist schools, they receive additional recurrent funding per pupil to support the specialism.

How will they be governed?

- They are not covered by the regulations applying to other types of school.
- They will be free to decide the composition and size of the governing body that will best meet their individual needs and circumstances, subject to the Secretary of State's agreement.
- All Academy governing bodies are expected to include representatives of the local community, teachers, other staff and parents.

What's planned for Hackney?

- Mossbourne Community Academy is opening in September 2004 on the former Hackney Downs site. Its Principal is Sir Michael Wilshaw. It will be an ICT specialist school with 6 forms of entry (ie 180 pupils per year), growing from its first entry of 11 year-olds next September. Almost 500 Hackney children have applied for a place. Applicants will be assessed to ensure that the intake is of mixed ability and the admission arrangements favour local children.
- There are plans for an Academy on the former Laburnum site. It is planned to have a maths and music specialism and have 6 forms of entry for 11-16 plus a Sixth Form. A sponsor has submitted an expression of interest and is awaiting ministerial approval. The proposed date for opening is September 2006. Like Mossbourne it will grow from Year 7 and will offer mixed non-denominational provision.
- Also in the planning stage is an Academy on the former Kingsland site. A sponsor has submitted an expression of interest - which is also awaiting ministerial approval. The proposed specialism is healthcare. The proposed opening is September 2006 with 6 forms of entry for 11-16 plus a Sixth Form. Like the others it will offer mixed non-denominational provision. There is potential for the development of specialist SEN provision within this Academy.
- A fourth Academy, with a science specialism, is being considered for North Hackney to open in September 2006 or 2007. It would differ from the others because it would cater for nursery age children right through to Sixth Form.



Update on Workforce Remodelling

Bill Lyttle, Head of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Research, and Sue Newth-Gibbs, the Head of Employee Relations, have attended a National Remodelling Team (NRT) Training Course in Cheshunt and are now preparing a series of events to roll the programme out across schools. All LEAs have been required to nominate one Early Adopter School. Our Lady and St Joseph Primary has taken up the challenge and its Headteacher, Sean Flood, has now attended the NRT's event for Early Adopter Schools.

There is phased entry to the programme in order that the schools receive the appropriate level of support from the LEA, following an introductory event. The Learning Trust is planning to cooperate with other local LEAs on joint events to share a wider pool of experience and information.

The first group of schools – Clapton, Downsview, Rushmore and Stormont House – attended their first event on 5 December 2003. The Learning Trust will contact other schools with dates for 2004.

Training for support staff is an important part of the remodelling agenda and we were delighted when the recent CPD event for Teaching Assistants produced a record attendance of 123 people.

We are proposing a joint management and trade union sub-group to focus on remodelling. More details from Bill Lyttle, Head of CPD and Research, on 020 8820 7542 or Sue Newth-Gibbs, Head of Employee Relations, on 020 8820 7585.

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOLS FORUM

The Schools Forum, the local advisory body on school funding, met at the end of September. Greta Karpin, a governor at Betty Layward, Grasmere and Tyssen Schools, was in the chair. They discussed the proposals and timetable for a fundamental review of the schools funding formula. In response to a request from the Forum, the timescale for the consultation has been extended to allow for optimum participation, attendance at consultation meetings and response by Governors and Headteachers. A report from December's meeting, looking at school budget allocations for 2004-2005, will follow in the next Governors Bulletin

Contact: Mick O'Regan on 020 8820 7341 or mick.oregan@learningtrust.co.uk

New Human Resources Handbook for Schools

The new Human Resources Handbook was given to all schools at the start of the autumn term. Many of the policies remain the same but some policies have been updated to reflect recent changes in legislation. Where there have been changes, the policies are in draft form to enable The Trust to consult with trade union and other colleagues. Contact Sue Newth-Gibbs, Head of Employee Relations, telephone 020 8820 7585 or e-mail sue.newth-gibbs@learningtrust.co.uk

Dear Governors Bulletin

Chairing a Committee

Help! I'm a new governor and I've just been asked to chair one of our committees. I said 'yes' at the governing body meeting because it seemed fair to share out the work, but now I'm wondering whether I can manage it. Have you got any tips?

Dear Governor

First of all, well done for volunteering. You don't say which committee, but there are two types. Some committees, like complaints or discipline, meet only as required. If you've been asked to chair one of these, you will have only to chair the meeting itself and you will be guided through the procedures by a clerk. Other committees such as premises, finance or curriculum, are regular and chairing is a little more onerous. Each committee should have a document setting out what the governing body expects it to do (terms of reference). If you don't have one, then your first task as a committee will be to recommend one to the governing body (you can get examples from the Governor Support Unit).

As committee chair you will need to:

- **Set the agenda (it can be just a list of topics)**
 - check the terms of reference for regular items
 - check the action sheet/minutes of the last governing body meeting – was your committee asked to do anything?
 - ask the chair of governors to pass appropriate DfES correspondence to you and your committee
 - check over the agenda items with the headteacher preferably before the meeting (this can be done by phone or e-mail)
- **Ensure all committee members are invited to meetings**
 - you can do this by phone, e-mail etc
 - but it's best to encourage people to diarise their committee meetings and note a year's meetings in advance
 - similarly, you can have a year's plan of topics to cover
 - ask the headteacher to ask invited staff to attend (and give them plenty of notice if you want a presentation)
- **Arrange for a brief note to be taken of the meeting (see overleaf)**
 - you can take the notes or ask another governor
 - record the date, who was there, a note of the topics discussed, decisions reached and any recommendations to the governing body
 - make sure the clerk gets a copy for the next governing body meeting

Good luck and do give us a call to tell us how you're getting on.

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Committee Minutes

School Governing Body		
Committee:		
Date:		
Present:		(Chair)
		(Note Taker)
Apologies:		
Agenda:	i	(Minutes & Matters Arising)
	ii	
	iii	
	iv	
	v	(Dates & Topics for Next Meetings)
	vi	(Any Other Business)

For each item make a brief note of

- the discussion
- the decision
- what action needs to be taken
- who is to take the action
- any recommendation to the governing body

Signed: (Committee Chair)

Date:

Report to next governing
body meeting:(Date)