

# Barnsley Governance Newsletter and Development Opportunities 2021 – 2022

6 September 2021

**Mel John-Ross, Executive Director for Children's Services**

Dear Governor,

As we take the time to reflect over what has been an unprecedented academic year having balanced the pandemic, kept children safe and provided them with a good education, I would like to thank each and everyone of you for the support you have given the school/academy where you govern and the difference this makes to Barnsley children and our community. You give your time voluntarily and this is valued.



As you will be aware the Barnsley Schools' Alliance has been instrumental in guiding and supporting all leaders across the primary and secondary sector as we continue to drive successful outcomes for all our children and families. The strength of the Alliance has meant that partnership working has never been so crucial. For working collectively, we have the power to be able to achieve so much more.

Our focus must be welcoming and settling our children upon their return in September as we continue to implement our recovery plans whilst keeping settings, staff and children safe. Many schools and academies may find themselves within an Ofsted window. The Barnsley Alliance will support school leaders and governors to feel confident and well-prepared for their next inspection.

The potential impact of the pandemic on children's learning and well-being is well documented and, sadly, is likely to have far reaching consequences in the future. For those children from disadvantaged backgrounds, the impact is even more acute with initial analysis from organisations such as the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) suggesting the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers will widen as a result of Covid-19. With this in mind I ask governors to continue to focus your monitoring checks on the progress of these pupils, ensuring they are afforded every opportunity to succeed alongside their peers.

Attendance and exclusions will also be areas that remain high on the agenda as we strive to reduce pupils' absence as much as possible. If our children and young people are not in

school then they are not in a position to improve their outcomes and realise their aspirations.

Equally, following our recent sector led Peer Challenge for children with SEND in the borough, there is more to do in respect of early help and inclusion and supporting more children early, with SEN in mainstream provision.

I am pleased to report that following the recent retirements of Nick Bowen (Secondary Co-Chair of Barnsley Alliance) and Yvonne Gray (Primary Co-Chair) we are in a position to welcome the new Chairs of the Barnsley Schools' Alliance: Paul Crook (Headteacher Penistone Grammar) will become Secondary Co-Chair and Lee McClure (Springvale Primary) will fulfil the role of Primary Co-Chair. We also welcome Teresa Smith (Highview PLC) as Leadership Chair. Colleagues will take up their roles in September and will inevitably bring new ideas and approaches to shape the next phase of the Alliance's journey.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks for your support. Working with the Barnsley Schools' Alliance and through high quality governor development programmes, we will continue to support you in your crucial role to deliver continuity of education and improve outcomes for all Barnsley children and young people.

Let's hope that this academic year brings about more consistency and less disruption for all our children, young people and the staff who support their education.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mel John-Ross". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mel John-Ross

Executive director for Children's Services

**Anna Turner, Interim Head of Service, Barnsley Schools' Alliance**



Dear Colleagues,

I hope you find the development opportunities detailed within this brochure helpful. Governor Services have worked hard this year to adapt sessions which have been delivered remotely through the use of Microsoft Teams, adapting to the challenges which the pandemic has brought about.

I thought it would be helpful to provide you with an insight into just some of the work the Barnsley School's Alliance has been undertaking in terms of the support available in addressing the gaps in children's learning. The Barnsley Schools' Alliance has committed financially to a comprehensive CPD support offer over the coming months. This is to ensure that the school workforce is well developed to support and aid our educational recovery. The sessions are intended for all Leaders, Middle leaders, Subject Leaders, teaching staff and support staff. The Alliance consulted colleagues from the sector and asked them to be part of a working CPD group to help shape and develop the programmes according to their needs. We hope that all colleagues will benefit and engage with this offer.

Further sub-groups have also been established creating a networking group which will ensure that colleagues feel well connected and better informed. Opportunities to share practice and be outward looking is the fundamental underpinning purpose of this group. A peer-review group is also being developed and I look forward to sharing the detail around this which will be shaped over the coming months.

You may or may not be aware that the Barnsley Alliance has also made a financial commitment to use the Launchpad for Literacy which complements the new EYFS framework and has the diagnostic capability to identify what children can do and their next steps. Launchpad provides EYFS teachers and practitioners with a framework in order for them to understand the small yet specific steps underpinning language development.

We hope that in investigating early we will in turn increase the percentage of children achieving GLD, expected levels in Communication and Literacy, Literacy and Maths. All Primary settings and PVI settings will benefit from this approach.

Writing is another area of focus for Barnsley. The Ofsted's briefing report (Oct 2020) noted that school leaders had spoken about the *"need to work on pupils' writing, including their 'stamina' when writing at length"* to recover some of the opportunities children had missed to *"practise their writing style and posture"* during the first national lockdown. Practitioners will also have access to tailored CPD to support children.

To ensure governors feel supported there are various development sessions on offer throughout the Autumn Term such as: *"How and When Schools will be inspected"*. This

session will ensure that governors understand the evaluation schedule, how schools will be judged and how the inspection framework will be applied in different contexts. Many schools will find themselves within the Ofsted window and we therefore encourage you to attend this session.

*“Teaching a broad and balanced curriculum for education recovery”* will also be of paramount importance. In June 2021 the DfE published its guidance ‘Teaching a broad and balanced curriculum for education recovery’. This non-statutory guidance is for teachers and leaders in reception and key stages 1, 2 and 3 who are responsible for the curriculum and its teaching. It offers suggestions to help schools decide how to prioritise elements within their curriculum for education recovery. Through attending this session, you will be better informed and understand how the curriculum can improve the outcomes for the children in your setting.

Barnsley Governor Services will also continue to work closely with Barnsley Governors Association (BGA). Please watch out for the forthcoming governor forum sessions which are a great way to get networking and keep well informed.

May I also take this opportunity to thank you for the support you have given schools so far throughout these extraordinary times and ask that you continue to support your school going forward. In particular I ask that you remember to support each other, watching out for colleagues’ mental health and well-being, as we grapple with re-establishing the school routine so that we enable our children to be the best they can be.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me should you feel that there are any bespoke development sessions you would like us to perhaps deliver, tailored to your individual Governing Board.

With good wishes for the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Turner', written in a cursive style.

Anna Turner  
Interim Head of Barnsley Alliance

## Messages from Barnsley Schools' Alliance Chairs

### Paul Crook, Secondary Schools Co-Chair

I have dedicated my whole career in education to Barnsley schools and the communities they serve. I am a passionate advocate for Barnsley's education system and the children and families it benefits.



I have taught at Penistone Grammar school for twenty-three years. During my time at Penistone Grammar School, I have led the school not only as Principal, but as Teacher of PE, Achievement Leader, Assistant Principal, Vice Principal, Associate Principal and finally as Principal. This has provided me with a repertoire of knowledge and strategies in how to effectively engage with staff, systems and stakeholders. Alongside my day-to-day role of Principal, I have also been a key member in external committees, including the Barnsley Schools Forum and the Funding Formulae Review Group. This has facilitated opportunities to build professional relationships with Barnsley Council workers and to have a gauge on the general voice from Barnsley schools and its workforce. Throughout this time, I have actively sought out opportunities to inspire and lead effective change within my current setting and within the wider Local Authority.

As an experienced Principal I have the skills, drive and determination required to continue to shape, and support Barnsley Alliance's strategic responsibilities and priorities. I understand the significances of the Board and have had the privilege of being actively involved with them.

Furthermore, I have proudly chaired Barnsley Secondary Heads Meeting for the last 2 years. Communication has been key when I have been required to disseminate vital information to other colleagues. This role has been insightful and enabled me to have a clear oversight of Barnsley's Secondary Schools and their leadership teams. As part of this role, I have influenced and supported colleagues throughout one of the most challenging times educationalists have ever experienced. This support has included the sharing of good practice, and the commitment required to ensure that the best practice shared has been implemented.

Building relationships with Barnsley Schools colleagues, as described above, has also permitted me to be a part of school improvement visits. These visits have enabled me to oversee the quality of education and school performance; as such I have gleaned a strategic view of crucial progress required in order to secure good outcomes for all students in Barnsley. I recognise the potential for change and continued progress within the education sector in Barnsley and I have the experience and strength of character required to challenge where required, whilst also celebrating success and diversity of our schools.

### **Lee McClure, Primary Schools Co-Chair**

I have been a Headteacher for 10 years now and a Local Leader of Education for 3 years. I have always enjoyed and had a passion for working with other settings and across other phases of education too - nurseries, secondary schools, etc. I would like to think of myself as a 'values driven' leader who has a track record for high standards in education - be that attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning or educational progress and achievement. I am from Barnsley and have always lived and worked here, minus 4 years at University in Sheffield and York - never too far away! I have worked in various schools across the Borough as a sports coach, TA, teacher, curriculum lead, Assistant Head, Deputy Head and now a Head. I love working with children and see my role as not just leading a school but supporting an entire community to thrive. My new role is as co-Chair of the Barnsley Alliance, representing the primary settings. I was honoured to be voted in by my peers and look forward to representing them well. I am excited to get started and to work with so many different departments and agencies. My main goals are to ensure that all schools engage with the Alliance and receive the levels of support and challenge that they individually require to thrive and also to engage with the relevant services to improve the early intervention strategies that are deployed across the town and across all services so that all children and families, especially the most vulnerable, get the best possible start in life. I am really looking forward to working with so many enthusiastic and talented professionals to take our Borough forward over the coming years.



### **Teresa Smith, Leadership Chair**

I have been a head teacher for four years, an SLE for 8 years and have recently become a Local Leader of Education. Through my roles within Barnsley, I have built strong working relationships with many schools and earned the respect of many colleagues and have fully enjoyed the opportunities of working with schools across the Borough. Throughout my career, I have championed the cause for our most disadvantaged families and young people with SEND as well as achieving high standards for all. I feel that this is the perfect opportunity for me to fine-tune these skills further and play a key role in developing synergy between services within the Local Authority through being the Chair of the Leadership Group with the end goal being the improvement of life chances for all young people in Barnsley. I believe that every child does matter and being Chair of the Leadership Group it enables me to work in partnership with others and continue the quest to get the best possible outcomes within and for the education system of Barnsley whilst supporting other leaders. I am really looking forward to supporting the leader of Barnsley and supporting all colleagues to provide the best educational offer.



## **Lauren Nixon, Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead**

I am Lauren Nixon, the Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead, working within BMBC Public Health. My role is to provide strategic oversight and leadership across the emotional health and wellbeing system in Barnsley, this involves supporting the design, development and review of new and existing emotional health and wellbeing services, securing funding for new initiatives and supporting wider referral partners, such as GPs and Education settings to understand the service offer and how to



access the right service at the right time for our children and young people. From September 2021, we will be working to support Education settings in a number of ways, the Wellbeing for Education Recovery project will continue, and training will be delivered by CAMHS and our Educational Psychology Team. We have also developed a centralised emotional health and wellbeing training offer which includes training from both statutory and specialist services. I will be introducing a new Designated Mental Health Lead Network, which will provide an opportunity for your schools' designated lead to attend training, learn about service developments and updates, communicate directly with services such as CAMHS and the new COMPASS Mental Health Support Teams and be a place to share best practice and consult on planned initiatives and developments.

There is significant work ongoing across the emotional health and wellbeing system, if you would like to know more or if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me on [laurennixon@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:laurennixon@barnsley.gov.uk).

## Clerking Services

The Department for Education (DfE) regards the role of the clerk as crucial to governing body effectiveness. The recent regulations require governing bodies to “*have regard to advice from the clerk in regards to exercising the governing board functions*”.

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council’s Governors Service employs a number of suitably trained clerks who are available to schools who buy back the service, and who can offer expert advice and guidance to support the work of governors. All clerks are regularly briefed on new developments and current issues, and the quality of their work is rigorously monitored. The clerks are kept up-to-date with legislative and procedural requirements, and best practice, so that governing bodies can concentrate on their strategic role.

The clerk to governors has a central role in providing advice to the governing board on governance, constitutional and procedural matters to ensure that the governing board meets its statutory duties, to:

- Provide effective administrative support to the governing board and its committees.
- Ensure the governing board is properly constituted.
- Manage information effectively in accordance with legal requirements.

One key aspect of our service is that if our appointed clerk, or your regular clerk, is unable to attend a meeting, we will aim to provide a substitute.

As part of our service we also offer minute taking for confidential meetings, disciplinaries and SISG meetings should the need arise.

As a service we have maintained our support to schools throughout this challenging period of time by providing advice and guidance, and our Governing Body Clerks have continued to support virtual meetings.

The National Governance Association produced a report in September 2019 following a survey of school governors and trustees (contributed to by 5,923 individuals across England), and one of their recommendations for governing boards is to ‘employ an independent and impartial clerk, where possible, for all meetings of the governing board rather than just the full governing board meetings.’

A recommendation for the government is that ‘Clerking should be an essential part of government policy in terms of its approach to making school governance consistently more effective.’

If you think that your governing body would benefit from the services of an experienced Local Authority Clerk, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Anna Turner **Tel:** 01226 773747 or Denise Brown **Tel:** 01226 772620

**Email:** [AnnaTurner@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:AnnaTurner@barnsley.gov.uk) or [Admin-governorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:Admin-governorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk)



## ***Useful Contacts***

### **The Governor Development Team**

#### **Anna Turner**

Interim Head of Service Barnsley Schools' Alliance

Tel: 01226 773747

Email: [annaturner@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:annaturner@barnsley.gov.uk)

#### **Shafeek Khan**

Policy and Knowledge Manager

Joint Commissioning, Policy and Governance

Tel: 01226 776539

Email: [shafeekkhan@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:shafeekkhan@barnsley.gov.uk)

### **Governor Services (Clerking) Team**

#### **Denise Brown**

Governor Services Advisor

Tel: 01226 772620

Email: [denisebrown@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:denisebrown@barnsley.gov.uk)

#### **Julie Blythe**

Business Support Officer

Tel: 01226 772367

Email: [Admin-GovernorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:Admin-GovernorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk)

## Useful Key Contacts

### **National Governors' Association**

The NGA is an independent membership organisation that represents school governors of maintained schools and academies in England. Its aim is to improve the wellbeing of children and young people by promoting high standards in all our schools and improving the effectiveness of their governing body.

NGA have developed a plethora of documents and resources which are available on their website.

**Tel: 0121 237 3780**

**Web: [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)**

### **Department for Education**

The DfE offers a range of information and advice for governors of all types of schools, from guidance on legislation and constitution of the governing body, to committees, training and year planning.

**Web: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance>**

### **National Co-ordinators of Governor Services**

NCOGS represents local authority providers of services to school governors. It is a source of good practice in training materials and support services regionally, and also lobbies national bodies on governance issues.

**Web: <http://www.ncogs.org.uk>**

Capacity to improve will be incorporated into the Overall Effectiveness. There will also be a judgement in the school's inspection framework and strong focus on behaviour and combating bullying. Complaints from parents may generate early inspection, but otherwise good and outstanding schools will not be inspected unless data indicates that there is slippage. A key message is that "Satisfactory is not good enough" with the suggestion that no improvement from satisfactory will be deemed insufficient progress.

### **Barnsley Governors Association**

The BGA is an independent democratic, non-political association of school governing bodies in the Barnsley MBC area, which aims to support, promote and improve governance.

**Web: [www.barnsleyga.org](http://www.barnsleyga.org)**

### **Governor Line**

Governor Line offers free, confidential advice, information and support to school governors, clerks and individuals involved directly in the governance of maintained schools in England. The Governor Line number (from a UK line) is 0800 0722 181. Governor Line is a free service delivered by an organisation called WorkLife Support under contract to the UK government.

**Web:** [www.educationupportpartnership.org.uk/individuals/governorline](http://www.educationupportpartnership.org.uk/individuals/governorline)

### **The School Governors' One-Stop Shop (SGOSS)**

The School Governors' One-Stop Shop is a government funded charity tasked with recruiting governors to governing bodies in England. SGOSS also receives support from business organisations. The SGOSS service is free to Local Authorities, volunteers, employers and schools.

**Web:** [www.sgoos.org.uk](http://www.sgoos.org.uk)

### **The Key**

A national information service The Key for School Governors, support nearly half of schools in England. Members have instant access to impartial information and guidance, practical resources and answers to questions on all aspects of school leadership and management.

**Web:** [www.thekeysupport.com](http://www.thekeysupport.com)

## Governor Development Opportunities

Interactive Governor Development sessions have been revised to reflect and respond to the current situation with Covid-19, to ensure that Governors are fully equipped with the information required to support the school in their role as Governor. We have also included some Webinars this time.

**All sessions will continue to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams this Term and the cost remains at £55 per Governor per session, unless otherwise indicated. Some sessions will be subsidised by the Barnsley Schools' Alliance.**

A list of Governor Development opportunities and more information about each session is available on <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/schools-and-learning/school-governors/newsletter-and-governor-development-opportunities-2021/>

Please note that development sessions will only run for a minimum of 5 participants in order for it to be viable.

A **cancellation fee** of £25 will be applied to the school if a Governor fails to attend a training session without notifying Governor Services two days prior to the training to allow sufficient time for the session to be cancelled if necessary.

Some of the sessions will require pre-learning tasks to be completed by Governors to enable the session to be more focussed on the areas of greatest need in terms of gaps in knowledge identified.

Virtual training sessions have been held very successfully, however if you are unfamiliar with using Microsoft Teams, a 'test' meeting prior to the actual training can be arranged so that you feel more comfortable, so please get in touch if this is something that you would benefit from. You will be sent an e-mail containing a link which you will need to click on to enable you to join the session on the day of delivery. You will be able to join the Microsoft Teams session at least 15 minutes prior to the start time to ensure that there are no technical issues. You will also be sent some instructions on how to join the session using a number of different devices, and some tips to be mindful of when using virtual platforms.

**To Book:** E-mail [Admin-GovernorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:Admin-GovernorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk) or via POD

***Bespoke training packages for individual schools are also available upon request.***



## Barnsley Governors Association

The Barnsley Governors Association was set up with the assistance of officers from BMBC, and the inaugural AGM was held in 2011. We are an independent organisation but continue to work in partnership with the local authority. Most Barnsley schools and academies are members of the BGA.

We represent Barnsley governors on the Alliance Board, Schools Forum and the Children's Trust Executive Group.

We hold regular Forums which are networking and information events, **free of charge to all governors and trustees of Barnsley schools**. We also provide training by governors to governors at a reasonable cost. Forums and training sessions have continued throughout the pandemic on Zoom; this has enabled us to invite speakers and trainers from further afield to offer new perspectives on governance.

We offer peer review of governing bodies and can broker mentoring support.

We send regular newsletters about our activities to everyone on our contact list.

In the autumn term of 2021, we will be organising meetings with chairs of governors (and any other interested governors) to talk about our work programme and the work of the Alliance Board, and to get feedback on what more we could do to support school governance. More details to follow on this in September.

We are also organising Forums and training for this academic year. Please have a look at our website [www.barnsleyga.org](http://www.barnsleyga.org) for information about the BGA and forthcoming events.

Please contact us at [admin@barnsleyga.org](mailto:admin@barnsleyga.org) if you have any comments or questions or if you would like to receive newsletters and emails from us.

Our **AGM** takes place on Tuesday **19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 6pm** at the Holiday Inn, with free buffet and speaker(s). Booking opens on our website on September 1<sup>st</sup> – please come and join us.

## **Multi-Agency Training**

### **BARNSELY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

#### **MUTI-AGENCY TRAINING AND EVENTS PROSPECTUS**

##### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Please note there are **no costs to Governors or schools** for attending the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency training events.

For the full calendar of training events please go to the website: Safeguarding Children in [Barnsley Multi-Agency Training](#)

**Places should be booked and cancelled online by the learner** via POD at [barnsley.learningpool.com](https://barnsley.learningpool.com), or by contacting Marion Proudfoot at [marionproudfoot@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:marionproudfoot@barnsley.gov.uk)

##### **EXPECTATIONS OF APPLICANTS**

There are clear expectations of people's behaviour whilst partaking in training events. The key principles are:

- Behaviour which is deemed to be aggressive, violent or intimidating will not be tolerated. Any attendee who displays such behaviour will be asked to leave the training and their line manager will be made aware of the concerns about their behaviour.
- The display of inappropriate attitudes e.g. racist, sexist, ageist, homophobic or any other forms of marginalisation will not be tolerated and will be challenged by the lead trainer.
- If there are comments which cause concern with regard to safeguarding issues this will be challenged and will also be passed to the relevant line manager for consideration.
- Training events are not to be used as a form of personal therapy.
- Attendees are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and to behave professionally when attending training. Any concerns relating to the level of engagement, use of mobile phones, inappropriate responses to the material etc. are not considered to be professional behaviour and will be challenged by the lead trainer.
- All attendees must observe health and safety requirements and take account of relevant information provided to them at training events.

## Your Views Matter

If you have any suggestions or you require something that we do not offer in this programme we would like to hear from you. Please email or write to the address below.

E-mail: [Admin-GovernorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:Admin-GovernorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk)

Or [AnnaTurner@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:AnnaTurner@barnsley.gov.uk)

Tel: 01226 772620/ 772367

Write to: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Children's Services  
For attention of Anna Turner, Interim Head of Barnsley Alliance  
Corporate Mailroom  
PO Box 634  
Barnsley  
S70 9GG

***THANK YOU***