

Report to: County Consultative Committee

Date of meeting: 13th October 2021

By: Karen Marr and the ESGF

Title: ESGF Update to the County Consultative Committee

Purpose: For members of the Committee to receive an update from the ESGF

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) To receive an update from Karen Marr and the ESGF.

1 Background

1.1 For members of the Committee to receive an update from the ESGF, to include:

- the return to school and the role of governors
- how challenges have been overcome in fulfilling obligations in a virtual world,
- safeguarding
- finance
- the long-term vision for the East Sussex Governors Forum

2 Supporting information

- 1) As always, schools are anxious about funding. We have a large number of small schools, which traditionally find it much harder to run stable budgets than larger schools, which are able to absorb changes in circumstance more easily. The picture across East Sussex schools is uneven; some have been hit particularly hard by COVID related absences and had to pay extra for supply; or have had to deal with extended leadership absences. However some schools have found that the extra per-pupil funding for COVID has enabled them to maintain a reasonable level of provision to mitigate against the detrimental effects of the pandemic. Governors have a responsibility to make sure that schools are accountable for this money. The new Funding Formula from the government will redistribute funds nationally for the year 2022-23. The Schools' Finance department at County have been working on an initial estimate for small schools, as early as possible, because they understand the pressures on small schools. We are hopeful that there will be more help for the small East Sussex schools as a result of the Funding Formula.
- 2) KCSIE has been updated to include more detailed guidance on child exploitation and to ensure that all staff know to reassure pupils who are reporting abuse, especially sexual violence and harassment, that they will be taken seriously. These are two rapidly developing areas of awareness in schools. Questions that governors will be asking may be around staff training, and how schools can show stakeholders that they are taking these concerns seriously.
- 3) Many schools were open over the summer for Catch up provision for disadvantaged pupils. Governors may be asking their schools about things such as engagement and uptake; any issues arising; whether any positive practices can be taken from the experience; what they have learned from the experience.
- 4) OFSTED inspections are coming back into schools. There will be increased focus on the most disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantage has previously been synonymous with those with a pupil premium grant, but there is more emphasis on disadvantaged pupils for any reason a school

has identified, such as SEND, in order to ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met. The extra funding available to help SEND pupils is very often not sufficient to cover needs, meaning that schools have to be creative around how they provide for these pupils.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 For information

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None