

To: Chair of Governors
cc. Headteacher

Dear Colleague,

Autumn Term Schools Finance Team Visits and School RAG Ratings

Following consultation with the Work and Finish groups formed from the Spring Term 2010 Keynote Conferences and approval of the Schools Forum, it has been agreed that changes are required to the format, focus and agenda of your Autumn Term visit. With this in mind, we have developed a new protocol for these visits to include:

- A pre-set agenda to focus on the key issues affecting the schools budget and other financial management issues
- Invitation to school Governors to attend the meeting, preferably, but not limited to, the Chair of Governors and/or Chair of Finance
- Discussion of the schools current RAG rating and actions required to address identified issues

It is anticipated that these changes will result in a number of improvements to financial management in schools and will ensure better communications and understanding between the school, its Governors and the Local Authority.

In the current economic climate, the Headteacher as lead professional and adviser to the governing body, is facing a number of crucial and difficult decisions when planning the budget 2011-2014. This requires the full involvement and support of the Governors as the strategic leaders of the school.

Prior to your pre-arranged autumn term visit you will receive an agreed agenda and a request for you to invite your chosen Governor/s to attend the meeting. Schools Forum have agreed that a new category be added to the current RAG rating and your school will be rated according to Governor attendance at that meeting. It is anticipated that this new category will help Headteachers to communicate budget planning more effectively to the schools Governing Body and ensure that all Governors are kept fully informed about the schools current and future budget situation.

The Schools' Forum consider that this visit, and the full involvement of the Headteacher and governor representatives, is crucial to assuring the LA and school leaders that sound financial management practices are in place in schools. Therefore, where a school refuses a visit, this will be reflected in the RAG rating.

Should you wish to discuss this further or have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Alison Randall on 01603 222473, Linda Bennett on 01603 228995 or Carol Wright on 01603 222544

Yours sincerely,

A. Randall