

**Norfolk
Governors'
Network**



From the Chair
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Dear Chair of Governors

Coping with Technology

As Chair of Governors at your school you have an important role to play in passing on information to your governing body. Norfolk Governors' Network (NGN) is concerned that now the majority of information for governors is only available electronically governors are not aware of and do not see important information. Information previously sent via the school post from Children's Services is available on E-Courier (passwords are no longer required) at www.norfolkesinet.org.uk and information from DfES is available from the GovernorNet website at www.governornet.co.uk

We must acknowledge that whilst the move to electronic communication will continue currently there are governors who are not able to access the new ways of working. There are also concerns about the cost to schools and governors associated with electronic communications. This issue was raised at the NGN Spring Forum and as a result of this we have held discussions on this issue with the Governor Support Service (GSS) and have decided to write to Chairs.

We want to ascertain how governing bodies are coping with technology and report on problem areas so these can be looked at in detail. We would be grateful if you would respond to the attached questionnaire so your opinions can be included in our survey.

We have included some hints and tips on good practice which we have developed to cope with internet technology. If you have any views on these, or further examples of good practice, please get in touch with us.

Please find attached the invite to the NGN Summer Forum. All governors and clerks are welcome; all attendees should inform the Clerk to NGN so we can arrange seating and refreshments. We are pleased that Lisa Christensen is taking time to talk to us and know she is aware of the important work which governors do.

We are interested in your progress in planning to deliver 10% Planning, Preparation and Assessment time to teachers in your school, so that we can give a fair and objective view to members of the County Council, DfES and the National Governors' Council. Please find enclosed a short questionnaire. We would be grateful if you would respond to the attached questionnaire so your experiences can be included in our discussions with the County Council, DfES and the National Governors' Council.

HINTS AND TIPS FOR GOVERNING BODIES ON COPING WITH TECHNOLOGY

Accessing E-Courier

Whilst information on E-Courier is available for governors to access, we know that not all governors have access. We suggest one member of the governor body (this does not have to be the Clerk or the Chair) accesses E-Courier each week to identify documents which need action and forwards these to the appropriate governor e.g. the Chair of a Committee or the Chair of Governors. This can be done by email or by paper copy. Governing bodies should be prepared to pay appropriate expenses e.g. for a print cartridge annually and paper (or the school could supply a ream of paper) to the governor/clerk.

A Guide to the Law for School Governors (GttL)

Updates to this important document are produced termly and can be accessed via the GovernorNet website: www.governornet.co.uk

where an up to date copy of GttL and amendments can be accessed by everyone.

This brings a problem with updating individual governor's copies as the onus is on the school to deal with photocopying and distribution. After some consideration it was decided that it is not cost effective to update individual copies. NGN 's advice is that each governing body maintains 3 paper copies of the GttL for the Clerk, Chair and one copy in school for access by governors and school staff. The clerk to the governors monitors the website, prints off the updates and amends the manuals as required.

What else can be done to help you?

Would a termly list of information for governors published on E-Courier sent by post to the chair/clerk be helpful?

Articles on good practice will be published in Agenda, which is sent to all governors and on the Norfolk County Council EsiNet website and the NGN website.

'Coping with Technology' Questionnaire

Whilst electronic communication is here to stay NGN wishes to help those governing bodies who at the moment cannot access the information. Please tell us your problems and what could be done to help you by completing the short questionnaire which follows.

Internet users can answer the questionnaire online at the NGN website: www.ngn.org.uk.

Alternative ways of returning the questionnaire are given below.

PLEASE RESPOND BY 30th JUNE 2005.

Many Thanks

Yours sincerely

Judy Leggett
Chair Norfolk Governors' Network

'COPING WITH TECHNOLOGY' QUESTIONNAIRE

Norfolk Governors' Network

This Questionnaire is available on www.ngn.org.uk if you wish to respond via the Internet.
If there is not enough room for your responses please continue on a separate sheet.

1.	Please mark the type of school at which you are Chair: Primary / Secondary
2.	Please give the name of the school if you wish us to respond to you on any issues:
Questions for Chairs who do <u>not</u> have access to the Internet	
3.	How aware are you of communications from Children's Services to schools /governing bodies, now that these are electronic?
4.	How regularly does your school update you on correspondence from Children's Services (formerly the Education Department)? Weekly / termly / as required
5.	Please list any problems/concerns you have with the current system.
Questions for Chairs who have access to the Internet	
6.	Do you or another member of the governing body access E-Courier every week to check for information for governors?
7.	How does the Headteacher go through the E-Courier correspondence with you on a regular basis?
8.	Please list any problems / concerns you have with the current system.
9.	Please give any good practice tips to add to our list.

To return the questionnaire by 30th June 2005: Email to clerk@ngn.org.uk or send to Clerk to NGN c/o Education Post Room, Children's Services, County Hall, Norwich via school post or Telephone 01603 429986 or 01603 466741

Please do not ring the Governor Support Service (GSS) with your replies