

GBA News - 27th January 2022



GBA AGM 2022 - Save the Date



The GBA Annual General Meeting will take place on the afternoon

of **Wednesday 30th March 2022** (exact time to be confirmed). We have opted for a fully online meeting due to the ongoing situation with the pandemic and to allow for the attendance of as many delegates as possible. We will be in touch with more information in the coming weeks.

School Budget Questionnaire

The GBA has issued a short questionnaire to Principals to gather feedback about financial pressures being faced by schools. Please [contact us](#) if you did not receive the email containing the link to the questionnaire.

Issues that have been raised include staffing, rising energy and transport costs, and Covid-19 related costs. We are keen to hear about individual circumstances and to gather evidence that will help form our response to the Draft Budget 2022-25 Consultation and support any concerns we may raise. Thank you for providing your feedback.



EA Launches Draft Strategic Area Plans

The Education Authority recently launched Consultations on Northern Ireland's draft Strategic Area Plan & draft Special Education Strategic Area Plan 2022-2027.

The Consultations are open until 12th April 2022 and can be accessed [here](#).

The purpose of the draft Strategic Area Plan 2022-27 is to outline the vision, mission and Key Themes with regard to primary and post primary schools across Northern Ireland.

The first Strategic Area Plan 'Providing Pathways - Strategic Area Plan for Schools 2017-2020' (Providing Pathways) completes on 31 August 2022. The second draft area plan sets the strategic direction of Area Planning for the next five years and spans the academic years 2022-2027.

The purpose of the draft Special Education Strategic Area Plan 2022-27 is to outline the aim, vision, mission and Key Themes with regard to special schools and specialist provision in mainstream schools across Northern Ireland.

This is the first regional Special Education Strategic Area Plan for Northern Ireland 2022-2027 (SESAP). The SESAP sets the strategic direction of Special Education Area Planning for the next five academic years 2022-2027.



Northern Ireland Assembly Updates

The Northern Ireland Assembly was recalled early on the 10th January 2022 to discuss concerns around school safety and COVID-19. Members discussed issues around staffing, ventilation and the mental health and well being of school staff and pupils.

The Minister outlined steps she had taken to address staffing pressures including an appeal to recently retired teachers to return to the classroom and relaxing rules for the 550 final year student teachers scheduled to undertake school placements in the coming months.

The Minister concluded: *“Given the intense staffing pressures at present and the additional workload associated with Performance Review and Staff Development for teacher appraisal, I have agreed that this process will be paused for the current academic year.”*

The Education Committee met on 19th January when it received an oral briefing from the Minister of Education on Flexible School Starting Age. The Committee also received an oral briefing from the Department of Education on the January Monitoring Round and the Draft Budget 2022-2025. At yesterday's meeting (26th January), members were briefed on a Legislative Bill in relation to mandatory CPR and AED training at Key Stage 3 and deliberated on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill. Once uploaded, sessions are available [here](#).

Shared Education

The EA has received a number of expressions of interest from schools who wish to become engaged in Shared Education and is now collating the list of schools to begin the process of forming partnerships.

Over the coming months there will be a focus on three key areas for the new schools:

- **Building Leadership Capacity** – this will focus on developing principals and middle leaders to support Shared Education Partnership working

- **Teacher Professional Learning** – This will help develop the skills required, by teachers, to plan, implement and evaluate high quality Shared Education
- **Planning for Pupil Engagement** – This will explore the collaborative planning process involved in the development of Shared Education Programmes

If you require any further information regarding Shared Education projects, [please get in touch](#).



Area Planning

As you will be aware, the GBA represents voluntary grammar schools on the various Area Planning Groups (Area Planning Steering Group, Area Planning Working Group and the Area Planning Local Groups). Discussions regarding the next Strategic Area Plan are underway. If you have any ideas for area solutions in your location (**including longer term solutions**) please [contact us](#).



NEXT STEPS FOR THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NI AND KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Policy Forum for Northern Ireland

ONLINE CONFERENCE

Morning, Tuesday 22nd March 2022

#POLICYNI

Teaching & Non-Teaching Vacancies

The GBA provides a free advertising service for our member schools. Job vacancies are posted on our website and Twitter page. There is also a link to our job listings on the Education Authority website in the job opportunities section.

As we are currently receiving a high volume of job requests, please use our [job template](#) and allow one working day for posts to be uploaded. This does not include bank holidays and weekends.

If you would like us to host a vacancy for your school, please [contact us](#).

Newsletter Subscription

Please feel free to forward our monthly updates to your school Governors. If any of your Governors would like to subscribe, please [send us](#) their email address.

If you wish to unsubscribe to these emails, please [let us know](#).

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