
GBA News - 31st January 2023



GBA Annual General Meeting 2023

The GBA AGM will take place during the afternoon of **22nd March 2023** at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Belfast. Invitations to the AGM and nomination forms will be issued week commencing 6th February.

GBA Executive Committee Nominations

We are seeking nominations to our Executive Committee.

Members of the GBA Executive Committee play a crucial role on behalf of voluntary grammar schools, providing an opportunity to:

- Contribute to educational policy development
- Represent the sector on a variety of key stakeholder groups
- Raise emerging issues from schools
- Help oversee the strategic direction of the Association

New Members are formally elected to the Executive at the AGM, where they will also have the opportunity to meet with current members and discuss

the important role the Committee plays in supporting Voluntary Grammar schools.



School Budgets: GBA and Education Bodies Issue Funding Warning

The GBA joined with seven other bodies, representing all school sectors, to co-sign a letter of warning regarding the current and ongoing crisis in education funding. The letter was issued to both the Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Chris Heaton-Harris, and the head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Jayne Brady.

In their correspondence, the CEOs of each organisation highlighted the detrimental impact of underfunding on the education of children and young people in Northern Ireland, and the disparities between funding here and in other UK jurisdictions:

"We would be failing the children and young people of Northern Ireland (NI) if we did not share our significant concerns about the impact of the current crisis in education funding. Without question, reduction in funding and ongoing under investment will negatively impact the quality of education of every child and

young person living in NI. This is inequitable, as the funding for our children and young people is already significantly lower than that received by those in other regions."

A full copy of the letter is available [here](#).

The GBA continues to advocate for a fair funding base for our schools and would like to thank school leaders for their input on the matter to date.

Area Planning Update

The Education Authority (EA), in partnership with the Area Planning Local Groups, has identified various locations that can meet demand for Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools (SPiMs) for September 2023 and beyond. Currently, the EA is prioritising workstreams based on the demand and needs of an area.

The GBA met with members of the EA's Area Planning team to discuss potential provision in the Voluntary Grammar sector and continues to engage with member schools regarding this type of provision. If you have:

- any questions or comments regarding SPiMs
 - wish to have an initial conversation regarding general provision in your area;
- or
- if you have any area planning requirements
- please [contact us](#).
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Consultations - January 2023

Pre-consultation Information: School Uniform Policy

Towards the end of her tenure, the former Minister (Michelle McIlveen, MLA), informed the Department that primary legislation should be drafted to enable statutory guidance to all schools on school uniform policy. The Department has commenced the process of a review of School Uniform policy with the expectation of future legislation in this area.

As key stakeholders, the Department has asked the GBA to contribute to the review. The GBA is aware that a number of schools operate schemes that support families with school uniforms and would like to hear from you regarding your uniform policy, specifically, any uniform schemes you may have in place and the demand for such schemes. To provide your feedback, please click [here](#).

All-Party Group on Reducing Harm Related to Gambling - Inquiry

The All Party Group (APG) on Reducing Harm Related to Gambling is conducting an inquiry into public health approaches to gambling-related harms in Northern Ireland. Inquiry Terms of Reference (ToR) are available [here](#) (questions pertinent to the education sector are highlighted). A call for written evidence is open until Friday, 3 February 2023. All responses should be submitted to the APG by email at secretariat@gamharmapg.org.

In relation to the above inquiry, you may be interested in CCEA's new resource, "[Gaming and Gambling Awareness](#)", designed to support teachers delivering the statutory curriculum for Learning for Life and Work: Personal Development to Key Stage 3 pupils.

Public Consultation on EA's Draft Interim Language Policies

The Education Authority has drafted Interim Language Policies for the Irish and Ulster-Scots Languages (Draft Interim Language Policies) and is seeking views. More information is available [here](#).

The public consultation runs from:

Monday 14 November 2022 until Monday 27 February 2023 at 6pm

Shared Education Updates

The GBA recently attended a cross-organisational Shared Education meeting to discuss;

- The current Shared Education landscape across NI
- Overview of the Steps into Sharing Programme
- SE Mapping Exercise conducted by EA

- Supporting the expansion of SE

Steps into Sharing entails a process of capacity building for Shared Education activity, and the formation of school partnerships. For more information you can access the [Shared Education Hub](#) or [contact us](#) for a conversation about SE and partnership formation.

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.

If you would like us to host a vacancy for your school, please [contact us](#), using our [job template](#) and allow one working day for posts to be uploaded. This does not include bank holidays and weekends.

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