
GBA News – Friday 28 November 2025



Building Stronger Governance Roadshows

The GBA will be delivering in-person training for Voluntary Grammar School Governors across Northern Ireland in Spring 2026:

The training will be delivered at the following venues and is open to governors and school leadership:

Governance Roadshow

Host School

Rainey Endowed, Magherafelt
Methodist College, Belfast
Foyle College, Derry/Londonderry
Loreto Grammar, Omagh
St Patrick's Grammar, Armagh

Date

Thursday 5 February 2026
Thursday 19 February 2026
Thursday 26 February 2026
Thursday 5 March 2026
Thursday 12 March 2026

Programme Outline:

6:00pm - Registration and networking supper

6:30pm - 3 x 20 minute presentations

- Good Governance in Voluntary Grammar Schools
- Finance

- Employment matters

7:30pm - Panel Q&A

8:30pm - Close

To reserve a place, please complete this [form](#) - . Please book early to secure your place.

TransformED Update

The Department of Education has hosted a number of events at locations throughout Northern Ireland to provide an overview of the main priorities of the TransformED Strategy and to allow for discussion around four main questions.

1. What impact or opportunities have you seen or expect to see from TransformED?
2. What challenges do you face in implementing TransformED?
3. What tools or resources would support your leadership in this work?
4. What advice would you give the Department for a successful rollout?

DE will collate the responses collected from the events and compile a report to share with stakeholders.

DE officials are also very keen to engage with school leaders after the responses to the consultation on the future of CCEA qualifications have been collated and analysed. This is expected to happen in January 2026 and school leaders are encouraged to become involved in the ongoing work that will shape the landscape of the Northern Ireland qualifications framework in the years ahead.

Supporting Newly Appointed Voluntary Grammar School Governors

Onboarding New Governors: A Guide for Voluntary Grammar Schools

As Boards of Governors are reconstituted across Voluntary Grammar Schools, effective onboarding is crucial. A structured induction ensures new governors

understand their responsibilities and feel welcomed into the school community. Chairs and Headteachers are encouraged to provide a tailored welcome pack to support this process.

What to Expect from Induction

A well-designed induction programme helps new governors quickly become familiar with the school and their role. Key elements include:

- **Welcome Meeting:** An initial visit to the school and a meeting with the Chair and Principal for an overview and introduction.
- **Team Integration:** Introductions to key contacts to foster a sense of belonging.
- **Essential Information:** Access to all necessary documents and resources for the role.
- **Training and Support:** Clear guidance on induction training, ongoing development opportunities, and support for attending your first board meeting.

New governors are usually asked to sign a commitment to uphold the seven Nolan Principles of Standards in Public Life, as outlined in the school's Code of Conduct.

Key Documents for New Governors

Your induction pack should include:

- Board of Governors Handbook or Induction Pack (with contacts and meetings' calendar)
- Scheme of Management
- Annual Report to Parents
- School Prospectus and recent newsletters
- Three-Year Development Plan
- Most recent ETI Report
- "The Governor's Role: A Guide for Governors" (from DE)
- School protocols, procedures, and policies
- Key school data (admissions, enrolment, pupil-teacher ratio, budget)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Handbook
- Governor training dates
- Declaration of Interest form

- Governors Code of Conduct

Collective Responsibility

Governors share collective responsibility for board decisions. All members are expected to support and uphold board decisions publicly, regardless of personal views. The Board of Governors sets the strategic direction, while the Principal and senior leadership team manage day-to-day operations.

Health and Safety Update

Working at Height

Falls from height are a leading cause of fatalities in Northern Ireland workplaces. Traditionally work at height is associated with construction and maintenance activities. While falls from height in classrooms and offices may be overlooked because they are considered low risk. However, many injuries occur from low-level falls e.g. from removing posters and work from classroom walls.

The Work at Height Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 apply to any work where a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. They require employers and those in control of any work at height activity to make sure work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people. This includes using the right type of equipment for working at height. Low-risk, relatively straightforward tasks will require less effort when it comes to planning but will still need consideration.

To prevent low-level falls it is recommended attention is given to the following: risk assessment, controlling potential hazards, and implementing appropriate safety measures.

This includes ensuring staff consider the task and are fully aware of the risks and measures to help control them.

Considering small activities in classrooms and offices of low risk and short duration;

A step stool or stepladders can be a sensible and practical option.

Good house-keeping can ensure equipment is on level ground and prevent trips from obstructions.

Appropriate non-slip footwear can help prevent slips.

Further information which is also relevant to maintenance can be found at the following links.

<https://www.hseni.gov.uk/publications/falls-height>

<https://www.hseni.gov.uk/topics/work-height>

Working at height safely: A brief guide, Leaflet INDG401 HSE

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.htm

Wild Birds

DAERA has issued advice including current public guidelines from the PHA

- do not pick up or touch sick, dying or dead poultry or wild birds, and keep pets away from them;
- avoid contact with surfaces contaminated with bird faeces;
- avoid untreated bird feathers (such as those found in the environment) and other bird waste;
- maintain good personal hygiene with regular hand washing with soap and use of alcohol-based hand rubs.

The latest situation is continually updated on the DAERA website. [Latest](#)

[Situation | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

School Uniform Guidance Issued

Guidelines have been published in relation to the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill that is currently awaiting Royal Assent. the 16 Guidelines will become statutory once the Bill becomes law. The guidelines can be viewed [here](#).

We welcome feedback from member schools regarding the outworking of the policy. Please send feedback to administrator@gbani.org

Specialist Provision Update

The GBA attended an EA hosted event working together on SEN provision. The education system is facing significant pressure in securing places for children

with statements of special educational need for September 2026/27 and beyond. The EA will be offering a virtual engagement session on Thursday 18 December from 10:00am to 11:30am via Microsoft Teams. At this time, information will be shared with schools about the support available to set up and deliver a specialist class. There are many examples of successful specialist provision units and if you would like to visit one of these, please contact us (nuala@gbani.org - joe@gbani.org).

Department of Education Curriculum Survey

The Education Minister has launched an online survey inviting schools and education stakeholders to help develop a new curriculum framework for Northern Ireland. School leaders, teachers and the wider education sector are invited asked to share their views on individual subjects and Areas of Learning to guide the work of the Curriculum Taskforce. The survey is can be accessed at - <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/de/curriculum-review-curriculum-survey>. The survey can be completed online until **23.59 on Friday 28 November 2025**.

Shared Education

The CCEA websites contains useful links that support post-primary schools in their delivery of Shared Education partnerships. These can be accessed using this [link](#).

GTCNI Legislation

The Minister of Education introduced the General Teaching Council Bill [NIA 23/22-27], which is a Bill to make provision in relation to the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland. The Bill passed First Stage and ordered to be printed. A copy of the Bill is available [at](#).

Advertising of Teaching and Support roles on the GBA Website

The GBA provides a free advertising service for our member schools. Job vacancies are posted on our website and Twitter page. The Education Authority website also links to the GBA jobs section.

****PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR JOB TEMPLATE HAS BEEN UPDATED AND IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD [HERE](#)****

If you would like us to host a vacancy for your school, **please contact us, with the completed job template for each post, and allow at least TWO WORKING DAYS for posts to be uploaded.**

THE DEADLINE FOR REQUESTS TO ADVERTISE JOBS BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS IS **12 NOON ON MONDAY 15 DECEMBER 2025**. REQUESTS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DEADLINE WILL NOT BE POSTED UNTIL MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2026.