



Rt Hon David Laws MP
Minister of State for Schools

Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Dame Dana Ross-Wawrzynski
Bright Futures Education Trust
The Lodge House
Cavendish Road
Bowdon
Altrincham
WA14 2NJ

14th January 2015

Dear Dame Dana,

Subject: Headteacher Standards Review recommendations

I would like to congratulate you on leading a successful review. I am very grateful for the work the review group has done on such an important area. I would like to thank you, Roy Blatchford as vice-chair and all the members of the review group for your hard work and dedication. We all know that strong school leadership is a key part of securing great outcomes for pupils, and I am confident that these standards will help the profession to keep moving towards excellence.

I have read the report accompanying the standards and have outlined my response to the group's recommendations below. I am content to accept recommendations 1 to 5. While I understand the thinking behind recommendation 6, I am confident that there is already sufficient material available to support governors.

Recommendation 1: The standards proposed by this report should be adopted to replace the existing 2004 National Standards for Headteachers

I believe the revised standards you have written are much more relevant for today's educational environment, and the self-improving school led system we are working towards. Therefore, I agree with this recommendation and these standards will replace the 2004 standards.

Recommendation 2: The Department for Education should support the review group in spreading awareness of the standards

My officials have been working with stakeholders on how best to communicate with the sector about the new standards and achieve the best possible coverage. Officials will support you as chair of the review in further communications about the standards.

Recommendation 3: The extent to which the standards have been used and in what ways, along with opinions of the standards, should be considered two years after publication.

This is a very sensible approach. It will be important to assess the impact of the standards, and the ways in which they are being used by the sector, to inform any future activity in this area.

Recommendation 4: The standards should be fully reviewed after a maximum of five years following publication.

In the next five years the education system will develop further. A full review will ensure that, if necessary, the headteacher standards are updated so that they will be applicable to headteachers working in that system.

Recommendation 5: The review group feels that another piece of work is needed to create guidance to sit alongside the standards to ensure that all who want to use them are supported to do so practically. The Department for Education should engage with key organisations to create this guidance.

A guidance document has been created to sit alongside the standards to support practitioners and, in particular, governing boards using the standards for appraisal and recruitment. This guidance will be published at the same time as the standards.

Recommendation 6: The review would like to suggest that the Department for Education considers whether there is a need for a set of professional standards for governors.


I welcomed your thoughts on this matter and have consulted my officials.

The Governors' Handbook already distils everything that governors need to know about their role and responsibilities, including the need to operate in a professional manner. This is backed up in key areas through requirements set out in statutory guidance for maintained schools and in the Academies Financial Handbook for Academies. In addition, model codes of conduct and role descriptions already exist e.g. as published by the National Governors' Association.

Therefore I do not think it necessary for us to develop a new set of national set of standards for governors and so will not be accepting this recommendation.

Thank you again for your work in this important area.

*I am very grateful to you
and your excellent team!*



David Laws MP