



Go-Governance

A Newsletter for Governors and Clerks

A FUTURE
FULL OF HOPE
CLIFTON DIOCESE

Introduction

Firstly, may I welcome you back for another school year. I hope that you were able to enjoy the heatwave, had a well-earned rest from school matters and now feel fully refreshed ready to meet the challenges of the year ahead.

It's been a little while since the last edition (February in fact) and a lot has happened since then. Most notably, a new Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds, has been appointed. Time will tell what impact he will have but let's hope it will be a positive one.

I hope you find this first edition of the new school year helpful.

Governor Briefings

It was with much regret that our Governors conference, scheduled for last November had to be cancelled. However, as an alternative, Governor Briefings sessions were held within each School Partnership group before Christmas and again in the summer term. We appreciate how busy people are and how difficult it can sometimes be to fit in another meeting, so we were pleased at how many of you attended most of the sessions - so many thanks to all who were able to make them. The feedback we have received has been very positive and so we intend to hold more sessions this year, when hopefully even more governors **and** clerks will be able to attend. The dates and venues for the next scheduled Briefings, are as follows (all 7.00pm - 8.30pm):

13 November	Gloucestershire	St Peter's Primary School, Gloucester
20 November	Samuel	Holy Family Primary School, Swindon
22 November	Emmaus	St George Primary School, Warminster
29 November	Dunstan	St George Primary School, Taunton
4 December	Newman	St Bede's College, Bristol
11 December	Camino	St Mary Primary School, Bath
12 December	Aquinas	St Bernadette Primary School, Bristol.

Please inform us if there are any particular topics or indeed training that you would like to see included at this or any future Briefing.

Department News-letters

When speaking with governors, it is concerning that many of them are still not aware of this, or the other Department newsletters, from Colleen Collett, Ann Fowler and previously Lisa Paniccia-Brown. Please may I again ask that you ensure that all Department newsletters are **always** circulated to all members of the governing body. These newsletters are the Department's way of communicating with stakeholders. Some contain 'Action Points' for governing bodies and leaders to consider. Please would you therefore ensure that the newsletters are a 'standing item' on the agenda for governors meetings and action points are discussed and addressed.

Action Point: Clerks and Chairs to ensure that Department newsletters are always circulated to all members of the governing body and that they, and the Action Points, are a standing item on all meeting agendas as appropriate.

A proposed agenda item for the Autumn meetings is: 'Governing bodies self-evaluation and monitoring'. To assist with planning, please let your Partnership Clerk know if you intend to come.

Action Point: *Please note the Briefing dates and let us know of any specific items you would like to be included.*

Result of Governor Appointment Process Review Consultation

As mentioned in Issue 7, the Mission and Ethos Committee consulted on the application process for governors wishing to stand for another term of office ('renewing governors'). Many thanks to all of you who took part in the consultation and responded to the proposals. The responses were considered by the Committee who decided to recommend to the Clifton Catholic Diocesan Education Foundation (CCDEF) that the following process be applied to **Foundation** Governors seeking to be reappointed, for another term of office on the same governing body, from September 2018:

- ◇ renewing governors complete a different nomination form (from those applying to join a governing body for the first time) that focuses on training undertaken and their contribution to the life of the school
- ◇ a Priest/Deacon is asked to verify Catholic practice
- ◇ the Chair of Governors would be required to complete the last page of the nomination form to summarise the governor's attendance and contribution, and to state if they support a re-appointment or not.

References, other than from the Priest/Deacon, will not be required.

The process for those seeking to be appointed as a Foundation Governor to a school's governing body for the first time, will remain unchanged from the existing process and so two lay people will still be required to provide references to verify skills and experience. However, all **new** Foundation Governors appointed with effect from 1 September 2018 onwards, will, unless there are exceptional circumstances, normally be limited to 3 x terms of office at the same school. This limitation therefore does **not** apply to all those whose **first** term of office at a school was prior to the 31 August 2018, so does **not** affect any existing governor (only the few new governors who have been appointed with effect

from 1 September 2018 onwards for the **first** time).

CCDEF have ratified the new process. This new application process is intended to be more appropriate for renewing governors but still ensures that due diligence is maintained within the process. This does mean that there are now 3 different nomination forms in use and these are as follows:

- ◇ Nomination Form for a New Foundation Governor
- ◇ Renewing Governor Nomination Form
- ◇ Clergy Nomination Form (for both new and renewing Clergy nominations)

These forms are available on our website <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/governance>

and replace all previous versions of the forms. The forms are updated on an on-going basis, so please do not keep hard copies of them but simply access them from our webpage whenever you need one - this will ensure that you are always using the latest versions.

Action Point: *Clerks and governors to be aware of the new application processes and of the new nomination forms and any previous stocks of the forms to be destroyed.*

Non-attendance at Meetings

We obviously appreciate that governors are volunteers with busy lives to lead and so cannot always attend every governor meeting. However, where there is consistent non-attendance at governor meetings, it can unfortunately create problems for the rest of the governing body and sometimes can sadly result in a governor having to be removed from their post. In the DfE statutory guidance for maintained schools it states:

"A person is disqualified from being a governor of a particular school if they have failed to attend the meetings of the governing body of that school for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting they failed to attend, **without the consent of the governing body.**"

It is therefore vital when any apologies for non-attendance are read out at the start of each meeting, they are not just routinely accepted

without any consideration. The reason provided for absence should, (unless it is of a particular confidential nature which the chair must be made aware and recommend acceptance) be read out and those present must decide if the reason is acceptable—if it is not, then the clerk must record that apologies are not accepted. Following this process will ensure that, where necessary, those failing to consistently attend meetings, may be removed from office as appropriate.

Action Point: Clerks to ensure that apologies for any non-attendance at meetings are always read and that the governors present decide if the person is failing to attend without the consent of the governing body.

Training for Clerks and Governors

The Diocese provides a range of courses and various events for pupils, staff and governors throughout the year. For 2018-19 these are all detailed in the Schools and Colleges Department's booklet:

<https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Booklet-of-Courses-2018-19.pdf>

I would like to highlight the '**Governor Induction Training**' courses (first one is on 15 November) on page 30. Whilst it is particularly aimed at new Foundation Governors, it explores what it means to be a Governor of a Catholic school and its distinctive nature. It is therefore extremely valuable for Parent, Staff and LA governors to also attend to support them in their role as a member of a Catholic school governing body. The first **Governor Refresher Training** is on **27 September** (see page 31). All governors who have completed more than one term of office, who have not yet attended a renewal training course are expected to do so.

Similarly, all Clerk to Governors are expected to have attended the '**Induction for Clerks to Governors of Catholic Schools**' training (see page 32) as it provides an understanding of the purpose of Catholic education and differences.

The **Religious Education Link Governors** (see page 29) is a short course for link governors in RE on **6 October**. It will look at recent changes in RE both in terms of curriculum and assessment. It will consider how governors fulfil their role and the evidence they need to have for section 48 inspections.

To book a place on any of these courses, please Contact Graham Tiley at:

graham.tiley@cliftondiocese.com

Action Point: Clerks and governors to contact Graham Tiley to book places on any appropriate courses.

Governance Development Training for Leadership and Clerks

The Catholic Education Service (CES) have informed me that the DfE has procured training for those involved in governance leadership and clerking. Please find below web links to published details about the Governance Leadership Development Programme and the Governance Clerking Development Programme:

Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-governors-professional-development>

Providers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/licensees-professional-development-for-school-governors>

As you will see from the guidance, the leadership training is aimed at those in governance leadership roles, such as chairs and vice chairs or committee chairs. There is also a link to the list of providers who have been contracted by the government to provide the training programmes.

We would encourage anyone wishing to undertake these courses to do so. The CES are keen to ensure that any training provided to our schools and academies is fit for purpose. It would be helpful to receive feedback from anyone who undertakes any of these training programmes. Please provide any observations on the training programmes and materials to Catherine Bryan at the CES

cbryan@catholiceducation.org.uk

Action Point: Governors and clerks to consider attending suitable courses as appropriate.

Clerks Training Template

You may recall that in Issue 6, all Clerks were asked to use the Training Template to record all the training undertaken by Clerks and Governors and to return it to me by the end of the school year. Many thanks to those who have already returned their completed template but please can those Clerks who have not returned their template for **2017-18**, do so by 30 September.

The recording of training is an on-going requirement and please use the **2018-19** training template form to log all training undertaken during the year ahead, ready for the return to be submitted at the end of the school year.

Templates for both 2017-18 and 2018-19 are available at <https://schools.cliftdiocese.com/governance>

Under Go-Governance newsletters

Action Point: Any outstanding 2017-18 Training forms to be returned to bill.mcentee@cliftdiocese.com by 30 September and 2018-19 training to be logged during the year.

New Chairs and Clerks

The start of a new school year often sees a change

to the membership of a governing body, specifically the Chair of Governors and Clerk. To ensure that records are kept up to date and that correspondence is sent to the correct persons, it is vital that any changes (including contact details) are notified to the Diocese and your Local Authority (LA) and that the school entry on GIAS (Get Information About Schools) is updated as quickly as possible. Also, if any Foundation Governors have notified you that they have resigned, (or that they intend to resign), please ensure the 'Resignation Form', available at <https://schools.cliftdiocese.com/governance> is completed and returned to me.

Action Point: Clerks to notify Diocese and LA of any Clerk, Chair or Foundation Governor changes as quickly as possible.

Safeguarding & Safer Recruitment

As you're aware all governing bodies must legally have at least one governor who is responsible for Safeguarding and one for Safer Recruitment.

Please ensure that, if you've not already done so, you have in place at least one governor with responsibility for Safeguarding and one Safer Recruitment (who has qualified for the role by undertaking a Local Authority training course) for the 2018-19 school year. If possible please try to ensure that more than one governor is qualified, to cover for unavailability or a sudden resignation. It is vital that if a designated governor resigns a replacement is found immediately.

It is also vital that the governing body record at the first meeting of the year who the designated Safeguarding Officer for the school is and if they are fully qualified with up to date training.

Action Point: Governing bodies to ensure they have designated governors responsible for safeguarding and safer-recruitment

Updated CES Model Contracts of Employment

The Catholic Education Service model contracts of employment for Catholic schools and academy trust companies have been updated, following consultation with dioceses and national trade unions.

The new versions are available to download via the CES website at the following location: <http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/employment-documents> and should be used by all schools.

Action Point: The new CES model contracts and application forms to be used by schools for all staff appointments.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Security

You may be aware that our Schools & Colleges website was hacked earlier in the year. Apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused but I'm delighted to say that after a lot of work by Jenny Fitzgerald and our IT colleagues, it has now been completely rebuilt and is now fully operational again. Please visit

<https://schools.cliftdiocese.com/>

to access the various resources it contains.

When emailing copies of nomination forms and certificates of appointments to Chairs & Clerks, they have been encrypted with the same password for some time. To avoid any possible breach of GDPR, this password is no longer being used

and all forms & certificates are being encrypted with a higher-level password. So if you receive an encrypted document from us, I'm afraid that you will have to call us for the new password - as passwords must never be sent in an email.

I'm delighted that so many school governors & clerks are now using a school email address account, rather than a personal or work account. I would urge the remaining few that are still using such accounts, to urgently set themselves up with a school based account in order to fulfil data protection legislation.

NB: From 1 October 2018 the Diocese will no longer circulate information to governors and clerks who do not have school email addresses, in order to comply with GDPR regulations.

Action Point: *All governors & clerks to ensure they have and use a school email account.*

Admissions 2020-21

Legislation requires that all governing bodies **must** review their admission arrangements every autumn to decide if they wish to make any changes to them. If after reviewing them, governors decide that they wish to alter them from the 2019-20 arrangements, you must undertake a formal consultation for at least 6 weeks between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2019 - so the last date you can start your consultation is by 19 December 2018.

You may have received from your LA a copy of a document issued in July by the DfE called "**The admission into school of children previously in state care**

outside of England". This document encourages schools to include a new category within their admission arrangements, for Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Whilst the request to include such a category is being made with the best of intentions, the Diocese has decided after consultation with the Catholic Education Service, other Dioceses and Local Authorities, that schools must **not** include it within their admission arrangements, for the following reasons:

- ◇ It may introduce a level of subjectivity which would appear to be contrary to the requirements of the School Admissions Code;
- ◇ It places admission authorities in a very difficult position (particularly when there is no available evidence) and that there is a real possibility that different admission authorities may reach a different conclusion on the basis of the same information;
- ◇ Schools may be more open to legal challenge;
- ◇ It is not a legal requirement to include such a category (and it may never become a legal requirement).

We would of course review the situation and update you should any revised guidance be received, but until further notice, schools must not include any category within their criteria/admission arrangements for Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Please see our updated admissions guidance for 2020-21

[Admissions Guidance](#)

that explains what is required and how to comply with the School Admissions Code.

Action Point: *Governing bodies to review their admission arrangements this autumn.*

Consultation on a Standardised Admission Policy in future Years?

As you are hopefully aware, the Mission and Ethos Committee also consulted on the possible introduction of a common Diocesan admission policy for all schools. Once again, many thanks to all those who took part in the consultation. The responses were considered by the Committee who were in favour of the principle of a standardised admissions policy in the near future. Pri-

or to implementing one, it was decided that a draft proposed policy for primary schools should be distributed, before any final recommendation, would be made to the Clifton Catholic Diocesan Education Foundation. A draft set of standard oversubscription criteria for inclusion in a common policy was compiled in July and circulated to the Partnership Representatives on the Mission & Ethos Committee. Once feedback on this has been received, it will then be considered by the Mission & Ethos committee before deciding if the proposal should proceed any further.

Arrangements for secondary schools may be more complex, so it was decided to wait before any possible common arrangements for primary schools were determined, before any further consideration to the arrangements for secondary schools was considered.

Action Point: Partnership representatives to gather feedback on the proposed possible criteria and report it to Mission and Ethos.

Keeping Children Safe

The DfE have issued new statutory guidance: <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Keeping-Children-Safe-in-Education-Proposed-Revisions.pdf> called 'Keeping Children safe in Education'.

From September 2018, all schools and academies will have to undertake, if they do not already do so, a 'Section 128' check on anyone involved in the fiscal management of a school, as part of their safety checks on all school governors and any management staff. Schools will need to add Section 128 information to their Single Central Record to show that checks have been made from September 2018 onwards.

There are two ways to do this additional Section 128 check:

Option 1: You can ask your Local Authority (or whoever provides your DBS services) to include a Section 128 check as part of a DBS, if they do not already do so. This is a specific role title and setting called: 'Child Workforce Management of Independent School' to add to your role list. This title means the DBS will know to run a Section 128 check as well as the usual DBS enhanced and barring checks. If your school still submits paper applications for a DBS check, you must include on the application form,

within box 61, Position Applied for 'Child Workforce Management of Independent School' as this allows the DBs to confirm if a Section 128 direction has been made.

For maintained schools this might seem a confusing title, therefore the second option is to run a generic existing DBS for a School Governor and then add a separate Section 128 check via the NCTL (explained below).

Option 2: The [National College for Teaching and Leadership](#) (NCTL) Teacher Services, which has secure access for all schools, can run a check on section 128 for individuals which is separate to a DBS. People do not have to be teachers to have this check run on them, any individual can be checked. If you do not have access to this system you can register as a school.

It is good practice for all schools to run a minimum of a 3 yearly re-checks on DBS', and Section 128 if applicable, for existing Governors and staff.

Action Point: Schools to undertake Section 128 checks to comply with statutory guidance.

Foundation Governor Guidance

The Clifton Diocese 'A Guide for Foundation Governors' has been updated. It provides helpful advice on the roles and duties of governors, key areas of Governance, Bishops' Conference & Diocesan requirements and other useful information to help all governors.

<https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/A-Guide-for-Foundation-Governors-updated-August-2018.pdf>

Action Point: Governors and Clerks to read the guidance.

ACADEMIES

Finance

The ESFA has issued the 'Academies financial handbook 2018' https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/714474/Academies_Financial_Handbook_2018.pdf

which came into effect on 1 September 2018. Academy governors with responsibility for finance should obviously be familiar with this new document. In particular, please note the details of '2.3 Financial Planning and monitoring' that now stipulates :

"Management accounts must also be shared with the chair of trustees every month irrespective of the size of the trust, and with the other trustees six times a year. The board must consider these when it meets."

Action Point: *Governors to ensure compliance with the requirements of the new handbook.*

New Chair?

May I remind all academies that when a new Chair is elected, that in addition to updating GIAS (Getting Information about Schools) and informing the Diocese & LA, you also need to ensure that the new chair completes a 'Deed of Adherence' to confirm that they will comply with the terms of the original Members Agreement of the academy. This is a legal requirement so must not be ignored. Please let me know if you require a copy of the Deed of Adherence form.

New Academy Chairs who already hold a valid, enhanced DBS certificate, counter-signed by the DfE, must submit it with a signed declaration to due.dilligence@education.gov.uk If new Chairs do not already hold this certificate, dated within the last two years, they must complete both an enhanced DBS application form and verification of identity to the DfE. Please follow this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identity-verification-for-new-chairs-of-trustees>

Action Point: *Any new Chair of Governors to complete and return a Deed of Adherence and enhanced DBS Certificate as soon as possible.*

Legal Document Returns

It is also a legal requirement that every year Members, Directors (Governors) and senior academy staff, complete a signed Declaration of Related Party Interests and a Fit and Proper Persons return. Each Academy should produce its own forms to be individually signed by each relevant person. Governors should liaise with their School Business Managers to ensure this task is completed annually.

Action Point: *All appropriate people make a signed declaration of Related Party Interests and a Fit and Proper Persons return.*

Annual General Meetings (AGM)

The AGMs of Academies for 2018 will take place on 6 and 7 December 2018 in Alexander House. The schedule of the times and **dates of each Academy's AGM**, attended by Bishop Declan, has already been circulated.

The AGMs of 2019 will take place on **5 and 6 December 2019**. Please note the dates in your diaries to avoid any clashes with Nativity plays, which has happened to some schools in the past.

Action Point: *AGM dates to be noted in diaries.*

Next Issue

If there are any issues, or indeed celebratory items, you would like to see included in any future issue, please just let me know.

I hope you have an enjoyable and rewarding 2018-19 school year.

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