



Go-Governance

A Newsletter for Governors and Clerks

**A FUTURE
FULL OF HOPE**
CLIFTON DIOCESE

Introduction

Welcome to this post-Easter edition of *Go-Governance* that I hope you'll find helpful. I hope you've had a refreshing break.

Bishop Declan's Year of Prayer



As I'm sure you're aware, Bishop Declan has declared 2019 to be a special Year of Prayer for all our parishes and schools.

Sent with this newsletter, you will find a copy of a letter sent by the Bishop to all Head Teachers. This letter contains information about the Year of Prayer and some of the special events that are being held for it. Please could you strongly encourage your schools to support these events.

Consideration Point: *Governors to consider how they can encourage their schools to support the Year of Prayer.*

New DfE Guidance

The Department of Education (DfE) has recently issued some guidance on various issues; these include:

i) a new *Governance handbook* for schools, academies and multi academy trusts

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788234/governance_handbook_2019.pdf

ii) advice on school appeals, which is important for those involved in preparing and/or presenting appeals against admission

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/admission-appeals-for-school-places/advice-for-admission-authorities-on-school-admission-appeals>

iii) As previously advised updated guidance (for maintained schools only) on Schools complaints procedures, including model procedures for dealing with complaints and also a model policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures>

iv) As indicated by the DfE, if you've not already done so, schools should update their procedures to include where a grievance or complaint has been made against a governor. The Catholic Edu-

cation Service provide a model grievance policy for schools <http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/employment-documents/model-policies-and-procedures/itemlist/category/78-england-academies>

Action Point: *Governors to consider DfE guidance and update policies and procedures as appropriate.*

A new guide for Clerks to Governors!

In addition to our Diocesan guide for Foundation Governors, we have produced our first 'A Guide for Clerks to Governors' booklet to help support our Clerks in their vital role. This easy to read guide, covers the requirements of Clerking at a Catholic School and is for both new and experienced Clerks in our Diocese.

Please visit <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/governance> and click on the 'Diocesan Guidance' tab to view your copy.

Action Point: *Clerks to read the new guide.*

Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) Certificates for Governors

As you're no doubt aware it is a legal requirement that all governors have a satisfactory enhanced DBS certificate. Bishop Declan appoints all Foundation Governors (except where they are appointed by a Religious or Charitable Order), therefore he carries the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the required certificate has been obtained and the Chairs of Governors at each school is responsible for ensuring that all DBS records are up to date. Failure to have obtained DBS clearance is also an OFSTED failure point. For these reasons, when notifying new governors of their appointment, we now ask Clerks to confirm

that the DBS clearance has been obtained within 4 weeks of the appointment date.

In common with others within the voluntary sector, it is Diocesan policy that DBS clearance is renewed every 3 years and so for those being appointed for another term of office, Clerks are asked to confirm that the governor has obtained the required clearance. Clerks will be prompted to provide the confirmation when they receive a copy of the email confirming each appointment. Schools must ensure that DBS clearance is obtained for all categories of governors.

We do appreciate that it is not the responsibility of the Clerk to undertake the DBS checks. However, it is part of the Clerk's role to ensure that a governing body is legally compliant in this regard. We're sorry for any inconvenience that providing this confirmation may cause, (we just need an email, not a copy or number of a certificate) but hope you understand the reasons for requiring it.

Action Point: *Chairs to ensure governors have DBS clearance every 3 years and Clerks to provide confirmation of it to the diocese when prompted.*

Briefings sessions for Governors & Clerks - Summer 2019

Just a reminder that the dates & venues for our Briefing sessions for the summer term have all been set as follows (all from 7.00-8.30pm except Emmaus):

- Samuel:** 13 May - Holy Family Primary, Swindon
- Camino:** 22 May - St Gregory's College, Bath
- Emmaus:** 13 June - St George Primary, Warminster (6.15 - 7.45pm)
- Dunstan:** 19 June - St Joseph's Primary, Bridgwater

Newman: 26 June - St Bede's College, Bristol

Gloucestershire: 3 July -

St Mary's Primary, Churchdown

Aquinas: 10 July - St Brendan's Sixth Form College, Bristol.

Whilst a session has been arranged within each Partnership Group, you are welcome to attend whichever session is most convenient for you.

Many thanks to those who have suggested topics to be discussed at the Briefings. An agenda will be circulated in the near future. To avoid having to bombard Chairs & Clerks with emails, please could **every governor** let their Clerk to Governors know as soon as possible if they are likely to be attending a Briefing this summer term and then please can each **Clerk** inform me of the numbers (not names) attending from their school, no later than 14 days before the Briefing date for your particular Partnership. Your cooperation with this would be greatly appreciated and would help the host school with their preparations.

Action Point: *Governors to inform their Clerks if they will be attending and Clerks to inform me via bill.mcentee@cliftondiocese.com no later than 14 days before the date of the Briefing for your Partnership.*

Updated Recruitment Documents

The Catholic Education Service (CES) recently completed a review of the model recruitment documents and guidance, including the model application forms, for schools to use when recruiting staff. The following updated documents can now be found on the CES website.

A) Model Recruitment Documents & Guidance:

<http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/recruitment-process/item/1000051-model-recruitment-documents-guidance>

- 1) Applicant's Declaration
- 2) Model checklist of evidence obtained at interview
- 3) CES Guidance employment references
FAQs
- 4) Application Forms - Notes to Applicants
- 5) CES Model Application Forms and GDPR Compliance Guidance Note
- 6) Recruitment Monitoring Form
- 7) Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 - Disclosure Form
- 8) Consent to Obtain References Form
- 9) Disqualification Guidance
- 10) Disqualification Policy
- 11) Equality Act 2010 - Reasonable Adjustments Statement
- 12) Model Invitation to Interview Letter
- 13) Guidance for Governors - Recruitment
- 14) Memorandum on Appointment of Teachers

B) Model Application Forms:

<http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/recruitment-process/item/1000042-model-application-forms>

- 1) Model Application Form - Support Staff
- 2) Model Application Form - Teacher
- 3) Model Application Form - Senior Leadership
- 4) Model Application Form - Lay Chaplain

Action Point: *All schools to use the new model documents*

Congratulations Kim!

Many congratulations to Kim Downer of St Osmund's Primary School in Salisbury for becoming the first Local Leader of Governance (LLG) in the Diocese - very well done indeed Kim! Two other governors are also undertaking the LLG programme. Kim has kindly provided the following article about her experience:



'Following the article in the February issue of the Go-Governance Newsletter, I was approached by Clare Farrow, Chair of the Emmaus Partnership Group to apply to become an LLG. It was a robust but straightforward process which was useful in reflecting on my experience and skills in governance. The process was in three steps:

- ◇ *completing an application form, giving evidence of my experience in governance leading to school improvement and supplying two references from our Headteacher and another person who knows my governance practice well.*
- ◇ *a telephone call from an NLG (National Leader of Governance), to explore more deeply my application and provide more insight into my experiences.*
- ◇ *An induction day with other applicants from around the region, which was well structured and practical.*

The whole process was a positive experience and the induction day gave confidence that there is a growing support network of highly experienced governors and those with clerking experience who can help in fulfilling this important role.

I am now one of a group of 23 new Local Leaders of Governance who can be called upon by schools to support governing bodies in the South West Region. My wish is to support Catholic schools and I hope that the number of LLG's will grow within the Diocese so that all our schools are well supported.

If you have 3 years' experience in effective Governance leading to school improvement, of which 2 are in a charring role, I would encourage you to apply. It is a rewarding process with extensive training opportunities. I have already booked onto a coaching course and a review of pupil premium course and hope to enrol on an external review of governance course in the future. [There is a minimum commitment of 35 hours of governance support per year.](#)

To learn more about the role in the South West, visit <https://www.cpdportal-sw.org/index.php/governance-and-leadership>

If you need the support of an LLG you may request it via <https://www.cpdportal-sw.org/> > find support>search by designation

or if you know the name of the LLG you can search for them on the site and send a request by clicking 'request NLG/LLG support' at the bottom of the page. In case of difficulty, please contact the Project Manager Julia Steward at jsteward@tscouncil.org.uk

Kim Downer

Chair of Governors, St Osmund's Catholic Primary School

Consideration Point: Experienced governors to consider joining the LLG programme.

Academies

Article 45A of the Articles of Association for all of our academies, states:

"All Governors shall upon their appointment or election give a written under

taking to the Diocesan Education Trustees and the Diocesan Bishop to uphold the Object of the Academy Trust.”

This is a legal requirement but many of our Academy governors have yet to provide a written undertaking. To make this easy, there is a simple undertaking statement on our website <https://schools.cliftdiocese.com/governance> - just click on the 'Recruitment' tab. Any academy governor that has not already done so, should ensure they sign the undertaking, pass it to their Clerk who should then submit it to the Diocese, as soon as possible.

Action Point: Undertaking forms to be signed as appropriate and submitted by Clerks to bill.mcentee@cliftdiocese.com as soon as possible

Next Issue

Many thanks to Kim for her contribution to this newsletter.

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

As always, thank you for your continued support and commitment.

Bill

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