



Department for Schools and Colleges

## Go-Governance - a newsletter for Governors and Clerks

Issue 13 - September 2019

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### Introduction

Welcome to the first edition of *Go-Governance* of this school year. Since the end of the last year, we now have a new Prime Minister and a new Secretary of State for Education - so who knows what other changes the new school year will bring! I hope you have had a refreshing break and feel ready to face the year ahead.

### 1) Teachers - ideal governors!

As you're no doubt aware, there is a national shortage of governors and many of our schools do not have their full complement. We think teachers would often make ideal governors at a **different** school to where they teach and you may be aware that the National Governance Association (NGA), have launched the 'Educators on Board' campaign to encourage teachers to consider becoming governors. The NGA campaign states:

*“Governing boards must have a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience – including that of education professionals – in order to be effective. Teachers, middle leaders and senior leaders can make a valuable contribution to the governing board of a different school/ trust (to where they are employed).”*

## **What are the benefits?**

### **i) To a governing board:**

- *Getting someone with education expertise and experience on your board can help you in effectively supporting and challenging executive leaders*
- *You can benefit from someone who brings ideas and insight from a different phase, type of school or area*
- *Their specialist skills may include data analysis, teaching and learning, SEND, curriculum, safeguarding and more which can add value*

### **ii) To a governing board as the employer:**

- *When considering succession planning to senior or executive leader positions, you will benefit from having candidates who have experience of strategic leadership and working with a board*
- *As the employer, you should create a culture where staff are enabled and given time to govern in another school – it is an important part of their professional development and they will bring back what they learn*
- *Experiencing governance will help to create a more governance-literate staff who understand the role of a governing board*

### **iii) To the educationalist/teacher**

*There are enormous professional development benefits to doing so. Governing in a different school provides valuable experience of strategic leadership including finance and human resources for aspiring leaders whilst teachers can utilise and grow their skills and experience in a different context.*

We would ask governing bodies to discuss this within their Partnership Groups and to encourage their own Catholic teachers to consider becoming a Foundation Governor at another Catholic school (applying via the Diocese) and also other teachers to join other schools (via 'Inspiring Governance')

<https://www.inspiringgovernance.org/educators-on-board/>

We have asked all parishes in the diocese, to include an article in Church newsletters during September, encouraging Catholic teachers who work at Catholic or non-Catholic schools, to become Foundation Governors at our schools.

## 2 -Code of Conduct

Just a reminder that governors should adopt a code of conduct which sets out the purpose of their governing body and describes the appropriate relationship between individual governors, the whole governing body and the leadership team of the school. If you've not already done so, please ensure that all members sign a Code of Conduct for your school as soon as possible and at the start of each subsequent school year and that you use the model Code of Conduct provided by the Catholic Education Service, for both schools and academies

<http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/guidance-for-schools/governance/item/1003629-codes-of-conduct-for-governors-and-directors>

## 3 - Admission Arrangements for 2021-22

The proposed common admissions policy for all **primary** schools, was determined by Clifton Catholic Diocesan Education Foundation (Chaired by Bishop Declan) on 2 July. As legislation requires that schools need to consult in order to implement new arrangements, **all** primary schools will need to undertake a formal consultation this year.

The policy, along with a step-by-step guide to the consultation process, has been circulated to schools (at the end of August) in time for you to undertake your consultation within the legal time-frame. As explained in the step-by-step guide, the consultation must take place from 21 October to 9 December 2019.

Any **secondary** school proposing to make changes to their arrangements, must also undertake a formal consultation.

The School Admissions Code requires schools to have regard for guidance issued by the Diocese and we have posted updated separate admissions guidance for both primary and secondary schools (and the School Admissions Code) at <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/governance> - just click on the 'Admissions' tab.

## 4 -Training Courses for 2019-20

As previously advised, our CPD booklet <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Booklet-of-Courses-2019-20.pdf> detailing the various

events and training for 2019-20, is now available. Whilst the Induction & Refresher Governor sessions, are specifically aimed at Foundation Governors, they are of benefit for **all** categories of governors. **If you are a Parent, Staff, Local Authority or Co-Opted Governor, with little or much experience, we would love to see you at one of these sessions.** The next one is on 26 September.

I'm delighted that so many Clerks have already booked a place at one of the two training sessions for Clerks (see page 28). Please reserve your place, if you'd like to join them.



Please use the simple online booking form to reserve your place on any of the appropriate course(s).

## **5 - Clerks Training Template 2018-19 and 2019-20**

Please could any Clerk who has not yet returned their Training Template with brief details of all training undertaken by Clerks & Foundation Governors during the last school year, do so by 30 September. This is important in order for us to be assured that our schools governing bodies are effective.

Please also log all the training undertaken during 2019-20, so that you may also submit the next return at the end of this school year. The Training Template forms for both 2018-19 and 2019-20 are available at

<https://schools.cliftdiocese.com/governance> just click on the 'Go-Governance Newsletters' tab.

## 6 - Free online training for Governors & Clerks

The DfE has expanded its free **online** leadership training programme for governors and clerks. For further details of what is on offer and how it may benefit you and your school, please visit

<https://entrust-ed.com/2N6Y-1FUNP-AA4YFODUD2/cr.aspx>

## 7 - New Chairs & Clerks and leaving governors

In order to ensure that our records are kept up to date and that correspondence is sent to the correct persons, please ensure that any changes (including contact details) of Chair or Clerk are notified to the Diocese and your Local Authority (LA) as quickly as possible. Clerks should use the 'Resignation Form', available at <https://schools.cliftodiocese.com/governance> (click on the 'Recruitment' Tab) to advise of any Foundation Governor resignations.

## 8 -Virtual attendance at meetings

To ensure effective governance, it is obviously vital to have the maximum number of governors present at meetings. Meeting attendance is also part of OfSTED inspections, so high attendance figures are very important. We appreciate that various factors, such as work/family commitments may sometimes make it difficult for governors to attend a meeting. In such circumstances, it may be helpful for attendance to be via modern technology, by use of video or telephone conferencing etc. (but not via email). In order to do so, schools must have (if they have not already got one) a 'Virtual Attendance' policy that covers how & when virtual attendance would be acceptable, how much notice would be needed, security/privacy etc.



## 9 - Education Mass 22 October 7pm Clifton Cathedral

This year the mass, in celebration of The Year of Prayer, will focus on the work of schools during this Year and we will be joined by members of the Missio Executive Team. We hope that all schools will be represented and will be able to bring with them either a cheque for the money they have raised for Missio or a reminder of the work they did in support of Missio (Mission Together for Primary). We will also be welcoming back into the Cathedral our pilgrimage cross which will have completed its journey around the Diocese.

During the Mass there will be an opportunity for all governors, staff and chaplains to renew their commitment to Catholic education. Refreshments will be available afterwards in the Apostles room. All members of the school community, including parents and pupils are invited to attend. We realise that this is a difficult journey for many of you, but we hope that as many of you as possible, will be able come together to celebrate

## 10 - Foundation Governor Nomination Forms

The new governor, renewing governor and clergy nomination forms are all now available in an 'interactive' PDF format, so may be completed electronically or printed and completed by hand. This also applies to Interview Record and Resignation forms. The latest versions of all our forms are always available from our website <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/governance> just click on the 'Recruitment' tab. It is hoped to reintroduce an online application service, later in the school year.

## 11 - Time to apply for a Reception place for 2020-21

We want to try to ensure that parents of children who are due to start school, apply for a place at the right time. Every year some parents unfortunately miss the closing date or forget to provide their child's baptism certificate and so risk missing out on a place at a Catholic school. Please would you therefore kindly help parents, by including the following notice, or something similar, in all your newsletters to parents and on your school website, from now until 15 January 2020:

**Starting School?** If you have a child born between **1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016**, then **now** is the time to apply for a place at our school for admission from September 2020 onwards. You must complete an application

form that is available from the school admissions team of the **[INSERT NAME OF YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL(S)]** Local Authority. If your child is a baptised Catholic\*, you **must** also provide a copy of the baptism certificate to the school, even if you already have a child attending our school. Please ensure you apply by the closing date of **15 January 2020**.

*\*NB if your 2020-21 admissions policy includes a category for other (non-Catholic) Christian children, then just amend it to read 'Catholic/Christian.'*

I have asked all Parish Priests to include a similar notice in parish newsletters.

## **ACADEMIES ONLY**

### **12a) Undertakings**

Thank you to the Clerks who have returned the Undertakings for all their governors. If you have not yet submitted the Undertakings for your governors, there is a simple undertaking statement for your use on our website <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/governance> - just click on the 'Recruitment' tab to see it. 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. Please would Clerks collate the undertakings for all governors and then just scan & email them to me. **This is a legal requirement, so new governors will no longer be able to start their appointment until their Undertaking has been received by the Diocese.**

### **12b) New DfE Model Documentation**

As you are aware, the Department for Education has agreed with the Catholic Education Service new model documents (Articles of Association, Supplementary Agreement) for academies. The Diocese has engaged our Solicitors to start the process for our academies to convert to these new documents. Whilst an exact completion date is not known, it is hoped the process will be finalised in time for the Academy AGMs on 5 & 6 December 2019.

## 12c) Academy Annual General Meetings

The 2019 Academy AGMs with Bishop Declan have been set, as below. Please keep the date for your school's AGM free.

<b>ACADEMIES AGM THURSDAY 5/12/19</b>	AGM time
St Augustine's College, Trowbridge	9.30am
St Peter's High, Gloucester	10.00
St Patrick's Primary, Bristol	10.30
<b>Break</b>	11.00
St Nicholas of Tolentine Primary, Bristol	11.30
St Joseph's College, Swindon	12.00pm
Holy Cross Primary, Swindon	12.30
<b>Lunch</b>	1.00
St Catherine's, Swindon	1.30
St Mary's Primary, Swindon	2.00
St Bede's College, Bristol	2.30
<b>ACADEMIES AGM FRIDAY 6/12/19</b>	
Holy Rood Primary, Swindon	9.30am
St Dominic's Primary, Stroud	10.00
St Mary's Primary, Churchdown	10.30
<b>Break</b>	11.00
St Edmund's Primary, Calne	11.30
St Joseph's Primary, Devizes	12.00pm
The Rosary Primary, Stroud	12.30
<b>Lunch</b>	1.00
St Teresa's Primary, Bristol	1.30
Holy Family Primary, Swindon	2.00

## Summary of Consideration & Action Points



- 1)** *Governing bodies to discuss within partnerships and to encourage their own staff to consider becoming a governor at a different school.*
- 2)** *Governing bodies to adopt a CES Code of Conduct.*
- 3)** *Primary school Governors to formally consult on common admission arrangements from 21 October to 9 December 2019. Secondary schools to consult if proposing any changes.*
- 4)** *All Governors & Clerks to consider the various events in the CPD booklet and book places, as appropriate.*
- 5)** *Any outstanding training templates to be submitted to [bill.mcentee@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:bill.mcentee@cliftondiocese.com) by 30 September 2019 and a log to be kept during the 2019-20 school year.*
- 6)** *Governors & Clerks to consider accessing free online training service.*
- 7)** *Clerks to notify Diocese and LA of any Clerk, Chair or Foundation Governor changes as quickly as possible.*
- 8)** *Governors to consider adopting a Virtual Attendance policy.*
- 9)** *Governors to consider attending the Education Mass.*
- 10)** *The updated nomination forms to be used when required.*
- 11)** *Schools to promote the need to apply for a Reception place in parent newsletters.*

## 12) Academies only:

- a) Undertaking forms to be signed as appropriate and submitted by Clerks to [bill.mcentee@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:bill.mcentee@cliftondiocese.com) by 30 September.
- b) Diocese to provide updated documents by December 2019.
- c) Governors to note AGM dates.

## Next Issue

If you have any feedback or 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, many thanks for all that you do and best wishes for the year ahead

Bill

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