



Department for Schools and Colleges

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

Issue 16 - May 2020

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### Introduction

Welcome to the latest edition of the *Go-Governance* newsletter. I sincerely hope you and your loved ones are keeping in good health and are coping well with the lockdown situation.

### 1) Essentials for Governors

Recent general advice has, understandably, been for governing bodies to focus on supporting Heads in running their schools in these most challenging of circumstances and so for governing body meetings to focus only on essential matters. Well, what are these essential matters?

The South West Commissioners of Governors Services (SWCOGS) is a group of governor service providers, made of representatives from various Local Authorities, Dioceses and private providers in the region. At our latest meeting, we discussed what could be the essential matters, the 'non-negotiables' that governors should be dealing with before the end of the summer term and came-up with the following list. You may well already have them covered, but you may see something you may have missed:

- Budgets (for maintained schools) must be submitted to LA (some LAs may be allowing a later date for their submission e.g. 31 May)

- Safeguarding Audit return to LA - must be submitted by whatever date a LA normally requires them.
- Questions to be asked of how the school is ensuring the safeguarding on pupils, for those currently in school and those at home
- Any statutory policies, depending on schools on policy schedule.
- Headteacher Performance Management (Gloucestershire LA have shared the attached 'Guidance for mid-year reviews HTPM' paper)
- Monitoring of Head's work-life balance (but with a flexible approach)
- New Relationships Education (primary) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) (secondary) and Health (primary and secondary) curriculum due to be taught from September. Need to consult with parents, if not already done so.
- Admissions Policies for 2021-22 on website & circulated (if not already done)
- Temporary contracts/Fixed term contracts/redundancy - these are HR issues; however, GBs may need to ask the question regarding staffing for September
- Early Years baseline - no guidance yet as to whether this will be postponed.
- Admissions Policies for 2021-22 on website & circulated (if not already done)
- Meetings must continue (remotely)
- Recruitment, may need to continue for a Head or Principal, however it is a big decision to make virtually - in some schools they are looking partnership arrangement with another school (under contract) or an interim arrangement (someone stepping up to the role), up to April 2021.
- Pupil Premium spend report and the Sports Premium spend report (Primary Schools)

## 2) Recovery Plan – schools reopening

Oxfordshire County Council has produced the attached 'Recovery Plan 1 - things to think about' paper. It's a list of questions that governors may like to discuss with their SLTs, for when planning to reopen schools. It was written before the Prime Minister's announcements on 8 May and provides some 'food for thought' that you will hopefully find helpful.

## 3 - Education Mass

The annual Education Mass has been rescheduled for Tuesday 10 November 2020 at Ss Peter and Paul Cathedral, Bristol at 7.00pm. It will be celebrated by Bishop Declan and is especially for all those involved in education, in anyway in the Diocese. Please keep the date in your diary if you would to attend - you'd be most welcome.

## 4 - Saint Corona - Pray for us

I was surprised to learn that there is a Saint Corona and that she is a patron Saint of pandemics.

### *Prayer to St. Corona in a Time of Epidemic*

*Lord Jesus Christ, You came into this world for our salvation. Look kindly on us now, we pray, that we, and all those who serve You, might be kept safe from this epidemic.*

*Heal those who are sick, comfort the suffering, bring back those who have gone astray, and above all, increase our faith, O Lord.*

*Give us the grace to follow You and, like the martyr St. Corona, who gave her life for love of You, to take up our crosses daily without fear or hesitation.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us and on the whole world.*

*St. Corona, patroness of epidemic victims, pray for us.*

## Next Issue

As always, many thanks for all that you're doing to support our schools, but particularly so at these most challenging of times. As I'm still working from home, please email or call my mobile number below, if you need to contact me.

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