

Department for Schools and Colleges

Go-Governance - a newsletter for Governors and Clerks

Issue 22 - June 2021

Introduction

I hope you have been able to enjoy some of the nice weather we have been having recently and are all ready for the final term of the school year.

1) Prepare for the new School Admissions Code

As mentioned in the last edition of *Go-Governance*, the Government is introducing some alterations to the School Admissions Code, that are to be implemented from 1 September 2021. For a copy of the new Code (dated May 2021) please visit:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/989176/School_admission_code_2021_slip.pdf

To help schools prepare for September, the Catholic Education Service (CES) has produced the '**Summary of Changes and Potential Actions Required**' guidance document. It is attached to this newsletter. We advise you use this very helpful guide to help ensure you are fully compliant with the new Code in September. Some of the major changes to the Code include the following:

- ❖ all schools **must** vary their admission policies, for both 2021-22 and 2022-23, to include provision for children who appear to have been previously Looked After abroad. I have already sent to all Heads & Chairs, guidance on how to vary your policies and the related DfE advice,

in order to be compliant. Please remember that no other changes to admissions policies are legally permissible.

- ❖ Schools **must** notify parents of the outcome of In-Year applications within 15 school days at the latest. Whilst 15 days is longer than was proposed, the Code says that schools should **aim** to notify parents within 10 days. I would therefore recommend that a meeting of your admissions committee is scheduled for every 10 days from early September to ensure that all In-Year applicants can be notified within the legally required deadlines. To help ensure that at least 3 x members will always be present to make decisions, please consider increasing the number of members on the admissions committee.
- ❖ Schools **must** notify their local authority (LA) of every In-Year application and its outcome as soon as is reasonably practicable but should aim to be within two school days. This is to allow the LA to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area and to ensure they are aware of any children who may not have a school place.
- ❖ The common admissions policies of our primary schools specify (for September 2021 onwards), schools will process their own In-Year applications. All primary schools **must** therefore inform their local authority **by 1 October** (but please do so immediately) that they will **not** be part of their LA in-year co-ordination scheme for the period to 31 August 2022 (where this is offered). In all subsequent years, schools must inform the LA by 1 August at the latest each year. Secondary schools will need to advise their LA, if their admissions policies state that In-Year applications go to the school, rather than their LA.
- ❖ Schools must set out on the school's website **by 31 October 2021** how in-year applications will be dealt with from the 1 November 2021 until 31 August 2022. In all subsequent years, they must set out by 31 August at the latest each year, on the school's website how in-year applications will be dealt with from the 1 September until the following 31 August.
- ❖ Decisions for Fair Access Protocol (FAP) placements **must** be made within 20 school days and that FAP decisions **can** be delegated to an individual.

In addition to these changes, there are many other ones that schools need to be aware of, so please read all of the CES guidance document.

2) Clerking Handbook

The National Commissioners of *Governors Services* (NCOGS) has produced a 'Clerking Handbook - a practical guide for governing board clerks in maintained and academy schools'. I have attached a copy of it and it is free to all Clerks - I hope Clerks finds it a useful tool to support them and governors in their vital roles.

3) Catholic Education Service (CES)

As I am sure you are aware the Catholic Education Service provides excellent legal guidance to all Bishops, Dioceses and schools in England & Wales. The CES website, that has valuable resources including model employment contracts, Codes of Conduct, RSE training, etc. etc. now has a new website address <http://catholiceducation.org.uk/> You may like to save this to your 'favourites'.

4) Academy Matters

i) Undertakings

I recently asked the Clerks of our academies to arrange for any governor who has not yet signed the 'undertaking to uphold the Objective of the academy', to do so. This produced a great response, and a signed undertaking form has now been received from almost every academy governor - so please may I say a big THANK YOU for your assistance with this. I am just waiting for the final few outstanding signed undertaking forms to arrive - so if you have received a prompt but have not yet responded to it, please could you submit a signed undertaking form -this is a legal requirement for all categories of governors at academies so please submit it as quickly as possible.

ii) PSC return

You may recall from previous years that it is a legal requirement that all academies must maintain a 'Person of Significant Control (PSC) Register' (including Bishop Declan and your Chair of Governors) and are legally obliged to deliver the information annually to the central public register at Companies House when making a Confirmation Statement.

The actual return date is different for each individual academy (although it appears to be 14 days after the anniversary date of your incorporation), so each

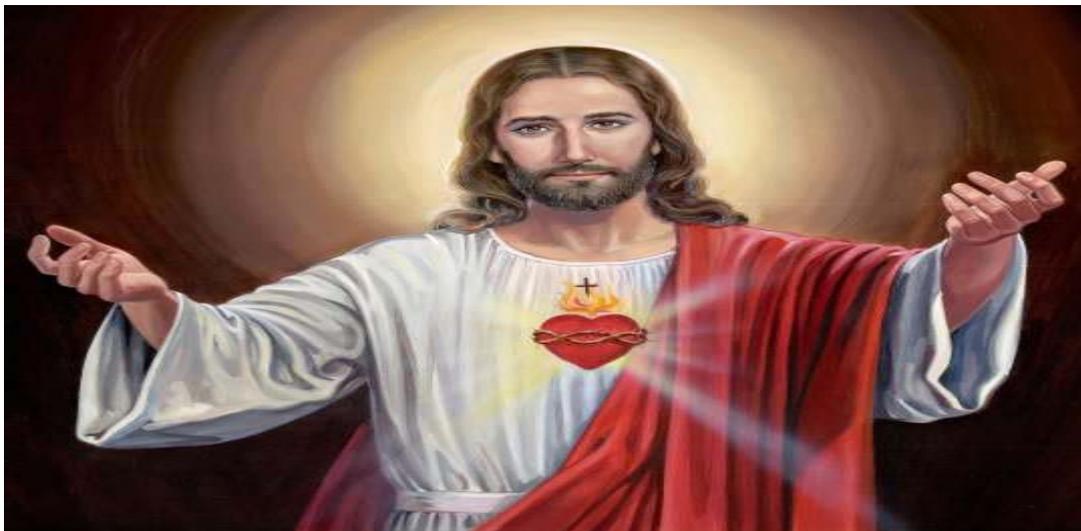
academy will need to check their page on the Companies House website under the heading of 'Confirmation statement' for the next statement due date to see when they must make their own submission. Chairs should liaise with their School Business Manager to ensure your return is made on-time.

Prayer

The gratitude prayer of St Richard of Chichester (Feast celebrated on 16 June):

**Thanks be to you, my lord, Jesus Christ, For all the benefits that you have given me;
For all the pains and insults you have borne for me.**

**O, most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
May I know you more clearly;
Love you more dearly;
And follow you more nearly.**



Next Issue

Please just let me know if you would like anything included in the next issue. As I am mainly working from home, please email or call my mobile number below, if you need to contact me.

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