

Department for Schools and Colleges

Go-Governance - a newsletter for Governors and Clerks

Issue 25 - January 2022

Introduction

Welcome to the second edition of *Go-Governance* of this school year. I sincerely hope you had a happy and holy Christmas and have been unaffected by Covid19.

1) Associate Members

The School Governance Regulations allow maintained schools to appoint 'Associate Members' and we are aware that some of our governing bodies take advantage of this option. However, care must be taken to ensure that their appointments comply with legislation. They are often incorrectly referred to (including on some school websites) as 'Associate **Governors**' which can cause confusion concerning their responsibilities. The DfE guidance states:

"Associate members are appointed by the governing body to serve on one or more governing body committee. They may also attend full governing body meetings. They are not governors and therefore do not have a vote in governing body decisions but may be given a vote on decisions made by committees to which they are appointed. Associate members should be appointed because of the specific expertise and experience they can contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. Subject to the disqualifications set out in the 2012 Constitution

Regulations, the governing body may appoint a pupil, school staff member, or any other person as an associate member so that they can contribute their specific expertise. This can help to address specific gaps identified in the skills of governing body members, and/or help the governing body respond to particular challenges that they may be facing."

It is important to be aware that Associate Members:

- Must be issued with a copy of the School's Instrument of Government
- Can chair committees and vote in committee meetings (if it's been agreed by the governing board, and the member is over 18)
- Cannot cast deciding votes in a committee if the vote is evenly split
- Cannot be elected as the chair or vice-chair of the governing board
- May be excluded from any part of a meeting where the business being considered concerns a member of school staff or an individual pupil
- Are appointed for a period between 1 and 4 years and can be reappointed at the end of their term
- Are subject to the same laws concerning disqualification etc. as governors, so the rules concerning attendance at FGB meetings also applies to them e.g., they are disqualified if they do not attend FGB meetings for 6 months without the permission of the FGB.
- May be removed from office by the governing body at any time.

Governing bodies that have Associate Members should ensure that their websites accurately record their Associate Members and that they comply with the above, to avoid any legal problems.

2) DfE Governance Updates

The latest news and communications from the Department for Education (DfE) relating to schools is available from

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-governance-update>

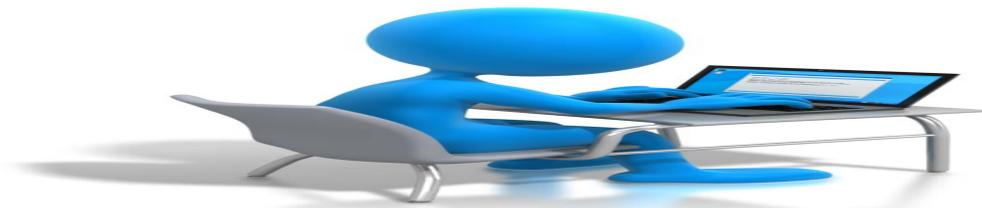
3) - Diocesan Training

Forthcoming training sessions for Governors and Clerks are scheduled as follows:

- ❖ **Refresher for Experienced Governors** - Saturday 30 April - 10.00-11.30am
- ❖ **Clerks to Governors** - Tuesday 8 February - 9.30 - 11.00am
- ❖ **Induction for New Governors** - Saturday 5 March - 10.00 - 11.30am
- ❖ **Induction for New Governors** - Thursday 9 June - 6.30 - 8.00pm

These sessions will be held virtually, via Microsoft Teams, so you can attend from your home. The Refresher and Induction sessions are both open to **all** governors, of any category and it has been wonderful to welcome Parent, Staff & LA governors, in addition to Foundation, at our recent sessions. As a requirement of appointment, Bishop Declan expects governors to attend training, so please would experienced governors who have not attended the **Refresher** session since being reappointed, and any new governors who have not yet attended the **Induction** session, make every effort to attend a session.

Just complete the online booking form to reserve your place at any session <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/courses>



4) - Online Training

In partnership with the Catholic Education Service and the Catholic Teaching Schools Alliance, Formatio have designed a portfolio of online training for the induction and development of governors in Catholic schools. This service has been expanded and now includes the following modules:

- ❖ An introduction to Catholic education (30 mins)
- ❖ **The environment of Catholic education (30 mins)**
- ❖ Strategic direction (45 mins)
- ❖ **Accountability (45 mins)**
- ❖ Financial probity (30 mins)

These modules are free and open to all governors and clerks - please take advantage of them. Just visit <https://formatio.org.uk/e-learning> for further details.

5 - Multi Academy Trust to be formed

As many of you will be aware, six of our Primary Schools in Somerset have been going through the legal stages of forming a Multi Academy Trust. Following a consultation process, I can announce that the '**Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust**' will, subject to completion of all the legal processes, officially open on 1 March 2022 with Helen Taylor as the appointed Chief Executive Officer. The Trust will consist of:

- ❖ Corpus Christi Primary, Weston-super-Mare
- ❖ St Joseph's Primary & Nursery, Burnham-on Sea
- ❖ St Joseph's Primary, Bridgwater
- ❖ St Gildas Primary, Yeovil
- ❖ Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary, Wincanton
- ❖ St Joseph and St Teresa Primary, Wells.

We wish all the governors, staff and of course, pupils, every success in this new venture. There are still some vacancies for Foundation Directors on the Dunstan board of Directors, so if you would like to join the board, please see the Dunstan Director Pack <https://schools.cliftodiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Dunstan-Director-Recruitment-Pack-010921.pdf>

6) - Congratulations!

Special congratulations to Sister Margaret Harlock, for being awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year's honours list for her services to further education. Sister Margaret has served as a governor at St Brendan's Sixth Form College in Bristol for many years, including several as Chair and richly deserves this royal recognition - many congratulations Sister!



7) - Appeals Timetable

Please may I just remind all schools, including those that are not oversubscribed, that they are legally required to publish an 'appeals timetable' (to cover new intake and in-year applications), on their website by 28 February. Please see page 10 of School Admissions Appeals Code <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/School-Appeals-Code-2012.pdf> for full details.

8) - Admissions Arrangements for 2021-22 and 2022-23

As previously advised, all schools are legally required (if they have not already done so) to vary their admission arrangements for both 2021-22 and 2022-23 to include provision for 'Internationally Adopted Previously looked Children' (IAPLAC). I wrote to all primary schools in December to advise that in addition to altering their admissions policy, schools must also update the In-Year Application Form to include provision for IAPLAC.

Many thanks to all the schools who have already varied their arrangements (and In-Year form for primary schools) and sent them to me. As this is a legal requirement, any school that has not already done so, **must** make the necessary changes to their arrangements as a matter of urgency, to be legally compliant.

9) - Admission Arrangements for 2023-24

i) Primary Schools - are reminded that, if they have not already done so, they are legally required to determine their arrangements (policy and In-Year form) by 28 February at the latest.

ii) Secondary Schools - As mentioned in the last edition of *Go-Governance* the possibility of introducing a common admissions policy was considered by the Diocesan Schools & Colleges Committee, Chaired by Bishop Declan, on 21st October. The committee decided that a common policy should not be introduced for 2023-24 but should be considered for 2024-25. Schools should therefore determine their arrangements for 2023-24 by 28 February at the latest, in the usual way.

10) - Academies

If your academy has appointed any new parent or staff governors since September, they are legally required to sign a form of Undertaking, to confirm that they will uphold the Object of the Academy Trust. Please would Clerks ensure, that any such new governors have signed an Undertaking form and then submit it to me. Just let me know if you need an Undertaking form.

11) - Next Issue

As always, many thanks for all that you do for our schools, particularly whilst facing the ever-changing challenges presented by Covid19. Please just let me know if you would like anything included in the next edition of Go-Governance and I hope that despite the Covid pandemic, you have a great 2022.

Bill McEntee

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Prayer to St Thomas Aquinas - feast day 28 January

Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know you, a heart to seek you, wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing to you, faithful perseverance in waiting for you, and a hope of finally embracing you. Amen.

