



Department for Schools and Colleges

## **Go-Governance - a newsletter for Governors, Directors and Clerks**

Issue 26 - April 2022

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### **Introduction**

Welcome back! I hope you have had an enjoyable Easter break and have not been affected by Covid19 as so many people unfortunately have.

#### **1) Thank-you Colleen!**

As you may well be aware, our Director of Schools & Colleges, Colleen Collett has decided to retire and her last working day is on Friday, 29 April. Following a career in teaching, Colleen joined the Diocese 11 years ago and she has worked tirelessly for the benefit of the pupils, staff and governors at all our schools. Colleen's endless commitment and support has been appreciated by so many of you, as well of course, by her colleagues in Alexander House and she will be sorely missed. A special Mass of thanksgiving for all that Colleen has done for Catholic education, is on Thursday 28 April, followed by refreshments, to give Colleen an appropriate send-off. Due to lack of space, invitations unfortunately had to be limited to Heads & Chairs, but I'm sure that many of you would like to offer Colleen every best wish for a long, happy & well-deserved retirement.

#### **2) Ukrainian refugees**

I'm aware that some schools have been concerned about the plight of Ukrainian refugees and how applications for them should be considered. I am also aware that the Secretary of State, Nadhim Zahawi, has written to all Local Authorities (LA) and encouraged them to "use the flexibilities to admit above

*published admission number (PAN) and exceed the infant class size limit as well as using the in-year Fair Access Protocol."*

Whilst the desire to help these children is, of course understandable, legally governors must still ensure that applications are considered in accordance with their published admission arrangements, meaning that when more applications are received than places available, the oversubscription criteria must be used to rank the applications. There is potentially some flexibility when considering In-Year applications for KS2 pupils and above, as governors may admit over their admission level if they consider it appropriate to do so. However, schools need to be very clear as to why they have done this as they will be held to account by others seeking a place and/or already on the waiting list.

Governors should be aware that the law concerning Infant Class Size limits has not been changed and therefore applications that would exceed the ratio of 30 children per teacher, must still be refused, unless one of the legally allowed permitted exceptions apply. The permitted exception that is most likely to apply to refugees is *"children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance."* (See Paragraph 2.16e) of the School Admissions Code). The Code does not define what a 'reasonable distance' is considered to be, so governors should be cautious, and check with their LA School Admissions Team, before breaching Infant Class Size limits.

It is acceptable for a refugee 'host' family to assist parents with making an application and even complete the application form, but I would recommend that the parent(s) should at least sign the form.

### **3) New DfE guidance**

The Department for Education has issued updated guidance concerning children from overseas [School applications for foreign national children and children resident outside England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/school-applications-for-foreign-national-children-and-children-resident-outside-england)

The Catholic Education Service (CES) has advised that the guidance has not been substantially changed but has been updated to take account of the EU Settlement Scheme provisions and to include references to Hong Kong, Afghan and Ukraine migrants and refugees. Some information has also been reordered to clarify which sections are relevant to different applicants and how the

provisions interact with the school admissions process. The CES has also identified some 'key messages' to bring to your attention:

- 1. Admission authorities are not responsible for ensuring that a child has the right to reside in the UK and access a school place.*
- 2. Admission authorities must not require the submission of immigration documentation to prove a child's right to reside in the UK before processing an application.*
- 3. Admission authorities cannot require that a child has a permanent home address either in the UK or overseas before processing an application. If a child is living in temporary accommodation, then that address is the home address.*
- 4. The guidance provides information about how to establish a child's home address.*
- 5. Nothing in the guidance allows an admission authority to process any applications otherwise than in accordance with their published admissions criteria.*

#### **4) Warning from the Catholic Education Service**

With new education legislation forthcoming in the next few weeks/months, the CES has advised that they anticipate that opponents of Catholic education will be preparing for a large national campaign. It is likely that pursuing changes to faith-based admissions will be a priority for secular lobbyists. The CES anticipate that "research" into the admission policies of individual Catholic schools will be ramped up in the next few weeks in order to find Catholic examples for their public campaign. Campaigning organisations have previously used this approach to publicly target Catholic schools in the media.

It is therefore of extra importance, that as previously advised, if governors have not already done so, they **must** vary their admission arrangements (policies and any In-Year forms) for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 to include provision for 'Internationally Adopted Previously looked Children' and these must be posted on your website, sent to the Diocese and your LA & also notified to others, as required by the School Admissions Code, as quickly as possible. It is

also essential that all appropriate and up-to date documentation is on the school's website.

## 5) SEND consultation

As you may be aware, the government has undertaken a review of the education provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The review sets out the government's plans for improving the provision and outcomes for SEND pupils and it is undertaking a public consultation on its proposals that closes on 1 July 2022. Please see [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-and-ap-green-paper-responding-to-the-consultation?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm\\_source=75e453f0-7222-47d1-b9c9-c088004204c5&utm\\_content=weekly](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-and-ap-green-paper-responding-to-the-consultation?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=75e453f0-7222-47d1-b9c9-c088004204c5&utm_content=weekly) for full details and how to take part in the consultation.

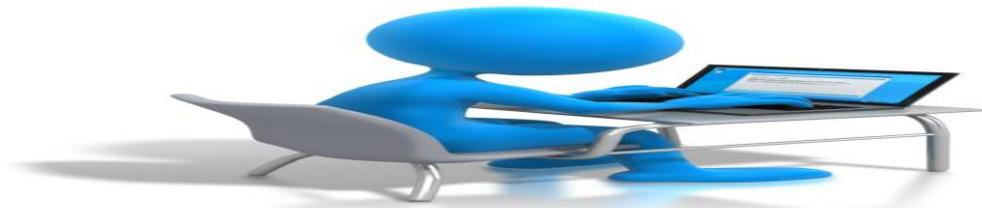
## 6) Training for Governors and Directors

The final Diocesan training sessions for Governors in this school year are:

- i) **Refresher Training for Experienced Governors** - Saturday 30 April 10.00 - 11.30 am
- ii) **Induction for New Governors** - Thursday 9 June - 6.30pm - 8.00pm

They will be held virtually, via Microsoft Teams, and as usual are open to **all** governors, of any category. Just complete the online booking form to reserve a place <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/courses>

There will be a new training session '**New Section 48 Inspection - Update for Governors**', by Louise White, RE Lead Adviser. It is for **all** governors, particularly RE Link ones, and will be on **Thursday 8 September 6.30pm - 8.00pm**. You cannot yet book a place on this session, but please would you note the date in your diary. Booking details will be included in the new CPD Courses book for 2022-23, that will be available during the summer term.



As previously advised, the Dunstan and Cardinal Newman Catholic Educational Trusts both opened within our Diocese on 1 March. We have arranged for Directors from the Trusts to be able to attend the **'Role of Trustees (Directors) in a Catholic Multi Academy Trust'** training session provided by our colleagues in the Catholic Diocese of Brentwood. It is a Zoom webinar event on **Monday 20 June 2022 (17:00-18:30)** and is intended for those new to the Director role within a Catholic Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The training will cover:

- What are the basics of good governance?
- How Trust Boards work
- The core functions of a Catholic multi academy trust board.

This short event is also open to governors who may wish to increase their understanding of the relationship between MAT Boards and Local Governing Committees, as well as anyone who may wish to find out more about the role of a MAT Director. Brentwood Diocese have very kindly agreed not to make any charge to anyone attending from our Diocese. Please just complete the attached Brentwood Diocese booking form if you would like to attend.

## 7) - **'Governors for Schools' website**

'Governors for Schools' is an organisation that aims to find volunteers for governing boards across the country. They also provide online training and support for governors. You can access new & previously recorded webinars on various topics including effective safeguarding and personal development in the new Ofsted framework. They also provide eLearning courses and have modules on a range of subjects, from 'driving school improvement' to 'understanding performance data'. It is a **free** service so please take a look at it to see how it may help support you and your governing body

<https://governorsforschools.org.uk/resources/overview-training-support-governors/>

## 8) 'Ask a Clerk' website

Just in case you are not already aware of it, Clerks may be interested in the 'Ask a Clerk' website <https://askaclerk.co.uk/> This is also a **free** service that contains lots of helpful information and answers to many frequently asked questions that I'm sure Clerks to Governors, at both schools and academies, will find very helpful.

## 9) - National Governors Association Survey

The NGA would like you to share your experience of being on a governing board, your views on current education policy and your governing board practice in the annual governance survey. This annual survey is now open for school governors, directors, and local academy committee members. To take part, visit [https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/NGAsurvey2022-DM/?utm\\_source=Master+Audience&utm\\_campaign=1610cecc51-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2022\\_04\\_25\\_10\\_51&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_685f6e617f-1610cecc51-52481979](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/NGAsurvey2022-DM/?utm_source=Master+Audience&utm_campaign=1610cecc51-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_04_25_10_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_685f6e617f-1610cecc51-52481979) by 30 May.

## 10) - Safeguarding

The Disclosure Baring Service (DBS) Protocol <https://schools.cliftodiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/DBS-Protocol-for-Foundation-Governors-April-2022.pdf> for Foundation Governors has been updated, including changes to Section 8 for where a Foundation Governor already holds an enhanced in-date DBS certificate.

## 11) - Academies

The dates for the 2022 Annual General Meetings (AGM) with Bishop Declan have been set as detailed below. Please would Chairs & Heads note the date of your own AGM in your diaries to avoid any potential clash and notify any relevant colleagues who may also be attending.

**Friday 02/12/22**

St Nicholas of Tolentine Primary, Bristol	09.00am
St Joseph's College, Swindon	09.45am
Holy Family Primary, Swindon	11.00am

The Rosary Primary, Stroud 11.45am

**Thursday 08/12/22**

St Augustine's College, Trowbridge 09.00am

Holy Cross Primary, Swindon 09.45am

St Catherine's, Swindon 11.00am

St Mary's Primary, Swindon 11.45am

**Friday 09/12/2022**

St Patrick's Primary, Bristol 09.00am

St Edmund's Primary, Calne 09.45am

St Joseph's Primary, Devizes 11.00am

Holy Rood Primary, Swindon 11.45am

Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust 13.15pm

**Tuesday 13/12/2022**

St Bede's College, Bristol 09.00am

St Peter's High, Gloucester 09.45am

St Mary's Primary, Churchdown 11.00am

Cardinal Newman Catholic Educational Trust 11.45am.

**12) A Prayer for the Coming of the Holy Spirit by St. Catherine of Siena (Patron Saint of Europe) – Feast Day 29 April**

"Holy Spirit, come into my heart; draw it to Thee by Thy power, O my God, and grant me charity with filial fear. Preserve me, O ineffable Love, from every evil thought; warm me, inflame me with Thy dear love, and every pain will seem light to me. My Father, my sweet Lord, help me in all my actions. Jesus, love, Jesus, love. Amen."



### 13) Next Issue

As always, please may I thank you for all your hard work, which is truly appreciated, and hope you have a good summer term. Please just let me know if you would like anything included in any future edition of *Go-Governance*.

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