



Department for Schools and Colleges

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

Issue 30 - June 2023

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### **Introduction**

Welcome to the final edition of *Go-Governance* of the 2022-23 school year.

### **1) Employment of Staff**

Please may I remind everyone that when recruiting new staff, schools **must** use the documentation provided by the Catholic Education Service (CES) for all staff (not just for reserved posts). The documentation has been produced by the legal professionals at the CES and written to provide protection, and avoid potential problems, for Catholic schools and must be used, even if your own Human Resources provider would prefer you to use other contract documentation. All schools **and** academies must use CES application forms <http://catholiceducation.org.uk/recruitment-process>

and **Schools** must follow these CES Model Policies and Procedures <http://catholiceducation.org.uk/employment-documents/model-policies-and-procedures/itemlist/category/77-england-schools>

whilst **Academies** must follow these CES Model Policies and Procedures

<http://catholiceducation.org.uk/employment-documents/model-policies-and-procedures/itemlist/category/78-england-academies>

Please also remember that when schools have a vacancy for a reserved post, e.g., Headteacher, they must involve the Diocese in all stages of the recruitment process including, advertising, short-listing and interviews. Interview dates should be agreed in advance with the Diocese to avoid diary clashes and so ensure officer availability.

## 2) Diocesan Training

Many thanks to all who undertook any of our training sessions during this school year. 179 governors, directors & clerks attended our sessions in 2022-23, which is wonderful. Details of the training sessions available in 2023-24 are given in pages 27-31 of new CPD Booklet of Courses <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/CPD-booklet-2023-2024.pdf> that also includes details of all the various other events for pupils and staff.

## 3) Date for your diary

The date for the next annual Clifton Diocese Education Mass with Bishop Declan has been set for Thursday 27th June 2024 in Clifton Cathedral at 7.00 pm if you would like to note the date in your diary. The last one was in November 2022, but we have reverted to the more popular summer date.

Everyone connected with Catholic education in Clifton Diocese is invited. This is an annual Mass bringing all our school community members together as a diocesan family with the Bishop to celebrate Catholic education.

## 4) Complaints Procedure

I am pleased to say that complaints about a governor(s) by another governor(s) are, thankfully, rare. However, they do unfortunately occasionally occur and obviously need to be dealt with in an appropriate way. Whilst all schools should have a Grievance/Complaints policy that should cover a complaint from a member of staff or parent about a governor(s), it may not cover complaints about a governor(s) made by another governor. Experience has shown that such an omission usually only comes to light once a complaint has been received, which can cause unnecessary stress and also delay in the complaint being dealt with. In order to protect yourselves, could you check your Grievance/Complaints Policy, to see if it covers complaints made by governors. If it does not, please

would you revise it to do so or produce a separate governor complaints policy. A little time on this now could prevent a lot more work and difficulty in the future!

Please ensure that it does **not** include reference to the complaint or appeal being considered by the Diocese. Whilst we may sometimes be able to provide advice on process or seek to assist in finding independent panellists, it is not appropriate for the Diocese to be actively involved in a parent/staff/governor complaint or an appeal.

There may be occasions when it may not be appropriate for governors from your school to consider a complaint (perhaps because governors are already familiar with the issue, so cannot be considered independent or perhaps the complaint is against the whole FGB). In such cases, governors will need to appoint governors from another school to consider the complaint or appeal. It is therefore **vital**, if you have not already done so, that you ensure that you have reciprocal arrangements in place with other governing bodies within your school partnership group, to provide governors to sit on the panel to consider such complaints.

**Action Point:** *All schools to check that they have reciprocal arrangements in place with other governing bodies within their school partnership group, for providing panellists for dealing with complaints.*

## **5) – Catholic Educational Trusts (CET) – do you have the skills to help?**

As previously mentioned, six of our primary schools in Gloucestershire are intending to form the **Little Way CET**, and it is now due to open on 1 January 2024 (rather than September 2023). We are delighted that six directors have been appointed to it's shadow board, so just two more are needed to complete the set. If you have experience in **Human Resources** and/or **Legal** matters, then you could be a real asset to the new board.

St Louis Primary, Frome and St Edmund's Primary, Calne are intending to join the **Dunstan CET** on 1 November 2023 and the board would like new people to join them and are particularly seeking someone with a background in **Accountancy**.

The **Newman CET** are also seeking someone with experience in **Accountancy** and also an experienced **Educationalist** (current or retired senior teachers).

If you have some experience in any of the above-named skills, please would you consider offering your services to help support our CETs by applying to be a CET Director. Please complete the following:

- **MAT Director Nomination Form**
- **Skills Audit**
- **Eligibility Declaration**
- **DBS Self Declaration Form.**

There is a conference (in Liverpool on 13 October) called 'Building a Catholic Multi Academy Trust' that may be of interest to directors and governors. Please see the attached promotional sheet for more details.

As some of you may have previously seen, the Birmingham Diocese, has produced a document about the 'benefits & challenges' in joining a Catholic MAT:

[joining a multi academy family benefits and challenges summary as at 17 march2022.pdf](#) which is shared with you again.

## 6) End of one year - start of a new one

The end of a school year and the start of new one, often sees changes occurring to personnel on governing bodies. Could I please just remind clerks of the following points, in readiness of the new school year:

i) Please inform me as soon as you are aware of any Foundation Governor who is standing down at the end of the year for any reason, so that I can ensure our records are up to date.

ii) It is not compulsory for the appointment of the Chair to be considered every year at a **VA school** (unless otherwise stated within a governing body's own arrangements), although it is good practice and many schools do so. The Chair does **not** have to be a Foundation Governor. However, as stated in their constitutional documents, **academies** must at their first meeting of the year, elect a Chair and Vice-Chair and these must be Foundation Governors (unless exceptionally agreed otherwise by the academy Members).

iii) At your first meeting of the new year, it is appropriate for all governors of any category to sign 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. This is in order to protect all members and mitigate against any possible difficulties that could occur within governing bodies. Schools should use the updated Code of Conduct provided by the Catholic Education Service as it provides protection specifically for Catholic schools and is available at:

<http://catholiceducation.org.uk/guidance-for-schools/governance/item/1003586-annual-self-evaluation-form-of-the-governing-body>

## 7) Admission Arrangements 2024-25 – Primary Schools

Most of our schools have submitted their determined admission arrangements for 2024-25 – thank you. I have recently emailed the Chairs & Heads of primary schools where their arrangements are still outstanding. Please could those schools ensure, that if they have not already done so, they determine and submit their arrangements as quickly as possible to ensure legal compliance.

## 8) School Discipline Regulations

The DfE have published amended School Discipline Regulations, [updated Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance](#), and a [guide](#) for parents on school behaviour and exclusion. The guide for parents delivers on a key recommendation from the Timpson review for the DfE to produce more accessible guidance for parents/carers to help them gain a comprehensive understanding of school behaviour and exclusion.

Key updates include:

- Updated [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance](#) which sets out legislative changes to support head teachers to cancel exclusions where appropriate if new information becomes known which warrants a review of their decision to exclude in a lawful, reasonable and fair way. It also sets out an important choice for parents to request remote meetings for governing boards and independent review panel meetings, if they so wish, which supports their empowerment and engagement.

- These legislative changes are reflected in the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (Amendment and Transitional Provision) (England) Regulations 2023 laid in Parliament on 25th May.
- A separate [guide](#) for parents on school behaviour and exclusion to better signpost and support them to navigate the school exclusion process. Parental guidance was previously contained as an annex within the statutory guidance on Suspension and Permanent Exclusion but has now been published separately to enable it to be found more easily.

## 9) 22nd July - Feast of St. Mary Magdalen

Saint Mary Magdalene,  
woman of many sins, who by conversion  
became the beloved of Jesus,  
thank you for your witness  
that Jesus forgives  
through the miracle of love.

You, who already possess eternal happiness  
in His glorious presence,  
please intercede for me, so that some day  
I may share in the same everlasting joy.      Amen.



## 10) Have a good rest!

Whilst we haven't reached it yet, I hope that when the summer holiday does arrive, you get the chance of a well-earned rest! May I thank you for all your hard work and commitment for the benefit of our pupils and staff during 2022-23 - it really is much appreciated. If I don't speak with you before the end of term, I look forward to seeing you in September.

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