



Department for Schools and Colleges

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

Issue 33 - March 2024

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### **Introduction**

Welcome to the third edition of *Go-Governance* of the 2023-24 school year.

#### **1) Thank you & best wishes!**

I'm have no doubt that many of you would have been saddened to learn of the resignation of Bishop Declan after 23 years as our bishop.



Bishop Declan has always been a passionate supporter of the value of Catholic education and very appreciative of all the work done in our schools by the staff and governors. He will be sorely missed! I'm sure everyone would like to offer him their thanks for all he has done for our schools, along with their best wishes for his well-earned retirement. Thank you, Bishop Declan!

We do of course look forward to being under the leadership of Bishop-Elect Bosco MacDonald, who has been a Foundation Governor at Ss Peter & Paul Primary, Bristol, since 2016, once he has been ordained.

## 2) New Governance Guides

The Department for Education (DfE) has published its new governance guides to replace The Governance Handbook. You can find the new guides by following the links below:

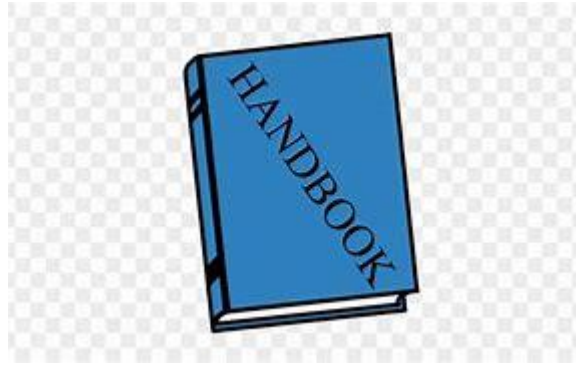
- **Academy trusts:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/-governance-in-academy-trusts>
- **Maintained schools:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/governance-in-maintained-schools>

**Action Point:** *Governors & Clerks to become familiar with the appropriate guide for their school.*

## 3) - Chairs of Governors Handbook

The Catholic Diocese of Brentwood has produced a handbook for Chairs of Governors [Chairs-Handbook-Diocese-of-Brentwood-revised-Oct-2023.pdf \(cliftondiocese.com\)](https://www.cliftondiocese.com/Chairs-Handbook-Diocese-of-Brentwood-revised-Oct-2023.pdf), that they have kindly given us permission to share with you. Whilst of course parts of it only apply to the Brentwood Diocese, it is still a helpful, easy read for all current Chairs (plus anyone considering becoming a Chair) and provides an understanding for all governors of the role of the Chair.

**Action Point:** *Governors & Clerks to become familiar with the handbook.*



#### 4) New online application form for teaching posts

You may be pleased to learn that **eteach** has produced a new online application form just for Catholic schools. This will help schools when filling teaching posts and it has been approved for use by the Catholic Education Service. Please see the **eteach** website [Recruitment Solutions for Catholic Schools \(eteach.com\)](http://eteach.com) for full details of how it may assist your school with your teacher recruitment.

*Action Point: Governors to consider using the online eteach form for teaching appointments.*

#### 5) - National Wraparound Childcare Programme

The DfE have asked the CES to circulate their recent announcement concerning the above and bring it to the attention of our schools. The DfE announcement is:

On 27 February we published an updated version of the [National Wraparound Childcare Programme Handbook](#). This provides additional guidance and up to date information on the programme to further support local authorities with programme delivery. The key changes include: confirmation of Childcare Works as our delivery partner and outlines their roles and responsibilities, additional detail on the funding for the programme, clarity on the expectations of schools and trusts to align the handbook with the recently published schools guidance, and sets out department's position on home to school transport.

There is a long standing 'right to request' guidance, which allows parents to request wraparound or holiday care at their child's school and allows childcare providers to request using the school premises for wraparound or holiday care and sets out how schools should respond to these requests.

As part of supporting delivery of the new wraparound programme, we have updated [the guidance](#) to ensure its alignment with the programme objectives.

It now sets out the minimum expectation of schools, including engaging with the designated LA wraparound lead. The update strengthens the role of the LA, linking to their sufficiency duty, including informing schools of the availability of wraparound and ensures schools are communicating this to families.

In early February, we published [wraparound childcare guidance for schools and trusts](#), which sets out their role in relation to wraparound, and the support schools and trusts can expect, in particular from their LA, to meet these expectations.

This guidance is designed to support schools and trusts, regardless of their involvement with the national wraparound childcare programme. We are really keen to hear about the reception to this guidance and if there is any further support DfE could offer schools to meet the expectations outlined in the guidance.

**Action Point: Governors to become familiar with the DfE guidance.**

## 6) - Training Opportunities

### i) Diocesan Training

The final training sessions (all via Microsoft Teams) for this school year are:

- ❖ Induction for new governors - 6th June 2024 6.30 pm - 8.00 pm.
- ❖ Refresher for experienced governors - 9th May 2024 6.30 pm - 8.00 pm.
- ❖ Admissions - 18th May 2024 (Saturday) 10:00 - 11:30 am.

These sessions are open to all governors of any category and the **Admissions** session is also open to all school staff (and is strongly recommended to anyone who is involved in admissions). 35 staff and governors attended the **Admissions** session in September, with one attendee commenting "That is some of the best training I have been on in a really long time." To reserve a place on any of the above sessions, please complete a Course Booking Form [Events – Calendar | Clifton Diocese Schools and Colleges](#)

**Action Point: Governors and staff to consider attendance as appropriate.**

### ii) [Formatio Training - eLearning](#)

In partnership with the Catholic Education Service (CES) and the Catholic Teaching Schools Alliance, Formatio has designed a portfolio of online training

for the induction and development of governors in Catholic schools. There are five individual modules:

- ❖ An introduction to Catholic education
- ❖ The environment of Catholic education
- ❖ Strategic direction
- ❖ Accountability
- ❖ Financial probity.

The sessions are free, are between just 30 - 45 minutes each and you can do them at any time that suits you - no need to book. Please visit <https://formatio.org.uk/e-learning> to take advantage of these eLearning modules.



**Action Point:** All Governors to attend the eLearning training.

## 7) - Admission Arrangements for 2025-26

All admission authorities were required to determine their arrangements by 28 February 2024 at the latest and are legally required to send a copy of them to the Diocese and their LA by 15 March. Please see para. 150 (and 1.47) of the School Admissions Code [School admissions code 2021 \(cliftondiocese.com\)](https://www.cliftondiocese.com/school-admissions-code-2021) for details of who else you need to notify.

If you have not already done so, please determine them as a matter of urgency. Please remember that in line with the common admission arrangements for both primary & secondary schools agreed with Bishop Declan, no changes must be made to your arrangements for 2025-26 (apart from rolling forward the dates)

**Action Point:** If not already done so, Governors to determine 2025-26 arrangements as a matter of urgency.

## 8) – New criteria for Primary Schools for 2026-27

As previously mentioned, the Schools & Colleges Committee consulted on the possible introduction of 3 x oversubscription categories to the common admission arrangements for primary schools. These were:

- ❖ Children with a parent who has been a member of the school's staff for two or more years at the time of application, or who was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage. This does not include staff who work on the school site for other employers.
- ❖ Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion.
- ❖ Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader.

The result of the ballot was in favour of including all x 3 criteria, so the Committee approved their introduction to the arrangements, with effect from the 2026-27 school year, following a public consultation by all primary schools. Full details of the decisions of the Committee and the requirements of undertaking a public consultation (in the autumn term 2024) will be shared with schools in due course.

**Action Point:** *Governors will be required to consult on admission arrangements in Term 2 2024 (full details to follow).*

## 9) – Safeguarding Compliance

I'm sure that you are all aware that all governors/directors are legally required to have enhanced Disclosure Barring Service clearance.

i) For **Foundation** Governors, it is a Bishop's requirement that their DBS clearance is renewed every four years. Our records indicate that there are currently over 60 Foundation Governors whose last DBS clearance was in 2020 and so are due to renew it this year. I shall therefore be emailing those governors in the near future, to ask them to contact the DBS officer at their school to arrange for an updated check to be made. If you receive such an

email, please ensure that you act on it promptly to ensure clearance is updated within the required timescales. Thank You.

**Action Point:** *Governors who receive an email, renew their DBS clearance with their school promptly.*

ii) For **all** governors of any category, it is a legal requirement that schools see the actual original paper DBS certificate. This to comply with no. 243 on page 64 of the '**Keeping Children Safe in Education**' statutory guidance 2023 [Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115222/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023.pdf) that confirms, that once the checks are complete, "the DBS will send a DBS certificate to the applicant. The applicant must show the original paper DBS certificate to their potential employer before they take up post, or as soon as practicable afterwards." (Whilst of course, governors are not 'employed', it applies to them in the same way as it does to staff employed at the school). **If any governor has not yet provided their original paper DBS certificate, please present it to the officer responsible for DBS checks at your school, as soon as possible to ensure legal compliance.**

**Action Point:** *Any Governor who has not provided a DBS paper certificate, to present it to the school as soon as possible.*



**Action Point:** *Governors & Clerks to become familiar with the protocol.*

## **10) – Academies Undertakings Audit**

For all our Academy schools, both Single and those within a Multi Academy Trust, all governors of any category, must sign an undertaking to the Bishop of Clifton, the Directors and the Diocesan Trustees, to confirm that they shall

uphold the Object clause (clause 4) of the Academy Trust, as specified in the Trust's Articles of Association. The Diocese will therefore be conducting an 'undertakings audit' to ascertain how this legal requirement is being complied with, and so shall be contacting all academy Clerks in the near future, for details of the undertakings received from their governors.

*Action Point: Academy clerks to respond to the audit email when received with details of undertakings received.*

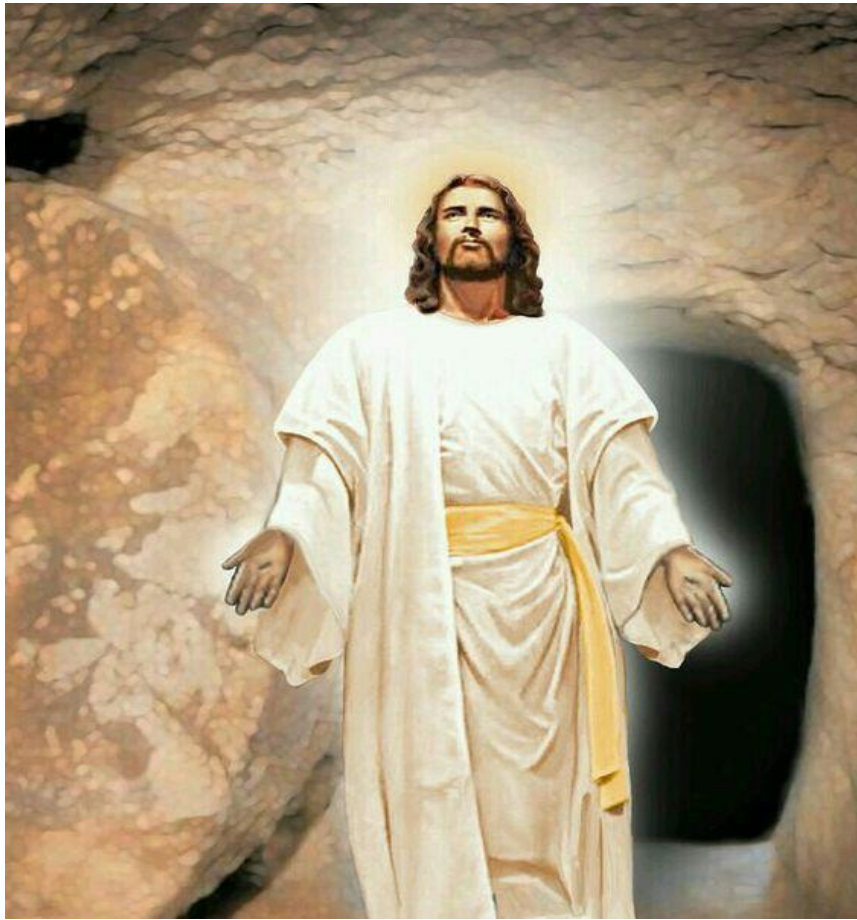
## 11) - A Prayer for Easter

### You are the resurrection.

How wonderful, Lord Jesus, you came back  
You suffered death but conquered it  
You laid in the tomb but on the third day  
You rose again  
O joyful day, Lord Jesus, when you returned  
You are the resurrection, our hope and our life  
O glorious and victorious Redeemer  
Help us not to be afraid of death  
For we must pass through it to see you face to face  
And on the last day we will rise again  
For you said so  
Let us rejoice and praise you  
Our Blessed and triumphant Lord  
On this happy, joyful feast. Amen.

**Diana Ng-Sutherland/CAFOD**





## **12) - Contact**

Please feel free to contact me if ever you have any queries. If you wish to speak with me, as I work from home on 2 days per week, please dial my mobile number below in the first instance.

As always, many thanks for all that you are doing for the pupils and staff at our schools and may I wish you and your families a happy and most holy Easter season.

*Bill McEntee*

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