



Department for Schools and Colleges

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

Issue 34 - June 2024

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### **Introduction**

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

### **1) Education Sunday - 8 September 2024**

Education Sunday falls on the second Sunday of September just as the new academic year starts and is one of the oldest Days of Special Prayer in England and Wales, established in 1848. Last year we used this occasion to try to attract new Foundation Governors by including an appeal in parish newsletters/websites and asking governors to make an appeal at the end of Mass on the day. This resulted in around 30 new applications being received! The CES promotes governance recruitment [Catholic schools and universities need your help \(catholiceducation.org.uk\)](https://catholiceducation.org.uk) and their website also includes other resources [Foundation Governor Recruitment \(catholiceducation.org.uk\)](https://catholiceducation.org.uk) to aid attracting new volunteers. The Diocese also has promotional posters & leaflets.

Please would you therefore consider making an appeal after Mass at the Church(es) served by your school on 8 September? Two schools who did so last year, received 3 x new applications each - so you never know what impact an appeal may have. Please begin your preparation now and let know if I can assist you with your appeal.

***Action Point: Governors to consider making an appeal on education Sunday.***

## 2) Time off work

Did you know that governors at maintained schools are entitled to time off work to attend meetings (with some listed exceptions)? [Time off work for public duties - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

I'm afraid that this does not legally apply to governors/directors of academies - but you could try persuading your employer to give you time off by listing the skills that governors/directors must develop, which you can also use in your job: *analysing data, taking responsibility for high-level planning and results, strategic thinking, interpersonal skills, respecting confidentiality and holding leaders to account etc. etc.* It is certainly mutually beneficial.

## 3) - New CPD Booklet of Courses

i) As recently circulated, the new Schools & Colleges Department CPD Booklet of Courses [CPD-Booklet-2024-2025-1-1.pdf \(cliftondiocese.com\)](#) for **2024-25** is now available. It details all the courses, events, retreats etc. for pupils, staff, governors etc. In addition to the usual training sessions for governors/directors & clerks, the booklet includes the following extra events for **2024-25**:

- **Legal Updates** - given by the Catholic Education Service in Alexander House on 16 September 2024 (*limited to 35 attenders so please book as soon as possible*).
- **Multi Academy Trust** - Director training on 10 October 2024.
- **Governors' Conference** - for all governors/directors on 10 May 2025.

Please visit [Events – Calendar | Clifton Diocese Schools and Colleges](#) to complete a Course Booking Form to reserve a place on any of the events in the booklet.

ii) To help ensure governors/directors & clerks are able to attend any of the events & training sessions, please would all governing bodies kindly avoid scheduling any governor body/committee meeting on any of the dates of the sessions listed on pages 25-31 of the booklet - thank you.

iii) the figures of the numbers of governors/directors & clerks attending the following training sessions during **2023-24** school year, are shown below (figures in brackets are for **2022-23**):

- RE Link Governor Training - 39 (45).
- **Induction Training for new Foundation Governors** - 64 (62).
- Refresher Training for experienced Foundation Governors - 41 (31)

- Admissions Training for governors/staff - 58 (24)
- Clerk to Governor Training - 15 (16).

This shows an increase of 39 from last year, so thank you very much for giving up your time to attend - we are very grateful.

**Action Point:** *governors/directors & clerks to note the dates of relevant events in their diaries & reserve places as appropriate.*

#### 4) Catholic Educational Trusts

As you are probably aware, there are now 3 x Catholic Educational Trusts (CETs) within the Diocese:

- Newman [Outstanding education | Newman Catholic Trust | Bristol](#)
- Dunstan [Home: The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust \(thedcet.com\)](#) and
- Little Way [Little Way Catholic Educational Trust \(lwcet.co.uk\)](#)

They are served by committed Boards of Directors but need some new people to join them as they grow. Perhaps you would consider using the skills & the experience you have gained as a governor at one school, for the benefit of several schools by becoming a CET Director from September? If so, please complete an application form: <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/form-5>  
If you have any queries about the role of a Director, please just let me know.

**Action Point:** *Governors to consider applying to be CAT Director.*

#### 5) - Bishop's Vision Meeting

Please would all the Chairs & Heads of VA maintained schools and Single Academy Trusts schools that received a letter from Mary Cox, inviting\* them to a meeting on 9 July concerning the next stage of the Bishop's academisation, do their utmost to attend the meeting. It is an important meeting that will be led by Bishop Bosco, so if you are unable attend yourself, please ensure that you arrange for someone else to go in your stead, so that your school is represented.

*\* The invite was only sent to schools & academies that are not yet part (or scheduled to be) of a Catholic Educational Trust (CET), as CET academies are not required to attend.*

**Action Point:** *Invited VA schools & single academies to ensure their school is represented.*

## 6) - Do not set your Admission Arrangements for 2026-27!!!

As previously advised, following a ballot with primary school admission authorities, the Schools & Colleges Committee has approved the introduction of 3 x new oversubscription categories to the common admission arrangements for **primary** schools. These are:

- ❖ Children with a parent who has been a member of the school's staff
- ❖ Children of other Christian denominations
- ❖ Children of other faiths.

In addition, to comply with guidance from the CES, the Committee also agreed to include a category for children from Eastern Christian Churches. In order for each primary school to include these new criteria within their own arrangements for the 2026-27 school year, it will require a public consultation in this coming autumn term. So, whilst in previous years governors/directors would often have set their arrangements in the autumn term, it is **imperative** that schools do **not** do so this autumn - as they must first undertake their public consultation - then once completed, formally determine their arrangements in the spring term (by 28 February 2025 at the latest). A step-by-step guide to the consultation process & its legal requirements will be sent to you in the autumn term.

*NB The above only applies to primary schools, as secondary schools must keep to the common arrangements and determine their arrangements in the autumn term, without a consultation or making any changes to their current arrangements (other than rolling forward the dates).*

**Action Point:** *Governors/Directors of primary schools must consult but ensure they do **not** determine admission arrangements in the autumn term 2024.*

## 7) - Safeguarding Compliance - Thank You!

i) As mentioned in Issue 33 of Go-Governance [Go-Governance-Issue-33-March-2024.pdf](#) ([cliftondiocese.com](#)) (see item 9), DBS clearance for Foundation Governor/Directors must be updated at least every 4 years. I therefore emailed in April, all

Foundation Governors whose last DBS clearance was in 2020, to ask them to contact the DBS officer at their school to arrange for an updated check to be made. Many thanks to those who have now updated their DBS clearance. If you received an email, but have not yet updated your DBS clearance, please would you ensure that you do so before your current clearance reaches its 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary - thank you.

**Action Point:** *Foundation Governors to ensure renewed DBS compliance as appropriate.*

ii) The Diocesan DBS protocol [DBS-Protocol-for-Foundation-Governors-Directors-April-2024.pdf \(cliftondiocese.com\)](https://www.cliftondiocese.com/DBS-Protocol-for-Foundation-Governors-Directors-April-2024.pdf) for Foundation Governors has been updated - it reflects that new governors/directors must provide paper copies of their DBS certificate but where renewing governors have signed up to the DBS online update service, they may avoid having to provide a paper certificate & proof of ID each time they update their clearance.

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

## 8) - Academies

i) As also mentioned in Issue 33 of Go-Governance [Go-Governance-Issue-33-March-2024.pdf \(cliftondiocese.com\)](https://www.cliftondiocese.com/Go-Governance-Issue-33-March-2024.pdf) (see item 10), the Diocese has carried out an 'undertakings audit' to ascertain how the requirement for governors to give an undertaking to the Bishop etc. (to uphold the Object of the Academy Trust) is being complied with. Many thanks to all academy Clerks for their work in arranging for their governors to complete an undertaking - it was much appreciated. If you have not already completed an undertaking, please can you do as quickly as possible, as it is a legal requirement.

**Action Point:** *Any outstanding undertakings to be signed & submitted to your Clerk.*

ii) Please remember that at the first meeting of the school year, all academies must elect a Chair & Vice-Chair. It can be the current Chair & Vice-Chair again but must be from the Foundation Governors (unless exceptionally agreed otherwise by the Members).

**Action Point:** All Academies to ensure they elect a Chair & Vice-Chair at first meeting of 2024-25.

## 9) - A Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Our Lady of Mount Carmel - Feast Day 16 July

*O most beautiful Flower of Mount Carmel, Fruitful Vine, Splendour of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me this my necessity. O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother.*

*O Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart, to succour me in this necessity; there are none that can withstand your power.*

*O, show me herein you are my Mother, O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. (3 times)  
Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands. (3 times)*



## 10) – Contact and good wishes!

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 try to reach me via my mobile number below, in the first instance.

May I offer my sincere thanks for all your hard work throughout this last year, which is much appreciated, and wish you a very enjoyable and relaxing summer break.

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