

Clerks' Monthly Briefing

February 2023

**Strong teamwork
between the
headteacher, the
chair of the
governing body and
the clerk is crucial to
efficient working.**

Ofsted, Learning from the Best 2011.



**The role of the clerk is
pivotal to ensuring that
statutory duties are met,
meetings are well organised
and governors receive the
information they need in
good time. Consequently,
governors come to meetings
well prepared and with
pertinent questions ready so
that they are able to provide
constructive challenge.**

Ofsted, Learning from the Best 2011.



Governor Support Service

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Agenda

➤ Welcome new clerks	➤ Information exchange
➤ Help us to help you	➤ Updates
➤ Clerking vacancies	➤ Your questions

Governor Support Service

We hold a database of maintained school and academy governing boards which helps us to help you. Such information is needed for governor recruitment purposes, in cases of urgency, safeguarding, Ofsted inspections, and schools where there is a cause for concern. All data is stored and accessed in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR. The only piece of information we can give out publicly is the name of the Chair of the Governing Board, which is already in the public domain. We do not give out personal contact details or any other information.

With contact details changing each term, please let us have a complete list of all your GB membership including:

- Category of governor
- Contact phone numbers (mobile & home)
- Who is chair and vice chair
- Term of office
- Email address
- Details of any associate members of the board (inc. contact details and term of office)

Please send your Governing Board membership information to: office@governor.support

Instruments of Government (IOG)

Please send us a copy of any changes made to your IOG.

Get Information About Schools (GIAS)

Please make sure that you keep the DfE site updated with your governing board membership as well.

Your governing board minutes

Please send us a copy of your draft board and committee minutes once approved by your chair of governors and the final agreed minutes. Email: office@governor.support

School email addresses

Please can you check with your school that our email addresses are on the “White” allowed list? This issue happens more often with “LGFL” school emails.

Spring and Summer 2023 Term Governor & Clerk Training Courses

Please can you remind your governors of the range of courses that are available, also that they feedback on the course(s) attended to the governing board and to update your training records. Your minutes need to show what learning was achieved and shared with all governors. Check the courses [here](#).

Agenda reminders

Items to consider

- ✓ Budget outturn and considerations for the new financial year
- ✓ SFVS
- ✓ School Food
- ✓ Review Service Level Agreements
- ✓ Pupil Attendance
- ✓ Exclusions
- ✓ Review policies and update as necessary
- ✓ Data protection
- ✓ Open consultation

Department for Education (DfE)

Open consultation

Use of reasonable force and restrictive practices in schools

This call for evidence from the DfE will focus on understanding more about the use of reasonable force, physical restraint, and restrictive practices in schools.

It will inform revisions to [existing guidance](#) to ensure all schools are calm, safe and supportive environments, where staff and pupils can work in safety and are respected.

Closes 11th May 2023

Governing boards and trusts to note.

How Schools Should Prepare for the New National Emergency Alerts System - October 2022

All education, childcare, and children's social care settings should have emergency plans in place detailing what you would do and how you would respond if you needed to take any temporary actions in the event of an emergency. The aim of an emergency plan is to help you and your staff respond effectively to an emergency at the setting or on an educational visit or outing while, where possible, continuing to prioritise and maximise face-to-face learning.

Governing boards and Academy trusts to ask their senior leadership team about the plan and that is reviewed regularly.

Providing remote education: guidance for schools – January 2023

Schools are likely to have established remote education plans in place already that have worked well for them when attendance in school has not been possible. If schools choose to use established remote education plans, these should be kept up to date so that they remain relevant to the school's current context. A good remote education plan should be kept under review in consultation with staff and should demonstrate a consideration of any additional burdens that providing remote education may place on staff and families.

Governing boards and Academy trusts to ask their senior leadership team about the plan and that it is reviewed regularly.

State of the nation 2022: children and young people's wellbeing Research report February 2023 Department for Education

The report brings together a range of published information from government, academic, voluntary, and private sector organisations to provide a clear narrative for all those interested in the wellbeing of children and young people in England. It provides a shared evidence base for everyone - in government, services, schools & colleges, parents & families, communities, and employers - to reflect upon and deliver better wellbeing outcomes for all children and young people.

Personal wellbeing

The trends presented in this report indicate that children and young people's subjective wellbeing, measured annually, appears to have dipped in 2020 and recovered close to pre-pandemic levels by 2021, remaining at similar levels in 2022 (The Children's Society, 2020, 2021, 2022). During the 2021/22 academic year, while wellbeing on most measures remained consistent, anxiousness among both primary and secondary-age pupils appears to have increased and is higher than in 2020/21 (DfE, 2022e).

Governing boards and Academy trusts to discuss and note pupil wellbeing in their settings.

Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance - February 2023

Governing boards and Academy trustees are expected to:

- ✓ Regularly monitor and consider the approach to promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing within the school to understand how it is working.
- ✓ Satisfy themselves that the building of emotional resilience is sufficiently delivered through school curriculum and pastoral support, promoting a strong ethos and culture.
- ✓ Support the school to take a holistic approach to promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing.

Governing boards and Academy trusts to note their responsibilities.

School food: guidance for governors, updated 7 February 2023

It is the statutory responsibility of the governing body and trustees to ensure the [School Food Standards](#) are being met and [Ofsted](#) are putting a much greater focus on how schools are creating a culture and ethos of healthy eating.

The Department for Education recommends that all governors “work with their senior leadership team to develop a whole school food policy that sets out the school’s approach to its provision of food, food education (including practical cooking), the role of the catering team as part of the wider school team and the school’s strategy to increase the take-up of school lunches.

Extract from guidance says the board should:

- ensure that school food is included within the remit of one of the governing boards committees as part of the school’s wider health and wellbeing strategy
- ask the senior leadership team to develop and review a whole school food policy which includes a healthy packed lunch, vending and drinks policy
- check what continuing professional development training is in place for all teachers and support staff to support their knowledge of health and wellbeing
- see how the lunchtime experience contributes to the culture and ethos of the school when making a school visit
- have a member of the governing body attend school council and School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) meetings
- ask the SNAG and school council to provide feedback on the quality and enjoyment of school food and overall lunchtime experience
- work through the questions in the School Food Plan’s practical guidance with your school leaders, creating a culture and ethos of healthy eating
- check with the headteacher and catering manager that standards are being met across the whole school day
- ask how your catering staff are supported and integrated into school life
- obtain and review meal take up data each term
- work with your senior leadership team to identify trends and issues and create a plan for increasing take up
- establish what action you could take to improve the quality and take up of meals
- ask the senior leadership team and business manager to review the current pupil premium sign-up system and look at good practice to help maximise registrations - you can read the [free school meals guidance](#)
- ask the senior leadership team and business manager to conduct a review of the current catering contract and ensure the specification is appropriate and that the terms are being met – where they are not being met, establish what improvement action will be taken

Governing boards and Academy trusts to ask their senior leadership team about the plan and that it is reviewed regularly.

[School Attendance Guidance Training Webinar, effective governance that supports stronger attendance- July 2022](#)

William Day-Brosnan, Department for Education School Attendance Policy lead, and Diverse Academies webinar about effective governance which supports stronger attendance.

Governing boards and Academy trusts to note their responsibilities.

[National Professional Qualifications \(NPQ's\)](#)

NPQs are available for teachers and leaders who want to develop their knowledge and skills in specialist areas of teaching practice. There are:

- 4 leadership NPQs in senior leadership, headship, executive leadership, and early years leadership
- 4 NPQs for teachers and leaders who want to develop their expertise in specialist areas of teaching practice
- Study can last between 12 and 18 months, depending on your chosen NPQ. Your provider will determine the course structure, content, and method of delivery.
- As part of the government's long-term education recovery plan, it was announced in May 2022 that funding for fully funded NPQ training scholarships will be available in academic years 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024.

Governing boards and Academy trusts to note.

[Data protection in schools, updated 3rd February 2023](#)

The data protection officer in your school is responsible for:

- advising school leaders and staff about their data obligations
- monitoring compliance
- conducting regular data audits
- developing and updating data protection policies and procedures
- monitoring who in the school has access to personal data
- advising when data protection impact assessments are needed
- answering data protection enquiries from staff, parents, and pupils
- making sure privacy notices are regularly reviewed and updated
- supporting and advising staff who have data protection queries
- communicating with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- **reporting to the governing board or trustees about data protection**
- **advising the governing board or trustees on data protection risks**
- advising on and co-ordinating responses to information rights requests
- making sure all assets containing personal data are appropriately managed and secure

- data retention policy

The data protection officer role includes a significant level of responsibility. You should make sure they have the appropriate time, resources, and support to carry out the role effectively.

Find out more [here](#).

Governing boards and Academy trusts to note their responsibilities.

Advice for clerks and appeal panels on school admission appeals, updated 20 January 2023

It's the responsibility of the relevant admission authority to convene the panel, including appointing a clerk.

The clerk to an appeal panel must be independent of the school and the education functions of the local authority. They must have knowledge of the [School Admissions Code](#), the [School Admission Appeals Code](#) and other law relating to admissions, including equalities legislation.

The role of the clerk is to make all the necessary administrative arrangements for the appeal and give advice on procedure and admissions law. The [School Admission Appeals Code](#) sets out certain responsibilities of the clerk.

Note: The Schools Admission Appeals Code was revised in October 2022

Essential reference information for clerks involved with admission appeals.

All schools to receive defibrillators by the end of the school year

Described as a "huge milestone" by the Education Secretary Gillian Keegan, the DfE has announced that all state-funded schools in England, currently without a defibrillator will receive one by the end of the academic year.

The rollout will supply over 20,000 defibrillators to nearly 18,000 schools. To give schools the tools and knowledge they need to use their new defibrillators including how to make them available to the community, the [Oliver King Foundation](#) and other leading charities have supported the creation of updated guidance.

Information

Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) – February 15th 2023

- ✓ This is a reminder that the [school resource management self-assessment checklist](#) is now open for academy trusts to complete and return by Tuesday 15 March 2023.

All academy trusts with an open academy on 31 December 2022 must submit a checklist.

- ✓ Willis Towers Watson is providing risk management support for all [RPA](#) members through audit, guidance, and advice. As part of the risk management support, RPA members are invited to a workshop covering:
 - how to develop a safety culture within your school through good leadership
 - consequence management and how to instil the correct behaviours to control risk

Who should attend?

The workshop is aimed at those with responsibilities for:

Risk Management within the Senior Leadership Team

Setting high level risk management strategies and objectives

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis:

[9 March 2023](#)

[23 March 2023](#)

- ✓ The free school meal (FSM) protections policy was introduced in 2018 to protect those eligible for FSM from becoming ineligible while Universal Credit (UC) is being rolled out. This was originally set to last until March 2022 and was subsequently extended to March 2023.

The end date for protections has now been extended further until March 2025. This is when the DfE expect UC roll-out to be complete for most cohorts.

Trust boards, for information

Ofsted

[School inspection data summary report \(IDSR\) – 14th February 2023](#)

This guide gives an overview of the inspection data summary report (IDSR) for primary and secondary schools, along with information to help interpret the charts.

Updated primary inspection data summary report (IDSR). The main changes are revised key stage 2, final key stage 1 and final phonics data. Also included are minor changes to the pupil movement section of the secondary school IDSR.

Governing boards and Academy trusts to note.

[National School Governance Awareness Day - 28th February 2023](#)

This year's National School Governors' Awareness Day will take place on 28th February and will feature an exciting and informative programme of events throughout the day which aim to celebrate, develop,

and inspire those in governance across the country. What's even better is there is no charge at all to get involved; it is free to all.

Information

Education recovery in schools in England

National Audit Office report

The DfE said that support should be targeted at disadvantaged pupils, given their greater learning loss, but gave schools freedom to decide how best to help pupils catch up. There is limited evidence on how extra direct funding for schools was spent and how far it was used to support disadvantaged pupils. Take up of the centrally run NTP schemes was lower than DfE intended but school-led tutoring boosted take-up to above target. Disadvantaged pupils have been more likely than other pupils to receive tutoring through the NTP, although only a minority have received this extra support. Research indicates that pupils' learning loss is generally reducing but disadvantaged pupils remain further behind the expected level of achievement than other pupils.

Lots of questions for governing boards and Academy trusts to raise with their senior leadership team.

National Education Union (NEU)

Staff who are members of the NEU are holding a strike on 2nd March 15th and 16th March 2023.

Information

Nominate your clerk and board for an Outstanding Governance Award

Has your board demonstrated effective governance and outstanding strategic leadership? Are you on a journey of improvement? Have your efforts made a positive impact on your school(s) or trust?

Entries can be submitted until 9am on Monday 27 March. You can find the nomination forms and information sheets for each category on the [Outstanding Governance Awards page](#).

Course reminder

Wednesday 15th March, 6.00pm-7.30pm

Open Q & A meeting for chairs, vice chairs and committee chairs, for SLA and non SLA boards.

Please let us have any specific areas of interest and questions in advance.

Book your place [here](#).

Late information:

Ofsted

[Art should command an important place in every school](#)

This report explores the factors that contribute to a high-quality art education. It sets out a broad conception of curriculum quality that draws on the education inspection framework as well as art education research, art history, art criticism, aesthetics, and art practice.

DfE

[DfE Free school meals, February 2023](#)

Following the discussion/questions this morning.

The DfE advice is non-statutory, and is designed to help recipients understand their obligation to provide free school meals to disadvantaged pupils **in maintained schools, academies, and free schools in England.**

This means that pupils who were eligible on 1 April 2018, or who became eligible since then, continue to receive free meals, even if their household is no longer eligible under the benefits/low-earnings criteria, up until March 2025 and then until the end of their phase of education.

New applicants for free school meals on or after 1 April 2018, who are in receipt of Universal Credit and have earnings above the earned income threshold, will not be eligible for free school meals.

Spring term 2023

Clerks briefing meeting date for your diary

Wednesday 22nd March 2023 at 10.00am Please book a place [here](#)

Edited from material from: BBC, Department for Education, Fischer Family Trust, Information Commissioners Office, London Borough of Hillingdon, National Governance Association, NHS, Ofsted, Schoolsweek, The Times, Times Educational Supplement



