



# Clerks' Monthly Briefing

June 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**

**Phone: 01895 717321**

**Email: [office@governor.support](mailto:office@governor.support)**

**Website:**

**<http://www.governor.support>**

**[Twitter.com/govsandclerks](https://twitter.com/govsandclerks)**

## **Agenda**

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

### **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 (General Data Protection Regulation). 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 (Governing Board) 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](mailto: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 (Department for Education) 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](mailto: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.

## **Autumn 2023 Term Governor & Clerk Training Courses**

Please can you remind your governors of the range of courses that will be 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](#).

**Please ask your colleagues to let us know if they cannot attend after booking a place. A phone call or email.**

## **Agenda reminders**

### **Items to consider**

- ✓ Keeping Children Safe in Education, change from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023
- ✓ Staffing arrangements for September
- ✓ [Strike action](#) (July 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>)
- ✓ Staff wellbeing charter
- ✓ Reminder, Providing a 32.5-hour school week from September 2023
- ✓ Music
- ✓ School uniform
- ✓ Governing board diversity
- ✓ Pupil Attendance in school, ([latest DfE data](#))
- ✓ [Pupil premium](#)
- ✓ Exclusions
- ✓ RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) policy and publication
- ✓ Review policies and update as necessary
- ✓ Data protection

## **Department for Education (DfE)**

### **Open consultation**

[Working Together to Safeguard Children: changes to statutory guidance](#) -closes 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Working Together to Safeguard Children is the multi-agency statutory guidance that sets out expectations for the system that provides help, support and protection for children and their families. It applies at every level from senior leaders to those in direct practice with families, and across all agencies and organisations that come into contact with children.

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### **Education staff wellbeing charter**

The education staff wellbeing charter is a declaration of support for, and a set of commitments, to the wellbeing and mental health of everyone working in education.

The charter is for education staff in England. This includes temporary and support staff. All state-funded schools and colleges are invited to sign up to the charter as a shared commitment to protect, promote and enhance the wellbeing of their staff.

## [Download a copy of the charter](#)

### Governing boards and trustees to review

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### [Keeping children safe in education, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023](#)

Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment.

The 2023 version will come into force on 1 September 2023.

NSPCC summary of changes [here](#).

Governing boards and trustees to note:

- ✓ Recruitment updated guidance states that schools should inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of pre-recruitment checks.
- ✓ Training for governors and trustees, latest content emphasises that governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and then at regular intervals. Training should provide them with the knowledge to ensure their school's safeguarding policies and procedures are effective.
- ✓ Online safety Additions to the guidance state that governing bodies and proprietors should regularly review the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems.
- ✓ They should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff are:
  - aware of and understand the systems in place
  - manage them effectively
  - know how to escalate concerns when identified

### Governing boards and trustees to note changes and action

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### [School Uniforms, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023](#)

Requirements for governing boards

The DfE have published statutory guidance on the [cost of school uniforms](#) which the governing board must have regard to when developing and implementing their uniform policy.

Governing boards will also need to ensure that in developing and implementing their uniform policy, they comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010 and consider key considerations such as safeguarding requirements and the health and safety of their pupils.

## Information and review

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### [School suspensions and permanent exclusions, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023](#)

Guidance on the suspension and permanent exclusion of pupils from local-authority-maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units.

New guidance effective from 1st September 2023

See part 2 of the document for changes which include:

New guidance and amended regulations about a headteacher's ability to cancel an exclusion before the governing board has met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. This practice is sometimes known as withdrawing or rescinding an exclusion. If this occurs, the parents, the governing board, and the local authority, must be notified and, if relevant, the social worker and VSH (Virtual School Head). Further information on other actions that should take place following a cancelled exclusion is set out in paragraph 13.

- Governing board reinstatement meetings and IRPs (Independent Review Panel) can now be held via the use of remote access (for example, live video link) for suspension and permanent exclusions if requested by the parents, provided certain criteria are satisfied. Meetings held via the use of remote access should not be a default option and face to face meetings should always be encouraged. Further information is set out in Part Eleven.

### Governing boards and trustees to note

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### [School food, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023](#)

This is for governing boards of:

all local-authority-maintained schools  
pupil referral units (these provide education for children who cannot go to a mainstream school)  
academies and free schools  
non-maintained special schools (a school for children with special educational needs that the Secretary of State for Education has approved under section 342 of the Education Act 1996)

It includes information on:  
planning and provision of school food  
the school food plan  
the provision of milk  
the free fruit and vegetables scheme

[Guidance for governors](#)

## Information

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### [Special educational needs in England, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023](#)

This publication combines information from the school census (state-funded schools), school level annual school census (independent schools) and general hospital school census on pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

The publication includes breakdowns by type of SEN provision, type of need, age, national curriculum year group, gender, ethnicity, English as a first language and free school meal eligibility.

Local authority data on EHC (Education Health and Care) plans is published in the [Education, health and care plans publication](#).

## Information

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### [Estate management competency framework](#)

#### [Functions, skills, and knowledge required to effectively manage the school estate, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023](#)

This framework useful if you have responsibility for overseeing or managing the school estate. This includes:

proprietors, leaders, and governors of schools  
charity trustees of academies and academy trusts  
trustees of schools  
school business professionals  
those with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school estate  
local authorities  
diocesan authorities and other religious authorities and bodies

Governing boards and trustees should read page 17 - 20 in the strategic planning with senior leaders.

[Top 10 estate checks for boards \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

## Information

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### [School resource management: building a stronger system, June 2023](#)

These documents are for:

- ✓ responsible boards, including:
  - governing bodies for local authority-maintained schools

- boards of charity trustees for academy trusts

## Information and guidance

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### [Data protection: privacy notice model documents](#)

Suggested privacy notices for schools and local authorities to issue to staff, parents, and pupils about the collection of data.

[Model document for governors](#), clerks to note for new governors joining the board.

## Discussion and note any changes required

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### [Pupil attendance in schools, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023](#)

Headline facts – 2023

<b>Overall absence rate</b> <b>8.9%</b> during week commencing 22 May 2023	<b>Authorised absence rate</b> <b>5.5%</b> during week commencing 22 May 2023	<b>Unauthorised absence rate</b> <b>3.4%</b> during week commencing 22 May 2023
<b>Overall absence rate</b> <b>7.5%</b> academic year to date	<b>Authorised absence rate</b> <b>5.1%</b> academic year to date	<b>Unauthorised absence rate</b> <b>2.3%</b> academic year to date
<b>Persistent absence rate</b> <b>22.1%</b> academic year to date		

## Discussion and note school position

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### [New drive to better understand the role of AI \(Artificial Intelligence\) in education, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023](#)

The DfE are seeking views on how generative artificial intelligence (AI) is being used across education in England, and the opportunities and risks it presents.

Closes on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023.

## Information/discussion

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### **[New board to oversee government's plan to improve music education, 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023](#)**

Starting this September, schools are also being asked to teach music for at least an hour a week as part of their music development plan, supported by our national network of [music hubs](#).

## Discussion and review

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### **[Flexible working support: a programme for Multi-Academy Trusts and Schools, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023](#)**

Flexible working can help recruit and retain teachers, improve staff wellbeing, and promote equality in the workforce.

Despite the benefits, there are challenges associated with implementing flexible working in schools.

Flexible working ambassador multi-academy trusts and schools (FWAMS) have been appointed by DfE to support school leaders in implementing and embedding flexible working in their schools.

Online course for governors and senior leaders, free to register:

Flexible working in Multi-Academy Trusts and schools ([flexibleworkingineducation.co.uk](https://flexibleworkingineducation.co.uk))

## Information and discussion on future staffing and recruitment

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### **ESFA (Education & Skills Funding Agency) updates, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023**

The Department for Education, in conjunction with Willis Towers Watson, has developed a [bespoke training seminar](#), 'The Regulatory Mock Trial' on 7 July 2023.

This workshop has been designed to assist governors, trustees, directors, and members of Senior Leadership Teams to understand the challenges they face in implementing compliant health and safety management systems, enhance the prospects of avoiding enforcement action and improve the school's defensive capabilities where a prosecution is pursued.

## Information

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### [Ofsted announce updates to inspections processes](#)

Following the “wide ranging debate about the impact of school inspections”, Ofsted has announced several updates impacting inspection processes, complaints, and the support available for wellbeing.

They include:

- ✓ clarity on the threshold for effective and ineffective safeguarding provision.
  - ✓ where safeguarding is found to be ineffective, inspectors will now return within three months of report publication.
  - ✓ clarity for headteachers on sharing their draft inspection report
  - ✓ as part of their review on the complaints process, Ofsted also announced a [consultation](#) with the aim of improving dialogue between leaders and inspectors, reducing administrative burden, and increasing transparency.
- ☺ To avoid the 2-day national strike on Wednesday 5 and Friday 7 July, we will notify schools on **Friday 30 June** for inspections taking place on **Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 July**.

**Governing boards and Academy trusts to note.**

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### Clerks briefing meeting date your diary

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 10.00am**

Please book a place [here](#)

### Additional information

#### **Discussion regarding confidential support for headteachers, senior leaders and teaching staff**

Many schools in the borough have Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) so board members should review what is in place. Staff who are members of their Professional Association can also access confidential support as part of their subscription.

#### **Further background information**

##### [Headrest](#)

Offer a FREE 24/7 wellbeing telephone support service for headteachers. As experienced ex-heads ourselves, we volunteer our services for free and receive no funding or payments. Established in 2020, we provide a safe, sympathetic, and confidential listening ear at the end of the phone. Whether you feel stressed, anxious, or overwhelmed, we are here to listen. We've got your back.

0800 862 0110

[hello@headrest.co.uk](mailto:hello@headrest.co.uk)

## [Education Support](#)

Teachers and education staff can call us to talk through all kinds of concerns including:

- ✓ Managing difficult feelings or situations
- ✓ Advice on boundary setting and self-care
- ✓ Getting the best out of your work relationships
- ✓ Planning for or processing difficult conversations
- ✓ Any challenging personal matter
- ✓ And we're also here if you simply need to vent!

08000 562561

## [Professional association information](#)

### [National Association of Headteachers \(NAHT\)](#)

Call us on 0300 30 30 333. Our advice line is open from 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

### [Association of School and College Leaders \(ASCL\)](#)

The hotline is staffed by one or more duty officers from **8.30am to 5pm term time**, and **9am to 5pm in school holidays, during the working week**. At these times, calls are first answered by a member of the reception team who will request brief details such as membership number and name to enable calls to be transferred as efficiently as possible.

Access to Member Support Hotline – weekend emergencies and public holidays

In cases of urgency or emergency at weekends, a duty officer will be available to respond between **10am and 3pm**.

Members requiring urgent advice and support at a weekend should call 0116 2991122 and use the information provided via the answering machine to contact the duty officer.

### [National Education Union \(NEU\)](#)

As well as the support of your workplace rep and your branch, you'll have access to online advice, and the NEU employment Advice Line for expert advice.

## [NASUWT](#)

### [Wellbeing tools for teachers](#)

