

Clerks' Monthly Briefing

January 2024

**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

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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 (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

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

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 email

Spring 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.

Please remind new or recently appointed governors to book a place on the New Governors three-part course. Follow this link to [book](#).

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 please.

Agenda reminders

Items to consider

- ✓ What will your board do differently in 2024?
- ✓ DfE Consultation
- ✓ Pupil Attendance in school
- ✓ Pupil & PE (Physical Education) premium
- ✓ Behaviour & Exclusions
- ✓ Special Educational Needs/EHCPs
- ✓ Review complaints policy and update as necessary
- ✓ [School financial value standard](#)
- ✓ Academy trusts, self-assessment
- ✓ Winter weather arrangements
- ✓ Artificial Intelligence-Data protection

We are seeking feedback from your board members about future training course topics, times, and days.

Please can you share our [survey link](#) with all members of your governing board?

An overview of key issues for Governing Boards to consider

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DfE Consultation

Consultation

[Gender Questioning Children](#)

Non-statutory guidance for schools and colleges in England, December 2023

The DfE consultation is seeking views on the content of the guidance and whether it will help to support schools and colleges, teachers and leaders to make considered and lawful decisions in relation to children who are questioning their gender and the wider school and its community.

The draft guidance clarifies that schools and colleges do not have to, and should not, accept all requests for social transition. Where a school considers a request, they should take a very cautious approach, including watchful waiting periods, and ensuring parents are fully consulted before any decision is taken.

From the outset, schools and colleges should also consider the context and seriousness of the request including whether social influence is involved.

In exceptional cases where a request to social transition is agreed, children, teachers or staff at a school should not be required to adopt the use of preferred pronouns and there must be no sanction, verbal or otherwise. Where a teacher or child does not adopt the new pronouns, they should use the child's preferred name. Schools should ensure that bullying is never tolerated

[The Education Hub](#)

Gender questioning children: Everything you need to know about new draft guidance for schools

[Consultation document](#)

Consultation closes:12th March 2024

[A world-class education system: The Advanced British Standard](#)

Over the next decade, the DfE are seeking to introduce the Advanced British Standard (ABS), a new Baccalaureate-style qualification framework for 16- to 19-year-olds, which will increase teaching time, require the study of math's and English to 18 and ensure students study a greater breadth of subjects.

The consultation document sets out proposals on the way the ABS could work. Your views will help the DfE to continue developing their approach for ABS and how it is delivered.

Consultation closes:20th March 2024

DfE updates

[NEW Working Together to Safeguarding Children, December 2023](#)

The Government has now published the revised version of Working Together to Safeguard Children following the consultation.

Key points

- No statutory roles or functions have been removed
- Increased emphasis on multi-agency working
- Changes to law included, for example, Domestic Violence Act 2021
- Greater emphasis on extra-familial harms and exploitation
- Sets out what a good assessment (report) might include
- Useful annex of resources in appendix B

Review and update Safeguarding policy

Invite DSL (Designated Safeguarding Leads) to board meeting

[DfE summary of changes document](#)
[NSPCC summary document](#)

[Prevent duty guidance, December 2023](#)

Extract

Education settings should have robust safeguarding policies in place to ensure that those at risk of radicalisation are identified and appropriate support is provided. Settings should consider the process for how learners or staff raise concerns regarding radicalisation internally and the approach for submitting a Prevent referral, including use of the Prevent national referral form. 52 These policies and procedures will help an institution satisfy itself and government that it is able to identify and support people.[Prevent duty fact sheet](#)

[Awareness course](#)

If you're unsure what Prevent is and what signs to look for when it comes to risks of radicalisation, awareness is the first course in our Prevent duty training.

It's for anyone working with members of the public on a regular basis, for example those who work in education, health, probation, police and local authorities.

[Refresher course](#)

This course is for anyone who has already completed the awareness course and would like a reminder of the key points. We suggest you do this course every year, however you should refer to your local Prevent training policy for advice.

[Pupil attendance in schools](#)

Headline facts and figures - 2023

Overall absence rate 8.0% during week commencing 4 December 2023	Authorised absence rate 5.5% during week commencing 4 December 2023	Unauthorised absence rate 2.5% during week commencing 4 December 2023
Overall absence rate 6.6% academic year 2023/24 to date	Authorised absence rate 4.5% academic year 2023/24 to date	Unauthorised absence rate 2.2% academic year 2023/24 to date

[Pupil Premium, December 2023](#)

Primary pupils premium	2024/2025	£1,480.00
Secondary pupil premium	2024/2025	£1,050.00
Service pupil premium	2024/2025	£ 340.00

View the funding for each LA school [here](#)

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework, from January 2024

Summary of changes for group and school-based providers, since the previous issued framework.

Group and school-based settings must:

- ensure setting managers appointed on or after 4 January 2024 hold a level 2 maths qualification, or they achieve one within 2 years of starting in the position (Section 3, Staff: child ratios)
- ensure your setting's safeguarding policies and procedures include all electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, not just mobile phones and cameras (Section 3, Safeguarding policies and procedures)
- ensure all level 2 and level 3 staff members hold a valid paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate, otherwise they cannot be included in ratio (Section 3, Paediatric first aid) Find out more [here](#)

GCSE Subject Content, December 2023

Added subject content for British Sign Language and the 'Subject content for teaching from 2024 onwards' list.

School Teachers Pay Review Body (STRB)

Letter from Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education to STRB regarding the review and recommendations for 2024/5 pay.

In considering your recommendations on pay and views on wider structural matters you should have regard to the following:

- a. Potential equalities impacts associated with any changes proposed to the STPCD (School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document).*
- b. The cost pressures that schools are already facing and may face over the year (and how they affect individual schools).*
- c. The need to ensure that any proposals are not too difficult or onerous for schools to implement.*
- d. Evidence of the national state of teacher and school leader supply, including rates of recruitment and retention, vacancy rates, and the quality of candidates entering the profession.*
- e. Evidence of the wider state of the labour market in England.*

f. Forecast changes in the pupil population and consequent changes in the level of demand for teachers.

g. The Government's commitment to increasing autonomy for all head teachers and governing bodies to develop pay arrangements that are suited to the individual circumstances of their schools.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in Schools, December 2023

This publication provides non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE). It has been produced to help schools maximise the benefits of their on-site Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs or 'defibrillators') and sets out how schools can make their defibrillators more widely available and how additional defibrillators can be purchased.

Governance Handbooks

We understand that the newest versions of the Governance Handbooks are in their final-draft stages, subject to internal approvals by the Department for Education, and will be published this term (there will a separate version for maintained and academy schools). Sadly, this has been heralded before!

Schools causing concern, January 2024

Statutory guidance on local authorities' and regional directors' responsibilities relating to schools and PRUs causing concern.

To note: Schools judged Inadequate solely due to safeguarding

This guidance has been updated to reflect changes Ofsted has made to its inspection process in relation to a school judged Inadequate solely due to ineffective safeguarding.

The updated text sets out that where a school is judged Inadequate for Leadership and Management, solely because of ineffective safeguarding (but judged Good or Outstanding in all other key areas), Ofsted will carry out a monitoring visit within 3 months of publication of the Inadequate judgement to determine whether improvements have been made.

The monitoring visit will either confirm the school remains Inadequate or, if inspectors are satisfied that safeguarding is now effective and there has been no decline in the school's performance in other areas, regrade the school.

Ofsted Updates

Sir Martyn Oliver announces school and further education (FE) inspections will begin from 22 January, after inspector mental health awareness training.

Sir Martyn Oliver will embark on a Big Listen with all sectors Ofsted inspects and regulates at the start of his tenure as His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills.

The Big Listen, to begin later this term, will allow Sir Martyn to hear directly from parents and professionals about the strengths and weaknesses of Ofsted's current approach to inspection and regulation.

School inspection handbook, December 2023

Ofsted will also make it clear through their inspection handbook that school leaders can be accompanied by colleagues in meetings with inspectors, and that they can share inspection outcomes with colleagues, family, medical advisers and their wider support group, before they are shared with parents.

School inspection data summary report (IDSR) guide, December 2023

This guide provides an overview of the inspection data summary report (IDSR) for primary and secondary schools, including schools with a sixth form and gives guidance on interpreting the data.

Anonymised IDSRs

These anonymised IDSRs are examples for a primary school and a secondary school with a sixth form:

- [IDSR example report: primary](#)
- [IDSR example report: secondary](#)

IDSR reports are dynamically generated based on school data and can differ from school to school.

Academy Updates

Electric vehicle salary sacrifice guidance for academy trusts, December 2023

Guidance for academy trusts looking to provide employees with the option to enter a salary sacrifice for electric vehicles.

All academy trusts which have an open academy on 31st December 2023 must complete and submit a 2023 to 2024 self-assessment checklist each year.

- check they have appropriate financial management and governance arrangements
- check they are meeting the right standards to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management
- identify areas for change to make sure resources are used to support high-quality teaching and the best education outcomes for pupils

As well as helping trusts to identify areas for potential improvement in their resource management, the checklist provides assurance to ESFA (Education Skills & Funding Agency) that trusts have the right processes, systems and structures in place to help them to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management.

The deadline for academy trusts to submit their 2023-24 checklist is 15 March 2024. The form will go live in January 2024.

News in Brief

[Edexcel announces plans to allow digital exams from 2025](#)

Exams such as GCSE English will no longer need to be handwritten, according to one of the UK's largest assessment boards.

[10th January, Message from Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education](#)

Welcome back after what I hope was a relaxing and peaceful break over the festive period. As the new term begins, pupils will be enjoying swapping holiday stories with their friends and getting back into a routine. Like you, I want as many pupils as possible through the school gates this term relaxed, refreshed and ready to learn getting back into a routine. Like you, I want as many pupils as possible through the school gates this term relaxed, refreshed and ready to learn.

Follow the link to read full message.

Spring Term Governor and Clerk Courses

Clerks Briefing	Thursday 8th February 2024	10.00am-11.00am
Clerks Briefing	Tuesday 5th March 2024	10.00am-11.00am
Meeting the Inspector	Wednesday 17th January 2024	6.30pm-8.00pm
Understanding school finance for academy and maintained school governors	Wednesday 31st January 2024	6.30pm-8.00pm
New Governors Course Part 1	Tuesday 6th February 2024	6.30pm-8.00pm
New Governors Course Part 2	Tuesday 20th February 2024	6.30pm-8.00pm
New Governors Course Part 3	Tuesday 5th March 2024	6.30pm-8.00pm
Q & A meeting for chairs and vice chairs	Wednesday 6th March 2024	6.30pm-8.00pm