



## Clerks Briefing, November 2024

An overview of key issues for Governing Boards to consider and review over the Autumn Term 2024.

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### [What maintained schools must or should publish online](#)

Information that schools maintained by a local authority must or should publish on their website.

Updated 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024](#)

#### **Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges**

Find out what standards your school should meet on filtering and monitoring.

Schools have a statutory responsibility to keep children and young people safe online as well as offline. Governing bodies should make sure their school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, as detailed in the statutory guidance, [Keeping children safe in education](#).

Filtering is preventative. It refers to solutions that protect users from accessing illegal, inappropriate, and potentially harmful content online. It does this by identifying and blocking specific web links and web content in the form of text, images, audio, and video.

Governing bodies have overall strategic responsibility for meeting this standard. They should make sure that filtering and monitoring provision is reviewed at least once every academic year. This can be part of a wider online safety review. The review should be conducted by members of the senior leadership team, the designated safeguarding lead, and IT support. It should also involve the responsible governor. You should record the results of the online safety review and make it available to anyone who is entitled to inspect that information.

Questions for the governing body and trustees to ask school leaders, to help improve a school's understanding of its cyber security risks.  
Follow the [link](#) for 8 questions to ask.

### [Cyber security training for school governors by Lgfl](#)

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 5.30pm-7.00pm  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 5.30pm-7.00pm  
To find out more and book a place follow the link above.

### [Pupil attendance in schools, week 41 data](#)

This release covers the 2024/25 academic year from 09 September to 11 October 2024. National level figures are included in underlying data for the week commencing 02 September 2024. For the full 2023/24 academic year and termly pupil absence data, including by characteristics please see this [historical publication](#).

### [School-Based Nursery Capital Grant Information for eligible schools about the School-Based Nursery Capital Grant \(SBN Capital Grant\) 2024 to 2025.](#)

The School-Based Nursery Capital Grant is a one-time grant available for eligible state-funded primary-phase schools. Schools can bid for up to £150,000 of funding to use solely for capital expenditure, to convert surplus space within a school building so that it is suitable for nursery provision.

Applications for grant funding are open to state-funded primary-phase schools in England who already offer some early education, such as a reception class. Projects must use surplus space in the school building (including at primary-phase satellite sites).

This guidance is valid for the Autumn 2024 application window, which runs from 17 October 2024 until 19 December 2024.

DfE webinar for schools, local authorities and other responsible bodies who are completing or supporting an application through the school based nurseries

capital grant on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November at 2.00pm. Click on the link to register and book a [place](#).

### [Support and intervention in schools](#)

Statutory guidance on local authorities' and regional directors' responsibilities relating to schools and PRUs which require support or intervention.

This guidance describes how:

- local authorities and regional directors will intervene in underperforming local-authority-maintained schools
- regional directors will intervene in underperforming academies

Evidence that governors may be failing to deliver on one or more of these strategic roles could include, but is not restricted to:

- evidence of poor financial management and oversight, such as consistent overspending of the school's budget beyond agreed thresholds
- high governor turnover;
- a significant, unexplained change to their constitution;
- the governing body having an excessive involvement in the day to day running of the school ;
- lack of appropriate engagement with data. This might include, but is not limited to, data on pupil learning and progress, or staff recruitment; and/or
- not sufficiently managing risks associated with strategic priorities and school improvement plans

### [Maintaining your estate](#)

Planning and prioritising maintenance works to ensure the learning environment is safe, warm and weatherproof.

Your maintenance plan may cover a 3 to 5 year period but should schedule a list of works to be undertaken in each year. These should be based on the current condition of the buildings, identified from condition surveys.

Identify the main priorities for the estate, including:

- regular planned preventive maintenance works
- any planned capital or investment projects, such as window replacement

## Health and safety

Advice on legal responsibilities for managing and maintaining the school estate and ensuring school buildings and land are compliant with statutory and regulatory standards.

You should ensure the safety of pupils, staff and visitors by managing your statutory responsibilities and other health and safety issues in the school estate to minimise health and safety issues.

To keep the estate in a safe condition, you should:

- clearly define and designate responsibilities for health and safety issues
- identify all property related health and safety issues
- take appropriate actions to avoid or minimise risks
- monitor risks and issues
- follow the relevant legislation (you must indicate a statutory requirement)

Where the local authority or other responsible body is the employer, they may delegate roles and responsibilities to school staff, but they must undertake regular monitoring to ensure that local management arrangements are being implemented and are effective.

## Planning and organising your estate resources

Advice on governance, budgeting, procurement and emergency planning procedures to help you manage your estate.

Strategic estate management is not just for property professionals. It should be:

- led by the board with support from executive leaders and school business professionals
- integrated with other business and financial planning processes

Everyone has a role to play. Recognising estates in your governance arrangements makes sure that:

- everyone is aware of their role and responsibilities

- executive leaders are responsible for the estate
- decisions reflect your visions and priorities
- there's appropriate challenge and transparency
- property budgets are effectively managed
- property services are coordinated to achieve value for money
- the risks associated with the use and occupation of land and buildings are minimised

### [Managing asbestos in your school](#)

This non-statutory guidance provides an overview of requirements for the effective management of asbestos materials within schools and colleges. It explains the obligations on duty holders and signposts to more detailed guidance.

### **Role of governing boards**

The board is accountable for the performance of your organisation. As a governor or charity trustee, your role is to make sure that your organisation is being managed properly.

The board should ensure that it maintains oversight of the estate. This could be reviewed regularly by a relevant committee and reported to the full board.

You may find it helpful to designate a board member to have specific responsibility for the estate.

Your board should challenge your executive leaders to make sure they are:

- keeping the estate safe and secure for everyone
- aware of investment needs in the estate
- planning for longer term needs as well as the short term
- allocating resources in line with strategic priorities
- making best use of available budgets
- using land and buildings efficiently and driving value from the estate
- getting best value through procurement
- looking for opportunities to work with others to be more efficient
- prepared for an estate related incident or failure

### [Top 10 estate checks for boards](#)

### [School teachers' pay and conditions, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024](#)

Statutory guidance on pay and conditions for teachers in England.

Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024

## Schools to Receive Funding for National Insurance Increase Amid Concerns on Allocation

Schools are set to receive financial support to cover the upcoming rise in employer National Insurance contributions, which was announced in the recent Budget. However, educational leaders have expressed concerns about the specifics of how this funding will be allocated and whether it will fully cover costs across all institutions.

The Department for Education has assured sector representatives that schools will be compensated at a national level for the "net effect" of the NIC increase.

## Ofsted Updates

[Example of a new style school report which doesn't give overall judgement](#)

## Academy Updates

The Department for Education will end its [grant scheme](#) for schools choosing to become an academy at the end of this year and has "no plans" to continue to run its trust capacity and trust establishment and growth funds.

[Academy conversion support grant](#)

The academy conversion support grant gives schools up to £25,000 to spend on the process of converting to an academy.

The grant supports schools to convert voluntarily. It will end on 1 January 2025.

To apply for the grant, your school must:

- meet the eligibility criteria
- submit your application by 20 December 2024

[What academies and further education colleges must or should publish online](#)

Trusts and FE colleges must publish their audited annual reports and financial statements by 31 January each year, ensuring transparency in financial matters.

New sections in the updated guidance include pay gap reporting, PE and sport

premium funding, and advice on collecting and publishing data on trust board diversity. Updated 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### [Academies accounts return](#)

The academies accounts return (AR) 2023 to 2024 is now available for all trusts to complete their return. The deadline for AR submission is 28 January 2025.

### [School resource management self-assessment checklist](#)

This self-assessment checklist helps academy trusts check they are managing resources effectively and identify any adjustments they need to make.

All academy trusts that have an open academy must complete the self-assessment checklist each year.

The checklist helps governing bodies and trust boards:

- 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

### [Managing academy trust reserves](#)

A good-practice guide to help academy trusts manage their reserves and create robust reserves policies.

## News in Brief

### Help us to help you and your board

Please let us know about any:

- board appointments, reappointments and resignations
- contact emails and mobile numbers of members of the board
- dates of appointment and term of office
- type of governor
- positions held, i.e., chair, vice chair, committee chair, member of a committee, link governor
- copies of the approved board minutes



## Governor and Clerk Training and Development Programme

Autumn term 2024 & Spring term 2025

To book a place on any course:

- **Essential please remember to use the same email account when booking a place and joining the Microsoft Teams meeting**
- Please follow the course link(s) where you will find full details about each course. You will then be able to register and book your place(s),
- You will receive an automatic email reply which will confirm each booking, together with a Microsoft Teams meeting link for the course.
- An automatic reminder email will be sent one hour before the course.

Any questions you have about a course, or any other queries please contact us:

Phone: 01895 717321 Email: [office@governor.support](mailto:office@governor.support)

<b>Clerks briefing meetings</b> <i>Clerks only, book your meetings by clicking on the dates opposite please.</i>	<a href="#">Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December</a> <a href="#">Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025</a>	All at 10.00am- 11.00am	
<b>Class of 2023/2024</b> A review of your first year as a governor. <i>What worked well, &amp; what would have been better if?</i>	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Making sense of the data</b>	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Understanding the responsibilities of the board, clerk &amp; headteacher in exclusion and IRP hearings</b>  <i>It is essential to attend part 1 &amp; 2 of this course</i>	Part 1: Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> November  Part 2: Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> November	All at 6.30pm- 8.30pm	<a href="#">Part 1</a> <a href="#">Part 2</a>  Register and book each part above
<b>Finance for governors of maintained schools &amp; academies</b>	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Hot Topics/Question time</b> Just a selection of some of the topics we can discuss: Budget, Exclusions, Behaviour, Staffing	Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>The Inspector Calls</b>	Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	6.30pm-	<a href="#">Register</a>

<b>Is your board prepared?</b> <i>Update of current inspection framework &amp; possible future structure</i>		8.00pm	<a href="#">and book a place here</a>
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## Summary of autumn agenda items

- VA and foundation schools-any changes to admission arrangements
- Review and discuss school development plan
- Review and discuss budget report
- Review safeguarding arrangements and procedures
- Review PE and Sport Premium impact report
- Review Pupil Premium statement
- Review pupil outcomes from performance data from previous academic year
- Review special educational needs and EHC plan information
- Update and publish boards register of interests
- Elect chair and vice chair, agree term of office
- Publish Governor attendance at meetings
- Review and adopt code of conduct
- Evaluate governing board diversity
- Review and conduct a governing board skills audit
- Review committee structure, membership, and terms of reference
- Review and approve policies in accordance with policy schedule
- Conduct headteacher performance and pay review
- Review staff appraisal arrangements
- Skills audit and agree priorities

## Clerk email address

In light of recent feedback, we strongly advise clerks to use a generic email address in all cases, especially if your email details are on the school website.

Our suggestion: [clerk@yourschooladdress.com](mailto:clerk@yourschooladdress.com)

## Late information

[GSS](#)

Please remind and discuss our Service Level Agreement with your board.

Governor Support Service Ltd

Phone: 01895 717321

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

Website: [www.governor.support](http://www.governor.support)