



## JOINT BOARD OF EDUCATION

### Church School Governance Update – December 2017

### Issue 3

#### **Governance Coordinator Update**

Welcome to Issue 3 of the Church School Governance Update. It is that time of year when schools are buzzing with Christmas activities, nativities, decorations and excited children.

From a Governance point of view, it is the time when the first term is almost over, we can have a couple of weeks without thinking too much about governance and spend time remembering the things that are most important to us.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you for all that you do in supporting our schools and ensuring that they embrace their Church of England status. We would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and new year from all of us at the Diocesan joint education team.



*Sharon*

#### **Session regulations**

Session regulations apply to all maintained schools who have a statutory duty to provide 380 sessions per academic year. Two sessions must be operated each day separated by a break.

As governors you must ensure that your school is meeting the minimum number of session regulations. Any planned closures will reduce the number of sessions available. (Please note that this does not apply if a school has had to close for an exceptional reason such as snow or a flood.)

Questions governors should be thinking about include the following:

- If my school is planning to close at lunch time for the Christmas holiday, has that session been accounted for elsewhere?
- If you have staggered start dates for different year groups, are you confident that they all meet the minimum number of sessions throughout the year?

Governors can decide to reduce a session length or number of sessions, but there is a statutory duty to meet the minimum number of sessions in a school year. As governors, you need to be confident that you are achieving this.



### **Ofsted Webinar on Governance**

In November, Ofsted carried out a webinar on governance. It answered some of the common misconceptions that governors have about what Ofsted expect when carrying out inspections. The webinar is now available on 'YouTube' and can be found [here](#).



### **Appointing Foundation Governors**

I have had a few queries recently from clerks and Chairs of Governors asking why they have not heard about a foundation governor that they have appointed.

This is a reminder that when you have found someone that is willing to be a Foundation Governor, they need to complete the Foundation Governor application form. This then needs to be signed by the Parish Priest and PCC. Please note that the parish do not appoint Foundation Governors, they only nominate them for appointment.

Once signed, the Foundation Governor must take the form and their ID into school to initiate their DBS check. The school will also sign the form to confirm that they have seen ID.

The form then needs to be sent to me for processing and appointing. The Diocesan Board of Education appoints Foundation Governors.

Please note that we are not able to make any Foundation Governor appointments until their DBS check has come back. Please also refer to the letter sent to schools from Jeff Williams – Director of Education regarding DBS checks recently.

Forms can either be scanned and emailed to me electronically or sent through the post to me at the Portsmouth office.



### **DBS Checks**

All Headteachers, Chairs and Foundation Governors of maintained schools should have recently received a letter from Jeff Williams – Director of Education, to explain that the Diocesan Board of Education will require all reappointments of Foundation Governors to have a new DBS check carried out.

This will come into effect for any reappointments made from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. Both the Diocese of Portsmouth and Diocese of Winchester currently DBS check all clergy and volunteers every 5 years or when they have a change of role, whichever is sooner.

As we are responsible for appointing Foundation Governors, we need to ensure that safeguarding measures are in place. The decision to recheck every 4 years falls in line with the term of office of a governor in the majority of cases.

The new DBS details will need to be added to the reappointment form before the reappointment can be processed.

Please note that ex-officios will also be required to have a new DBS check every 4 years. A prompt will be sent to clerks, to remind them when an ex-officio DBS needs to be completed.

P&WDAT Schools – The trust policy is for all staff and governors to be re-checked every 3 years rather than on reappointment.

A copy of the letter has been attached to the email along with this Church Schools Governance Update.

### **Top Tips for writing minutes**

Writing minutes is not easy. Minutes should be clear and concise and a reflection of the decisions made, the actions arising and the questions asked.



Please ensure that your minutes clearly identify the following:

- Name of school, date and time of meeting, who attended, apologies and absence. Note if you do not receive apologies from a governor, please put them down as absent and not under apologies.
- Time the meeting started and confirmation that the meeting was quorum.
- Declarations of interest should be noted on every agenda and minutes.
- Governors names should not be used in the content of the minutes. Eg – SB asked ....., should say Governors asked..... When questions are asked they are asked on behalf of the governing board and should not be linked to an individual.
- Actions should be clearly identifiable. Either a separate column or actions table, or highlighted in bold or another colour.
- Questions should be clearly identifiable, a lot of Governing boards now write their questions in a different colour or use italics to highlight them.
- Support should also be clearly identifiable.
- AOB should not be an agenda item on the minutes. There should be no need for AOB, as governance meetings should be well planned in advance.
- Minutes should be signed by the Chair and each page should have the initials of the chair.
- Minutes should not be a word for word version of the discussion, but a summary of the key points raised.
- Minutes should be available within 14 calendar days of the meeting taking place for maintained schools.
- If a governor arrives late for a meeting or leaves a meeting early, then this should be noted in the section of the minutes relating to the topic being discussed at the time of the arrival or exit. Eg – often you see a time next to their name at the top. That does not show at what point of the discussion they arrived and that is what is important.
- Minutes should clearly be marked draft until they are finalised and signed.

The Diocesan office require a copy of your minutes. Once your minutes have been finalised, please email a copy though to the Governance Coordinator -

([Sharon.brueton@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:Sharon.brueton@portsmouth.anglican.org).)

P&W DAT Schools – Please send your minutes directly to Amanda Johnson  
([Amanda.johnston@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:Amanda.johnston@portsmouth.anglican.org))

## Our Vision for Education – Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good

### Governor Training

Please note that we have the following governor training sessions coming up in January



#### The Role of Governance in a Church of England School

Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2018	5.30 – 7.00	Pilgrims Cross Primary Andover	<a href="#">17/18-03</a>
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#### Foundation Governor recruitment

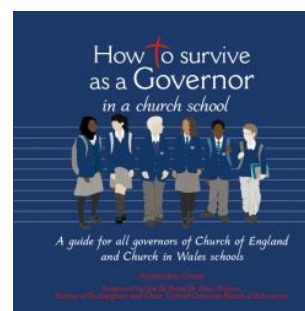
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2018	5.00 – 8.00	Peninsular House Portsmouth	<a href="#">17/18-14</a>
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To book, please click on the link which will take you through to our Eventbrite page.

### How to survive as a Governor in a Church school

An excellent guide for all governors of Church of England schools. Easy to read and a useful book to support you in your Foundation Governor role.

(If you do order a copy, make sure you get the Church of England version)



### Admissions Policies – 2019-2020

You should have now looked at your admission policy for 2019-20.

If you are a **Voluntary Aided School** or an **academy** and you are going through a period of consultation, then please ensure that you deal with any queries or questions raised.

Once you have completed your consultation or agreed your policy, you will need to go through a period of 'Determination'

All admissions authorities must determine (formally agree) admission arrangements every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and there has been no consultation.

Admissions authorities must determine admissions arrangements for entry in September 2019 by the 28th February 2018.

Once you have determined your admissions arrangements, you must notify the Local Authority and Diocese and must publish a copy of your policy on your website.

You must note in your FGB minutes when you have determined your policy.

If you are a Voluntary Controlled School, then your admissions policy will be agreed by the Local Authority. If you reside within a MAT then the trust is the admissions authority.

If you haven't already done so, please ensure that you send a copy of your admissions policy though to me. ([Sharon.brueton@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:Sharon.brueton@portsmouth.anglican.org))



**Is your school coasting?**

The Department for Education (DfE) has updated its guidance on primary and secondary school accountability to include the 'coasting' schools definition for 2017. This is a data based accountability measure which sits alongside the floor standard as a way for the DfE to identify schools where pupil outcomes may be a concern.

The floor standard is the minimum standard that the DfE expects schools to meet; the 2017 floor standards are:

A primary school will be below the floor standard if less than "65% of pupils meet the expected standard in English reading, English writing and mathematics" or the school does not make the required amount of progress, which is "at least -5 in English reading, -5 in mathematics and -7 in English writing".

A secondary school will be below the floor standard if: "it's Progress 8 score is below -0.5, and the upper band of the 95% confidence interval is below zero".

The DfE confirmed that a school be considered to be 'coasting' if:

For secondary schools, in 2015, fewer than 60% of pupils achieved 5 A\*-C at GCSE" and, in 2016 and 2017, if "the school's progress 8 score was below -0.25".

For primary schools, "in 2015, fewer than 85% of pupils achieved level 4 in English reading, English writing and mathematics and below the national median percentage of pupils achieved expected progress in all of English reading, English writing and mathematics" and, in 2016 and 2017 "fewer than 85% of pupils achieved the expected standard at the end of primary schools and average progress made by pupils was less than -2.5 in English reading, -2.5 in mathematics or -3.5 in English writing".

(NGA Website)

**Welcome to a Multi Academy Trust**

The second edition of the 2017-2018 guide is now available from the NGA. An excellent guide for new trustees and also a useful reference guide.

For more details visit the [NGA website](#).

*Wishing you all a Merry  
Christmas from the Education  
Team.*

**Contact Details**

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