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DGAT Governance Briefing

Volume 1: April 2020

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Dates for your diary

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic all planned face-to-face events are on-hold.

We will be in touch with revised dates as soon as possible.

Welcome from Rachel Howie

A warm welcome to the very first edition of our governance briefing compiled and created by Nicki Wadley our Governance Lead. We hope you find it useful and informative in your role as local governors. We welcome feedback and are keen to further develop this as a resource for you, so please let Nicki know if you have any further suggestions for inclusion.

I recognise the important role that you play as governors when the landscape is normal but your role of support for the school and the staff is vital in these strange and difficult times. I am extremely proud of the way in which every school in the DGAT family has responded to remaining open for the children of key workers and for our most vulnerable pupils – including over the Easter period. Please continue with your support for the leaders and staff as they are going well above and beyond what would usually be expected.

In the coming months we are holding a virtual Chairs of Governors forum to discuss with Chairs what the new normal look like until schools reopen to all pupils. Following this, in due course, they will be holding a local governing body meeting to cascade information and ensure that the appropriate key tasks of local governance continue. I recognise there will be challenges to meeting virtually but Nicki and I will work with you to support you in this.

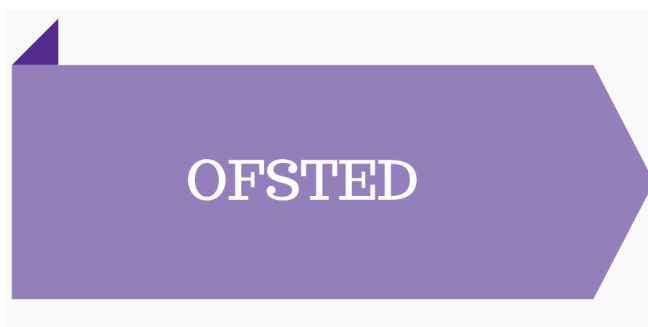
With my best wishes for you and your families in these challenging times.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rachel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Important sector updates



Please note due to the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) some of the dates and timescales given below may be subject to change.



The Ofsted inspection exemption for outstanding schools to be lifted from September 2020

Subject to the outcome of a recent consultation and a Parliamentary vote around 3,700 schools and colleges which are currently judged as 'outstanding' will be visited by Ofsted within five years, which is the normal timescale for inspections of 'good' schools. It is important that, with support from DGAT, school's and local governing boards engage in robust self-evaluation and have a sound understanding of the new inspection framework and how the standards against which the school will be judged.

Proposed revisions to Ofsted post-inspection arrangements

In March, Ofsted launched a consultation that proposes revisions to its post-inspection arrangements. The key proposals include implementing consistent post-inspection timelines across all inspection remits and changing how the inspectorate handles complaints. Ofsted expects the new arrangements to be introduced from September 2020.

Ofsted to investigate schools' financial decision-making

Beginning on a trial basis, Ofsted will be looking at financial decision-making to see if it provides "more insight into the quality of leadership and management". The announcement follows on from the government's plans for Ofsted to give schools financial ratings. It's a

FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS SCHEME

The government has launched a scheme that is set to give pupils easy access to free period products in all state-maintained schools and colleges. From 20 January 2020, schools and colleges were able to order a range of period products from the supplier Personnel Hygiene Services Limited (PHS). Having periods should not be a barrier to education for any learner. It is not a universal offer of free period products to everyone under the age of 19. This would be prohibitively costly and would not represent good value for taxpayers' money.

JACK'S LAW

'Jack's Law' came into force in April 2020 providing an automatic right to paid time off for bereavement and will allow those who suffer the loss of a child to receive two weeks' statutory leave for bereavement. The DGAT 'Authorised Special Leave Policy' has been updated to include this entitlement and is available on the [DGAT website](#).

PAY AND BUDGETS

DfE publishes its pay recommendations to the School Teachers' Review Body

The DfE has recommended that all teachers receive a pay rise in September 2020 – from 6.7 percent for new starters to 2.5 percent for experienced teachers and school leaders.

Under the proposals, starting salaries will increase to £26,000, with those in outer and

Confirmation of this is expected to be published later in the year and we will update local governing bodies further.

Legislation passed on new minimum per-pupil funding

The government has previously announced that it will increase minimum per-pupil spending to £5,000 in secondary schools and £3,750 (rising to £4,000 in 2021/2022) in primaries

Legislation laid in Parliament last week means that local authorities will be responsible for ensuring schools in their area receive this minimum level of funding from 2020/2021.

Pupil premium rates to rise from April 2020

The DfE has announced that the pupil premium rate will increase from April 2020 by £25 for primary pupils (from £1,320 to £1,345) and £20 for secondary pupils (from £935 to £955) – this represents an increase of approximately 1.8 percent, in line with inflation.

The pupil premium plus will rise by £45 per pupil (from £2,300 to £2,345) and the service premium will rise from £300 to £310 per pupil.

Budget 2020

In the Budget, the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, announced a number of measures for schools including confirmation of previous education spending pledges, plus:

- £25,000 on average being given to each secondary school to invest in arts activities
- £29 million a year being invested to improve PE teaching by 2023/2024
- An additional £7 million to support 11 maths schools – one in each region across the Country
- Abolishment of the reading tax - a VAT which is currently charged on all digital publications e.g. e-books, e-magazines and e-textbook
- An increase in the DfE resource budget from £6.3 billion to £67.8 billion

There was also news of a decrease in funding for capital projects - the DfE capital budget for 2020/21 will decrease from £4.6 billion to £4.5 billion.



The DfE have published a 'School governance update' which includes clarification for governing boards around key messages related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. You can read the update [here](#).

Rachel and Nicki are meeting virtually with our local governing body chairs on 21 April to discuss the next steps for local governing body meetings during the period of school

The DfE's consultation about proposed changes to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSiE) for September 2020 has been suspended due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The DfE have said:

"We do not know when the consultation is likely to resume but are monitoring the situation closely. At this point in time we are unable to answer any further questions about the consultation, or when any revisions to KCSiE will be made.

We would like to thank anyone who has already submitted a response, your feedback is greatly appreciated and will be taken into account in the final consultation report.

Keeping children safe in education (KCSiE) 2019 remains statutory guidance."



The DfE have also published guidance for all schools and governing boards which provides interim safeguarding guidance during the coronavirus pandemic. The guidance can be found [here](#).

DGAT have updated the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in line with the interim guidance from the DfE. This has been shared with all headteachers, chair's of governors and is available on the Trust website.

Safeguarding governors may wish to consider the following questions in response to the changes in provision due to the coronavirus pandemic and updated Safeguarding Policy and processes:

- Have you seen and read a copy of the updated DGAT Safeguarding Policy?
- Have you confirmed that all staff have read and understood the updated DGAT Safeguarding Policy and signed to confirm?
- Is the DSL keeping a log of the safeguarding updates being shared with staff?
- How have leaders identified vulnerable children?
- Have the children expected to attend school attended and if not what process was implemented to check on them?
- What have been leaders concerns so far about keeping children safe?
- What additional precautions has the school made to its risk assessment for this period?
- How are the school's chosen safeguarding systems e.g. CPOMS/My Concern supporting changes to provision and safeguarding practice?
- What support is the school receiving from other agencies? Is this sufficient?
- How are remote meetings held for vulnerable children working?
- How are leaders and school staff checking on the well being of pupils?

Recommended Resources



In each edition of the DGAT Governance Briefing we will share with you resources which we think will interest you and be helpful to you in your role.

Andrew Hall Safeguarding Briefing



Andrew Hall is a national safeguarding consultant who is well respected and regarded across the sector. Every Monday morning at around 7.00am he will deliver to your inbox his FREE safeguard briefing which will bring you all of the latest DfE updates, case studies and information and good practice from schools.

You can sign up for Andrew's weekly briefing [here](#).



Governors for Schools support governing boards to recruit volunteers to their boards but they also provide a large number of free training resources including webinars and free e-learning courses. These can be used by governors on an individual basis or could be used as a training resource during a local governing board meeting.

Take a look what is available for you and your local governing board [here](#).

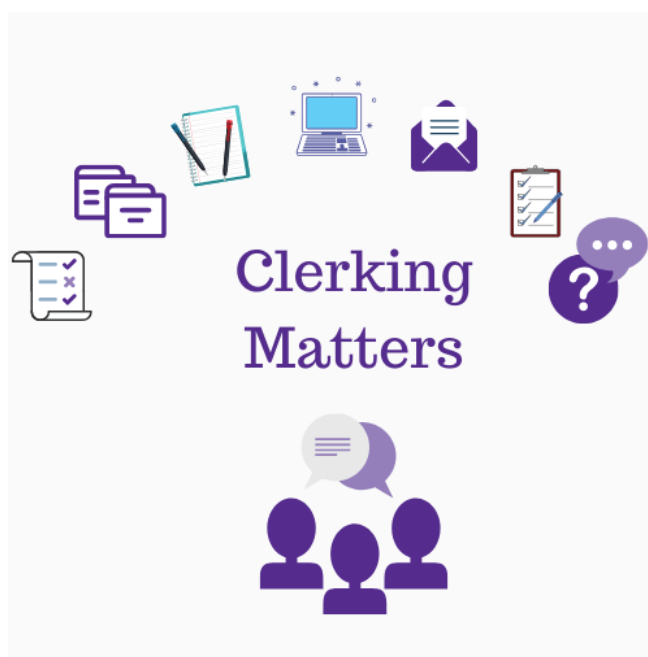
TheSchoolBus

TheSchoolBus is a whole school leadership resource site providing expert advice – guiding you through the next steps – templates which are easily amended and ready-to-use in minutes and model policies made in-house and compliant with the latest DfE and Ofsted guidance (Please note TheSchoolBus policies must not be used in place of a DGAT policy being available).

DGAT have purchased unlimited licenses for all schools, including all clerks and local governors. If you do not currently have access please contact Nicki who will arrange your access.

You can find out more about what is on offer [here](#).

If you know of any useful resources which other local governors would find helpful please send to Nicki at nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk and we will share them in the next edition of the DGAT Governance Briefing #sharingiscaring



As we navigate these current unprecedented times the role of Clerks on the smooth running and efficiency of our Local Governing Bodies has arguably never been more important. Clerks provide both support and guidance to governance structures within DGAT and are a vital part of the creation of a system of long-term resilience to ensure governors can focus on the most important matters at hand - how to protect and support our schools and most importantly our children through the change in provision and coronavirus pandemic.

Here are some ideas of tasks you may wish to focus on during the coming weeks whilst

- Spend time reviewing the existing and recently updated documents in the Clerk's area of the DGAT website - if you need the password contact Nicki.
- Undertake a review of the published governance information on the school website and ensure compliance.
- Complete a self-review of your meeting minutes - there is a Clerk to Governors Self-Audit Checklist on the DGAT website.
- Review the published governance information on GIAS and ensure compliance.
- Complete and return the DGAT Governance Database spreadsheet to Nicki.



The next DGAT Clerks' Forum is planned for Tuesday 22nd June 2020 - with a focus on minute writing and confidential minutes.

We will keep you updated of any changes to this date.

Nicki will host a virtual Clerking update via Zoom on **Thursday 23rd April at 6.30pm** - please check your emails for the meeting invitation and link to join.

In the meantime, if anyone needs any support or a virtual cuppa, get in touch with either Nicki or Ellie.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSE)

From September 2020:

- Relationships education will be compulsory in all primary schools.
- RSE will be compulsory in all secondary schools.
- Health education will be compulsory in all schools except independent schools.

Primary schools may also choose to teach aspects of sex education; however, this is not a requirement. All primary schools must have a written policy for relationships education and secondaries must have an RSE policy. Where a maintained primary school chooses to teach aspects of sex education (which go beyond the national curriculum for science), the

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Schools must publish these policies on their websites and must provide a copy of the policies free of charge to anyone who requests them.

DGAT are developing a trust-wide RSE Policy which will be shared with Headteachers in the first week back after the Easter break so they can provide feedback and shape the Trust's RSE provision.

Training will be provided to local governors by Jackie Buckland once the policy has been agreed.

 **The following resources have been reviewed and updated and are available on the DGAT website.**



Co-opted Local Governor
Application Process



Co-opted Local Governor
Application Form



Co-opted Governor
Appointment Letter



DGAT Local Governor
Commencing a Term of Office



DGAT Register of Interests
Form



DGAT Local Governing Board
Monitoring Plan Template



DGAT Local Governing Board
Visit Template



The following are new resources which are available for you to use on the DGAT website.



DGAT Local Governing Board Attendance Record Template

Up-to-date governor attendance at local governing board and committee meetings must now be published on the school website. This template enables clerks to easily capture information on one template to update the website following each meeting.



Co-opted Governor Non-Appointment Letter

This template letter can be used to inform applicants that the local governing board have decided not to appoint them as a local governor.

Compliance check

In each 'DGAT Governance Briefing' we will focus on areas of local governance which are subject to statutory compliance requirements to support your LGB to review its practice and processes.



Section 128 checks for local governors

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2019) explains that a section 128 direction prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools.

A section 128 direction will also be disclosed where an enhanced DBS check with barred

We have updated the DGAT local governor appointment templates to include confirmation that a section 128 check has been completed for local governors on their appointment. These are all available on the DGAT website in the clerks section.

Local governing bodies have received reminders about the requirement for section 128 checks to be undertaken and meeting minutes should confirm that the appropriate safeguarding checks have been undertaken for newly appointed governors.

Skills audits

The [Academies financial handbook](#) (2019) states that the Trust board should identify the skills and experience needed for local governance and use this information to address any skills gaps through recruitment, training, induction and any other development activities. At DGAT we meet this requirement by each local governing body undertaking an annual skills audit and are currently developing a DGAT Local Governing Body Skills Audit.

If your local governing body hasn't undertaken a skills audit in the past year then please action this as soon as possible. If you need any guidance or support please get in touch with Nicki.



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