

WELCOME

Dear Governors

Now that we have reached the end of the busy summer term, we hope that you are able to enjoy a well-deserved rest during the summer break to re-charge your batteries and prepare for the new academic year ahead, with all the changes it will bring.

Governance has had a very busy year with the introduction of eLearning and our new partnership with Modern Governor. We hope that many of you are discovering how effective and convenient eLearning training can be, and have had a chance to look at the range of courses launched since April – currently totalling 34. There is more information on governor training further on in this issue.

The **GovernorHub** database is still being very well received, and the premium upgrade is being used by more and more schools - an update from GovernorHub's annual conference in June is included in this issue. Many governors have benefited from the support available through the **Governance Helpdesk** (by telephone or email) which continues to provide the governors and headteachers of subscribing schools/academies with detailed advice and support on safeguarding, instruments of government, statutory guidance, governor recruitment and school based complaints.

Currently we are preparing for our Hertfordshire Governors Annual Conference which will be held at the Hertfordshire Development Centre in Stevenage on 16th November 2019. The conference, titled 'Governors' understanding education: a look at the curriculum', will feature a range of seminars and a varied exhibition. Bookings for the event will start in the autumn term – remember to add the date to your diary.

We are all looking forward to an exciting new academic year ahead and wish you a peaceful and enjoyable summer.

Best wishes from

The Governance team

We offer the following services to support governors and schools:

Governance Helpdesk	Governance Consultancy	Governor Training	Chairs Service
External Review of Governance	Clerking Service	GovernorHub database	

For details of what these services include please contact: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

	Telephone	Email
Governance support for maintained schools and subscribing academies (Helpdesk)	01438 843082	governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk
Clerking support for subscribing schools (Clerking Service/Clerks Training and Support)	01438 843082	governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk
Governor recruitment support for maintained schools and subscribing academies (Helpdesk)	01438 843082	lea.governors@hertsforlearning.co.uk
Clerking Service enquiries, queries and additional meetings (complaints/exclusion hearings etc.)	01438 844113	kelly.king@hertsforlearning.co.uk
Chairs support and guidance for subscribing schools (Chairs Service)	01438 843082	governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk
Training advice and guidance for subscribing schools (Governor Training)	01438 843082	governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk
Training bookings, cancellations or in house bookings (with agreed dates)	01438 845111 (option 2)	training@hertsforlearning.co.uk
GovernorHub support and enquiries	01438 843082	governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk



The Sunflower Federation – two years on...

Merja Paakkonen, the executive headteacher of the Sunflower Federation in Hertfordshire has given us her thoughts on the development of the partnership between Breakspeare and Meadow Wood special schools two years on.

The Sunflower Federation development

The Sunflower Federation was established in May 2017, formed from Breakspeare and Meadow Wood Schools. It was the first hard federation of special needs schools in Hertfordshire. The Federation is governed by one governing board that manages all accountabilities and responsibilities for both schools.

Our federation is a unique school community that strongly believes that synergy and co-operation within the wider school community brings the best outcome for all its members.

We were very clear from the beginning that we had to make strategically sound decisions to increase value in all areas of the organisation. One decision was to form a hard federation; another was our commitment to develop one community based on shared values, vision and aims; the third was to establish leadership and administrative processes that operate across the federation. These principles provided us with coherent and strong guidance, driven from shared values that shaped our leadership, administrative processes and practice.

Our motto 'Opportunities for All' summaries the following statements:

- **MISSION** - Provide the best practice to develop individuals' potential.
- **VISION** - All members of our community will benefit from our work.
- **VALUE** - Provide flexible, individually tailored opportunities to learn and be proud.
- **AIM** - Individuals are able to use the skills they need.

All of the above points apply both to our work with the students, as well as with our staff.

The Sunflower Federation aims to:

- provide the students with outstanding teaching and learning
- establish a school community that operates as one
- establish working practices, systems and processes that are united in their principles and purpose
- ensure the best use of resources, knowledge and skills across the school community
- celebrate the individuality of our schools

As a result of a systematic and carefully designed restructure and reorganisation processes we have made changes that have enhanced the organisational development by creating something new (learning opportunities for the students and staff), merged together areas that bring efficiency (leadership and administration) and discharged something that doesn't serve us any more (most of our separate policies).

The Sunflower Federation strategy identifies four key priority areas of action:

- to keep the best interests of the students and staff at both schools at the heart of the working practice
- to carefully implement systems and processes at both schools to ensure best practice
- to utilize the unique qualities and knowledge at both schools
- to establish the federation of schools that is innovative, secure and ambitious in all elements of school practice providing the highest quality of teaching and learning for all students

Students and staff. The students have benefited from the federation as it has provided opportunities for enrichment in both schools. Our curriculum and assessment is stronger than before as it has been further developed utilising experience and different models of our schools. The continuous professional development opportunities have been delivered in both schools and to staff from both schools. As a result, the staff have shared their practice through visits and peer observations. We have widened collaboration between the specialist teams and this has made these teams stronger. The staff's skill development has had a significant, positive impact on students' teaching and learning.

Qualities and knowledge. Both schools have specific areas of expertise and sharing this knowledge has sped up development. Working in partnership with another school has widened the horizon to benefit from open dialogue with colleagues. The wider organisation has also made recruitment more attractive. For example it has enabled us to appoint some full time posts for teaching and administration sharing costs between the schools. The bigger organisation has provided more opportunities for succession and therefore supported retention.

Systems and processes. Forming the federation, has provided us with an opportunity to review our previous practice; reevaluate our needs and design new practice. The federation's executive leadership, headteacher and two deputies, are visible and work in both schools – they know all the students, the staff and practices. This has enabled continuous assessment of practice, processes and implementation. The restructure of the leadership changed middle leaders' roles and responsibilities and established some specialist lead roles to work across the federation. The leadership change of the federation has consolidated distributed leadership and ensured speedy, targeted interventions and monitoring. Restructure of the admin team has been extremely important to ensure smooth, streamlined operational processes across the federation. It has widened the admin team and therefore made it stronger as there is more than one person who understands and can undertake specific tasks.

Innovations. We have been able to respond to the demand to increase the numbers of SLD (Breakspare) students by having a new unit for SLD students on the Meadow Wood site. This has had a positive impact on sharing practice and merging different cultures together. Our governing board has gone through an amazing conversion; not only have they the best interest of the students of both schools at the heart of their decision making but they have also developed close links with the staff. The governing board has formed a rigorous work plan and link governors' role descriptions to ensure targeted actions. They have also quickly adapted to the use of new technology such as Chromebooks that have been provided by the federation, to access the GovernorHub. By working closely together we have developed more effective ways to manage our policy updating cycle.

It has been a fascinating and rewarding experience for me to lead this transformation of two schools operating as one community. The key methodological principles throughout the process have been to establish direction (clarity of purpose), thinking strategically (choice making based on facts assessing new options), empowering others (collaborative partnerships), enabling effectiveness (developing accountability), exercising open communication (reflection and risk-taking), aiming for excellence (feedback and evaluation) and being open to learn together.

Leading change in organisation is building its sustainable future. To me it means that all members of the community are:

1. aligned and coherent in their understanding of core purpose and strategic aims
2. have skills and knowledge to carry out their roles successfully
3. exercise autonomy, empowerment and ability to facilitate change
4. adapt forward looking, solution focused, explorative, positive mind-set
5. maximise synergy of skills, knowledge and working practice, by working collaboratively and in partnerships
6. strive for continuous improvement through reflection, seeking feedback and evaluating the impact of their actions

It is reassuring that in the 2018 and 2019 staff surveys over 90% of staff say that The Sunflower Federation makes our schools stronger and improves outcomes for the students. I am confident that together with our governing board and my staff we will ensure continuous improvement within the federation.

Merja Paakkonen,

Executive headteacher of The Sunflower Federation

Hertfordshire governor honoured at Buckingham Palace

One of our governors was recently honoured with an invitation to a garden party at Buckingham Palace. Rosemary Bolton has written an account of her day in May.



I was fortunate enough to be nominated by the NGA to attend a Buckingham Palace Garden Party. This was in recognition of my work as a school governor, both at Presdales School for 12 years and with other schools supporting Chairs and sitting on various panels. It was a great honour and I was delighted to accept.

Several thousand guests are invited to each garden party so we met lots of new people queuing up to get in and in the grounds itself. It was humbling to find out why others had been invited. There are so many other volunteers across the country giving their time and talents for the good of the community. It is wonderful that the Queen can acknowledge some of us in this way.

Rosemary Bolton,

Former Governor, Presdales School

Amanda Spielman speaks at the Wellington Festival of Education

Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's Chief Inspector spoke on the 20th June 2019 at the Wellington Festival of Education and stressed the importance of preparing young people for life in modern Britain.

For a full transcript of the speech, please visit: <http://bit.ly/ASWF1>

Academies Financial Handbook updated

The *Academies Financial Handbook* was updated at the end of June with changes coming into force from 1st September 2019. For the updated version, please visit: <http://bit.ly/AcFHbk>

Key changes include:

- Section 1.38
states there is an expectation that the Trust should appoint a clerk to the Board of Trustees and that this person is not someone who is a trustee or the accounting officer of the Trust
- Section 2.14
encourages Boards to refer to guidance on good estates management
- Section 2.18
requires management accounts to be prepared monthly which include income and expenditure, variation, cash flows and balance sheets as a minimum
- Section 2.36
states that the Trust must have a risk register in place and that it must be maintained
- Section 2.42 and 2.43
state that Trustees must approve the whistleblowing policy/procedure
- Section 3
outlines new requirements for internal scrutiny including the internal audit process
- Section 6
covers regulation and intervention including clarification of the powers of intervention the Secretary of State has to deal with those who do not manage an Academy Trust appropriately

DfE guidance on EU exit: no deal preparation for schools

In January 2019, the DfE published guidance for schools in England on how to prepare for a no deal exit from the European Union. The guidance offers advice on admissions, employer responsibilities and safe recruitment, travel to the EU, data protection and food supplies.

For the full guidance please visit: <http://bit.ly/EUND1>

EEF publishes guide for governing boards

The Education Endowment Foundation is an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement. They have recently published a guide to becoming an evidence-informed school governor and trustee. EEF's top ten tips based on the report can be found here: <http://bit.ly/EEFB2>

HCC Overview and Scrutiny Committee constitutional change reduces the amount of Parent Governor representatives

At a meeting held in May 2019, the decision was taken to reduce the number of Parent Governor Representatives on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from four to two. There was no change to the terms of office so all current appointees are in office until 30th April 2021.

Guidance for safer working practice updated

The guidance for safer working practices for those working with children and young people in educational settings was updated in May 2019 and includes updates on photography, video and other images, communication with children and transporting children.

Further details on the revised document are available here: www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org

Keeping Children Safe in Education update

The draft version of Keeping Children Safe in Education to be published in September 2019 includes additional guidance for safeguarding checks on governors. Paragraph 173 states:

*“Governors in maintained schools are required to have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS. It is the responsibility of the governing body to apply for the certificate for any of their governors who do not already have one. Governance is not a regulated activity and so governors do not need a barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity. **Schools should also carry out a section 128 check for school governors, because a person subject to one is disqualified from being a governor. Using the free Employer Secure Access sign-in portal via the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) Teacher Services web page <https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk/>, schools can easily check if a person they propose to recruit as a governor is barred as a result of being subject to a section 128 direction”***

The DBS Team at HCC have sent out instructions via the School Bulletin.

EFSA DBS requirement update

In April 2019, the EFSA issued an update with regard to the form which should be used to get a countersignature from the Secretary of State for new Academy Trust Chairs plus details on the new address to send completed forms to.

For guidance, please visit: <http://bit.ly/GDBS5>

Herts for Learning's Modern Governor service in new partnership with GovernorHub



Herts for Learning (HfL), is delighted to announce a new partnership with GovernorHub to support the training and development of governors and trustees in schools and academies across England.

HfL's Modern Governor service – the leading online learning offering for school governors and academy trustees – is partnering with GovernorHub to simplify access to high-quality online learning and to make governors' training records accessible through GovernorHub's governing board management tools.

The new partnership enables subscribing local authorities to offer a full service to complement and support their work in face-to-face training, clerking and advice. The partnership enables further opportunities for local authorities to develop eLearning content tailored to local needs, as well as offering growing multi-academy trusts a package to support and develop governance across geographical and institutional boundaries. Individual schools subscribing to the services will of course benefit from this new partnership.

Andrew de Csilléry, Managing Director, HfL, said:

"I am delighted that we have reached agreement with GovernorHub to provide improved access to Modern Governor, and seamless integration of a wider range of tools that benefit governors and trustees. We share a common commitment to helping schools deliver a great education, so the combination of Modern Governor and GovernorHub is a natural partnership."

Local authorities and multi-academy trusts offering both Modern Governor and GovernorHub will be able to offer their schools seamless access between the two services. In addition, local authorities and MATs will also have the option to extend their own online CPD by building eLearning modules to run alongside Modern Governor's 60+ modules.

GovernorHub subscribers who do not yet use Modern Governor will be able to add the mobile-friendly online learning service to their subscription and give their governors instant access. Similarly, Modern Governor customers will easily be able to give governors access to GovernorHub's GDPR-compliant document management, board organisation and clerking tools, either directly or through their local authority governor support service.

Neil Collins, GovernorHub co-founder, said:

"We're thrilled to be able to offer this to our existing customers. Our goal is to make life easier for governors, and there will now be no need to contend with multiple websites, logins and passwords. Governor training records will be automatically updated and can be downloaded as Ofsted evidence at the touch of a button."

The Modern Governor e-training modules are of the highest quality and extremely well received by boards. The content is engaging - they've had years of experience of 'getting it right'. This is a really great opportunity for governors and trustees."

The combined service is planned to be offered to subscribing schools during the 2019-2020 academic year. For further information contact hello@moderngovernor.com or info@governorhub.com.

Governor eLearning training expanded

Following the introduction of Modern Governor into our governor training service in April, we are delighted to announce that the second and third phases of online learning courses have now been launched and are available to governors of subscribing schools.



The 10 new courses launched in June cover topics linked to safeguarding and strategic leadership:

- Safeguarding the school governance
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Honour based violence and forced marriage
- Radicalisation
- Prevent
- Asbestos in schools
- Helping the headteacher get the best out of their governing board
- Governing board meetings
- Converting to academy status
- Strategic leadership for governors and trustees

Three more courses have been launched in July, as below:

- Financial monitoring for governors
- Headteacher recruitment
- Academy governance

These courses complement our existing online courses and provide you with further opportunities for accessible learning, having been designed to work across smart phones, tablets as well as all desktop and laptop computers.

Additional courses will be added to the catalogue over the summer, with the full suite of online learning courses available to subscribing schools and settings by September 2019.

All governors should by now have been sent an email containing a link to Modern Governor along with their login details. When accessing the system for the first time, they will be required to update their personal login details, and will need to keep these safe so that they can easily access their online training account in the future. Existing HfL governor eLearning courses are also now hosted within Modern Governor – so the Talent LMS site should only be accessed to complete courses already started and to download certificates for previously completed courses. Courses on the Talent LMS site will not be updated from this point on.

For support with accessing the training, please contact our customer service team at customerservice@hertsforlearning.co.uk or call 01438 845111 option 4.

To check if your school subscribes to governor training please contact Governance on 01438 843082 or email governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

GovernorHub update

Staff from HfL Governance Services have recently attended the GovernorHub annual conference, and were very impressed with the new features that being developed or under consideration by GovernorHub.

GovernorHub now services a total of 7,131 governing boards nationwide with 82,287 users. Currently there are just under 1.66 million documents stored safely on the system.



The following new features have been added to GovernorHub. Please let us know if you need support with finding or using them:

- access to folders in the documents section can be restricted so they are only visible to the members of certain committees
- external web links can be added to the documents section allowing governors to click straight from the folder to a webpage e.g. HfL CPD Hub or Modern Governor elearning website
- documents can be printed direct from the site rather than having to be downloaded first
- multiple links can now be added to messages on the noticeboard

The following upgrades are due to take place:

- the constitution page is being upgraded to make it easier to add members into the correct categories. The page will feature term of office expiry warning icons, and new warnings for when there are more people assigned to a category than the constitution allows. There will be a clearer way to assign vacancies, with a new display to also show those who aren't in the constitution and the ability to set multiple membership types.
- the membership page will have a new look with a better layout, display of governor type, support for multiple governor types and member photos now included.

The following features are under consideration:

- artificial intelligence to provide prompts around the site
e.g. Did you mean to add a link to a file in the documents section?
- easy, interactive tours for new members
- the ability for boards to download historical membership data
- an App update

If your school or academy is not yet subscribing to GovernorHub premium and you would like more information, please contact governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

New Ofsted framework briefing for Governors – 10th October 2019

HfL are holding a briefing for Governors on the new Ofsted framework on Thursday 10th October 2019, 6.30 – 8.30pm (6pm for refreshments) at the Hertfordshire Development Centre, Stevenage.

This session will provide an update on the changes of the new Ofsted inspection framework which comes into effect from 1st September 2019. The session will be a combination of input and time for discussion, reflection and questions.

Places can be booked via the CPD hub: <http://bit.ly/CPDH3>

Cost: £15 per delegate (subscribers to governor training) or £51 per delegate (non-subscribers)

Interested in becoming an HfL Clerk?

HfL clerks provide essential support and advice to governing boards across the county. The work is interesting and flexible with full training provided. We are recruiting for the South Herts/Watford, Bishops Stortford/Essex borders, North London and Bucks areas. For further details, please contact Kelly King: kelly.king@hertsforlearning.co.uk

THE EXCHANGE e-BULLETIN

Sharing education news and best practice

The Exchange e-bulletin is a way for schools and academies to receive timely and relevant news from local and national media sources. The purpose of this e-bulletin is to share the latest education news and best practice from Hertfordshire schools, alongside the latest Herts for Learning updates.

The e-bulletin is published every Tuesday during school term to ensure you remain up to date with the latest changes and updates to education. For further information, please visit:

<http://bit.ly/2LheUID>

The Chairs Service

With the holidays in sight, hopefully you are now winding down and re-capping on the progress of your school and within the board. We hope the following questions and considerations will help you with this period of reflection.



How do you evaluate yourself as a board?

This is a favourite Ofsted question for all that are in 'the window'.

How do you know you are effective as a board?

What do the stakeholders think of the board of governors?

Some boards use the NGA's *The Twenty Questions*. Other boards set themselves objectives every year – for the FGB and their Committees or engage with our **Self Evaluation Toolkit**, and many this year have opted for an **External Review of Governance**. It's important to try and vary your approach each year to get different perspectives. Try and be ruthlessly objective – be aware of 'Group Think'.

Reminder: A New Ofsted framework briefing is available for governors on Thursday 10th October.

What self-reflective tools are being used by individual governors?

What responsibilities have they taken on? What committees do they belong to?

What visits have they done?

A **self-reflective form** is available from the Helpdesk that you can distribute to all governors, enabling them to reflect on their contribution throughout the year. You could also offer to meet with every governor (try and share this with the Vice Chair) and go through the feedback. This can be enlightening all round, highlighting potential difficulties such as relationships within Team GB, but also helpful in giving you the opportunity to thank individuals – letting them know they are valued. It may also give you the opportunity of having a 'courageous conversation' and encouraging some to 'consider their future'.

How can Chair of Governors collect feedback from their board effectively?

The Chairs 360 is a supportive tool you may wish to consider. It allows governors to provide constructive feedback highlighting what you do well and areas for improvement, if any.

It may also be useful to have a business meeting to set the scene for the new school year in July, September or October. At this meeting you can concentrate solely on governing board matters, such as:

- the annual plan of work (for the board)
- code of conduct (with minimum commitment)

- role descriptors for all roles – governors, Chair and link roles.
- membership – are any governors' terms of office ending?
- if a skills audit is needed and if you will need to recruit any governors or associate members (Please note academies cannot have associate members)
- the succession plan for the board and Chair
- training for the board and individuals
- committees and if they are still fit for purpose
- Governor availability for panels
- considering a SWOT analysis for the board or school

If you require support on any of the above, you may wish to attend the **Becoming an Effective Chair** course planned for 12th October at Robertson House. Chairs, Vice Chairs, Committee Chairs and Aspiring Chairs are all welcome.

Please remember to ask for help as soon as possible when faced with difficult and complex issues. A problem shared is a problem halved, and can often prevent it from escalating.

This term Governance has received a high level of requests for independent governors to sit on hearing panels. Please ensure your governors are aware that they do not get involved in discussions that could ultimately lead to them being tainted and unable to sit on a panel in the event of a formal hearing. **If governors are approached they should not engage in discussions** but direct the person (whether a member of staff or a parent) through the appropriate channels (please check your policies as they will differ from school to school). Governors should be familiar with key policies such as complaints, disciplinary, capability, whistleblowing and exclusions.

Herts County Council (HCC) are reviewing the model complaints policy for maintained schools which will be out in Autumn 2019. Ensure that you have sufficient impartial governors to cover panels and where possible, trained. Remember for exclusions you cannot use governors from other schools unless you are part of a MAT and governors should all have attended training.

Future planning – have you considered your vision and strategy?

Vision and strategy is essentially looking to future and considering your approach. A SWOT analysis can be used to great affect for this purpose:

- celebrate your Strengths and ensure these continue
- work on your Weaknesses to improve
- look for Opportunities through engagement
- guard against the Threats by working on prevention

All schools in the future are unfortunately likely to have problems with budgets and finance so consider your options carefully. Collaboration, Federation, MAT approaches can help share resources and achieve better value for money. Ask the Helpdesk for the Schools Working Together document.

The Chairs service over the upcoming year

We are continually seeking to update the service in line with your thoughts and requests.

Reoccurring themes in results from the HfL survey included:

- Chairs' network / online forums / small working groups (for peer to peer support and to share issues / best practice) /networking forums for governors working in the same education phase
- ✓ A termly network is available at the Fielder Centre. This is advertised via the Chairs eBulletin and all Chairs are welcome. Anyone can request a topic to be presented.
- ✓ A new Chairs network is also available where new Chairs can meet experienced Chairs and create support networks.

- Guidelines for parental engagement and consultation
- ✓ Please call our Helpdesk for further guidance.

- Mentoring programme for Chairs
- ✓ This is available if you subscribe to the service.
For further information, email: kathy.dunnett@hertsforlearning.co.uk

- Free access to online content (as per The Key)
- ✓ We are looking at what can be made available online. In the meantime we do have a range of documents that you might be interested in.
A list is available in *The Hertfordshire Chairs of Governors Handbook*.

- Support for Governor Recruitment
- ✓ *This is available via the Helpdesk. Materials are currently being updated.*

- Best practice guidance for on-boarding of new governors
- ✓ This is available via the Helpdesk. Materials are currently being updated.

- Time management
- ✓ A new online course is being considered at the moment. In the meantime contact us for support and advice. Chairs should not undertake any large link roles. Being Chair is a link role in itself.

Thank you to all Chairs, **seriously** and **sincerely**. Thank you for being a governor as well as a Chair and all the work that you do.

Have a lovely holiday and a good rest. See you all in the Autumn for another exciting and eventful year.

Kathy Dunnett

Senior Governance Advisor

York Road Nursery's Self-Evaluation of Governance experience

A self-evaluation of the governing board is an important step to identify areas for development and ensure that everyone is fully committed to working together appropriately. Outcomes could include identifying factors such as the success of a previous team or a significant developmental need for improved impact, which could help inform the governing board's future.

Below is Helen Gledhill's experience of a Self-Evaluation.

What made you think that a Self-Evaluation of your board might be a good thing to do?

I was relatively new to the governing board (GB) and hadn't had an induction or a clear message around the role of the different members, what we were trying to achieve, etc. I felt this was a significant gap for me, existing governors and anyone who may be interested in joining. We then had an Ofsted inspection and were told that the GB needed to be more 'strategic' in its thinking, so I spoke to HfL who suggested the review. The Head was also very supportive of the approach.

Did you know what it entailed before you embarked on it?

Yes, as I'd spoken to the Head of Governance, Cathy Irons who very clearly explained the different options for review and a clear outline of costs for me to discuss with the Head.

Was the information you received explaining the Self-Evaluation helpful?

Definitely, it was presented in a clear and helpful way, which then enabled the GB to understand which

areas we needed to focus on immediately, those we can take more time over and see the gaps in our approach as a group to supporting the Head, the education and welfare of the pupils and fellow governors.

How easy was it for governors to complete the survey monkey?

Very easy!

You chose to have the facilitated option - Did you find it helpful overall?

Absolutely – Kathy Dunnett was fantastic. Really experienced and was able to answer all our questions but also made the whole thing enjoyable. There was also a great presentation that guided the discussion.

What did you like best about it?

Our GB was a real mix of people who had been there a long time and some newer governors so having the facilitated approach enabled us to have informed discussions that needed to take place. There were some difficult topics that needed to be raised and this helped us do that.

Might you repeat the process in the future?

Yes, I think GB's should always be open to reviewing their effectiveness.

Did you consider overall that it was value for money?

Yes and the Head was also pleased with the cost!

Would you recommend it for other boards?

Definitely. It was a really helpful exercise to do and if you are in a similar position of needing to push forward with your GB but not sure where to start – it's a great way forward.

Anything else you would like to add?

I would also like to thank Herts for Learning for their continued support.

If you have any questions about this article, or want to know more about Self-Evaluations, please contact the helpdesk on 01438 843082 or email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Upcoming chairs training

Becoming an Effective Chair

Saturday 12th October 2019, 9.30am - 4.30pm
Hertfordshire Development Centre, Stevenage

Tuesday 5th November, 9.30am – 4.30pm
Holiday Inn, Hemel Hempstead

Chairs Strategic Information Briefings

Thursday 24th October 2019, 5.30 – 8.00pm
Fielder Centre, Hatfield

Tuesday 3rd March 2020, 5.30 – 8.00pm
Fielder Centre, Hatfield

Wednesday 24th June 2020, 5.30 – 8.00pm
Fielder Centre, Hatfield

Bookings can be made through the CPD Hub: <https://cpd.hertsforlearning.co.uk/cpd/portal.asp>
For further information please contact the governance helpdesk on 01438 843082.

Dear Clerks

Wow where has this year gone? I think it is safe to say that the summer term has been extremely busy and I imagine you are all looking forward to the summer break. Please note our team has several staff members that have reduced hours in the school holidays so please always contact the Helpdesk by email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk or call 01438 843082 in the first instance if you have any enquiries.

HfL is pleased to have recently welcomed Hannah Butler as one of our new clerks. We look forward to working with Hannah in the North Herts/Stevenage area.

We will shortly be running a recruitment campaign to recruit clerks in the following areas: South Herts/Watford Area, Bishops Stortford/Essex Border, North London and Bucks area. If you or somebody you know would like to have a discussion regarding the role of the HfL clerk and are available in one of these areas, please email: kelly.king@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Thank you for your support and commitment during this academic year. It is greatly appreciated.

Wishing you all a restful summer and hopefully some good weather. We look forward to working with you in the new academic year.

Kelly King
Clerking Officer

Summer term clerks' networks

This term we welcomed back Marcus Cooper, Consultant Hertfordshire Improvement Partner to our summer briefings for clerks. Both sessions allowed for key updates from the Governance team, networking and questions and a presentation from Marcus.

The messages from the governance team had a large focus on the changes to governor training and allowed opportunity to ask questions.

Marcus's presentation included great detail about the New Ofsted Framework which puts the curriculum at the heart of the new framework. His session focused on the new judgement 'Quality of Education' including great emphasis on Intent, Implementation and Impact. As well as the Character of Education and the idea that pupils' character is educable, is the foundation for approved attainment and the importance of role models.

The presentation, handouts and further resources recommended in the session have been circulated to all HfL clerks and clerks with a current clerks' training and support subscription. If you have a subscription

and have not received this circulated information please email: kelly.king@hertsforlearning.co.uk. If you do not subscribe to the clerk's training and support service please see the article focused on this essential clerks' service.

During the networks this year I have spoken with clerks regarding the value of the networks and how you would like things to move forward. Therefore for the coming academic year, the networks will take place over a couple weeks to allow more opportunity for clerks to attend if on holiday. The sessions are held across the county and we rotate the venues to ensure all clerks have an opportunity to attend. The format of the sessions will change to feature a presentation from a speaker, clerking best practice and messages from the governance team. I hope to be able to send a plan for the year's themes early in the autumn. If there are areas clerks would particularly like to hear more about or require additional advice and support in please email us (as above).

School complaints

As previously advised, the Best Practice Guidance for School Complaints was updated in March 2019 (Available here: <http://bit.ly/SCPr4>). As a result, the Herts County Council (HCC) complaints team are updating the HCC complaints advice and model policy and this will be available on The Grid in Autumn 2019.

Timpson Review on Exclusions

The Department for Education (DfE) welcomed the review on school exclusions and has agreed in principle to all 30 recommendations put forward. Findings and recommendations for the review were based on consultations with parents, schools and LAs. The Timpson review highlighted the pupil and school characteristics which are associated with greater risk of exclusion. The report concludes that whilst there is no optimal number on exclusion numbers, schools need to ensure that permanent exclusions are only used as a last resort when nothing else will be sufficient.

For further details and recommendations, please visit: <http://bit.ly/ETimp1>

New Ofsted framework 2019

The Ofsted framework has been updated following a consultation earlier in the year. The new framework is effective from 1st September 2019.

As detailed previously, the term 'intent' is heavily focused under 'Quality of Education'. Intent is what leaders intend pupils to learn and all actions up to the point of teaching. According to *The School Inspection Handbook* good intent has a curriculum that is:

- ambitious for all pupils
- coherently planned and sequenced
- successfully adapted, designed and developed for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- broad and balanced for all pupils

Details can be found in Section 5, pages 49–50 of *The School Inspection Handbook*:

<http://bit.ly/SIHand>

As mentioned above, HfL are holding a briefing for Governors on the new Ofsted framework on Thursday 10th October 2019, 6.30 – 8.30pm (6pm for refreshments) at the Hertfordshire Development Centre, Stevenage. For further details, please visit: <http://bit.ly/CPDH3>

Governance handbook 2019

As previously advised the Governance handbook was updated earlier this year and it is vital as clerk that your board are aware of the new handbook and are working in line with the new version. The Governance handbook and competency frame can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2Gej3CS>

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Governing boards need to be aware of the revised document Keeping Children Safe in Education which comes into effect on 2nd September 2019. The new guidance recommends that all new governors of maintained schools should receive a section 128 direction check, and all existing governors should have them on re-appointment. A section 128 check checks the names of individuals who have been barred from taking part in the management of any independent school (including academies and free schools), under the terms of a direction made by the Secretary of State for Education. They can be carried out through the Teaching Regulation Agency.

For the draft version of this document, please visit: <http://bit.ly/2bjKpJi>

Academies Financial Handbook updates on clerk requirements

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has updated the Academies Financial Handbook which comes into effect from 1st September 2019. Compliance with the handbook is a condition of each trust's funding agreement. A list of changes is given on page 8 of the document.

Sections 1.38 and 1.39 refers to the requirements of the clerk.

The academy trust should appoint a clerk to support the board of trustees who is someone other than a trustee, principal or chief executive of the trust. A clerk can help the efficient functioning of the board by providing:

- administrative and organisational support
- guidance to ensure the board works in compliance with the appropriate legal and regulatory framework, and understands the potential consequences of non-compliance
- advice on procedural matters relating to operation of the board

For non-executive trustees a knowledgeable clerk to the board (or company secretary) is essential. Section 1.11 on trustees emphasises the importance of robust governance and applying the highest standards.

To read the document in full, please visit: <http://bit.ly/AcaFi32>

The HfL CPD Hub

All face-to-face and group training for school staff, governors and clerks should now be booked via the HfL CPD Hub: <http://bit.ly/CPDH3>

Please note:

- Existing governors and clerks who had a current ID number on our old booking system have been migrated to the new system and should have received an email with log in instructions.
- New governors and clerks will need to set up a new account by clicking on register and completing the form. Governors and clerks need to ensure that they select Hertfordshire and their correct school from the drop down boxes in the establishment section of the form. Once they have registered, the admin at their school will need to confirm that they are part of their establishment, prior to them being able to book on courses.
- The CPD Hub is not connected in any way to GovernorHub – please make sure your governors are aware that they cannot book any courses through GovernorHub which is the database used in Hertfordshire to store governors' details etc.
- Governors will no longer need a governor ID number to book onto face-to-face or group training courses. Instead, they will need to access the CPD Hub at the link above and log in with their own individual details.
- Training should be booked under your establishment (school).
- Governors and clerks will now be able to cancel and check which courses they are booked on or have completed using the My Profile and Bookings tab.

HfL eLearning – Modern Governor

All HfL eLearning is now hosted by Modern Governor (<https://learning.moderngovernor.com>). Governors will need to access this site to complete any new eLearning courses.

There are 34 eLearning courses to governors whose school subscribes to governor training. Clerks will have access if their school subscribes to both governor training and clerks' training and support. Clerks focused eLearning is currently being reviewed and will be launched in the autumn term.

If your governors have any problems logging onto Modern Governor, please ask them to email hello.mg@hertsforlearning.co.uk or telephone 01438 845111 option 4.

Training records

- For governor training face-to-face and in house training sessions up to the end of May 2019, please email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk
- For governor training face to face and in-house training sessions from June 2019, governors will need to view their individual profiles on the CPD Hub.
- For eLearning training courses carried out on the Talent LMS site prior to April 2019, please email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk
- HfL are not able to provide training records for any eLearning carried out on the Modern Governor site. This will be recorded on governors' individual 'My Learning' tabs on the site. Please note records of eLearning courses completed on the Talent LMS site have not transferred to the Modern Governor site.
- We would advise you to ask your governors to record their training, as they complete it, on GovernorHub (Premium package), or to let the training co-ordinator know what they have completed so that it can be recorded centrally if the school does not subscribe to GovernorHub.

New Governors

- Any new governors added to GovernorHub will automatically receive an email welcoming them to governance and explaining how they will be able to access the different types of training.
- If your school or academy does not subscribe to GovernorHub, please continue to let us know about any new governors so that we can send them a welcome email and ensure they have access to the governance services that their schools subscribes to.

Please email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Resigning governors/end of term of office

- Keep note of the term of office for the school's records.
 - Remove the Governor from GovernorHub.
 - Send the name, school and email address to governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk. The helpdesk will then make sure that the governor no longer has access to Governor training or eLearning.
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Minutes

As clerk of a Hertfordshire LA maintained school, there is a statutory requirement for you to provide copies of draft FGB minutes to governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk, at the point of the draft set being agreed by the CoG/Head (ideally within 21 school days of the meeting).

HfL are commissioned to support schools in terms of school improvement. Minutes are essential in providing key people within HCC/HfL with background information to enable them to ensure they are providing support in the right area, so swift and effective action can be implemented.

If this applies to you, please could you as a matter of urgency send draft copies backdated to September 2018 to the above address and any previous copies as soon as possible. It would also be helpful for the team if you would kindly save minutes in the following format as this will ease the filing of the minutes – Date/school no./School name GB Mins. For example: 180307 111 Hogwarts GB Mins.

Committee and confidential minutes are not required.

Herts for Learning clerks' training and support service

If you require clarification on governor queries, consider asking your school or academy to subscribe to the Herts for Learning's clerks' training and support service.

The benefits of the clerk's training and support service are:

- a specific training programme for clerk's, 'Being An effective Clerk' (free to subscribers - non-subscribing schools pay £175 to attend the full day training)
- a copy of *The Clerks' Handbook*
- summaries of relevant documents and initiatives, sent by email periodically
- a termly list of suggested agenda items
- termly seminars for governance updates, information from keynote speakers and networking opportunities

(free to subscribers - non-subscribing schools pay £52 to attend each session)

- exclusions training for clerks at reduced fee of £15 (non- subscribing schools £50)
- access to the governance helpdesk by phone and email for general and statutory clerking advice
- access to eLearning if your board also subscribes to governor training

To enquire about this service and the price for your school, please email:

governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk or call 01438 843082.

Clerks training available this term

All training courses can be booked via the CPD Hub.

Being an Effective Clerk

Friday 11th October 2019, 9.30am – 3.00pm

Holiday Inn, Hemel Hempstead

Clerking in a Church of England School

Monday 14th October, 6.00 – 8.00pm

Barnwell School, Stevenage

Clerks' Networks

Wednesday 13th November 2019, 5.30 – 8.00 pm

South Hill Centre, Hemel Hempstead

Monday 25th November 2019, 9.30am – 12.00pm

Hertfordshire Development Centre, Stevenage

Bookings can be made through the CPD Hub: <https://cpd.hertsforlearning.co.uk/cpd/portal.asp>

For further information please contact the governance helpdesk on 01438 843082.