

Newsletter for Clerks

For School Clerks and Governance Professionals | Edition 4 | December 2025

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 became effective from 1st September 2025. Key updates include additional online safety risks, AI, filtering and monitoring, relationships, sex and health education and gender questioning children.



Take Action! All Governors / Trustees must confirm that they have read and understood at least Part 1 of KCSIE 2025 as part of their annual confirmations & declarations.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education

The DfE updated its statutory guidance on 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education'. Schools must follow the guidance from September 2026 but can begin making changes to the curriculum from autumn 2025.

Curriculum and Assessment Review

An independent review of the national curriculum for 5 to 19-year-olds was commissioned by the DfE.

Key recommendations from the final report include shortening GCSE exams, integrating financial literacy and other life skills into the curriculum, and giving more weight to skills like teamwork and resilience alongside academic knowledge.

The DfE is planning for curriculum reforms to start in September 2028.

The full report can be viewed [here](#).



Take Action! Keep your Board up to date by circulating this summary of updated guidance.

New Ofsted Framework

The new Ofsted Framework is now in effect.

Key changes:

- New report cards replace single headline grade with detailed report cards across 11 evaluation areas, including **Leadership and Governance** - see more information from the National Governance Association [here](#).
- Five-point grading scale:
 - *Exceptional*: The highest grade
 - *Strong standard*: A high level of performance
 - *Expected standard*: The expected level of performance
 - *Needs attention*: Performance requires improvement
 - *Urgent improvement*: Performance needs significant and immediate improvement
- A separate "met" or "not met" judgment for safeguarding is now a standalone category
- Inclusion for children with additional needs and from disadvantaged backgrounds is a key focus across all areas
- Inspectors and providers will have more upfront, collaborative discussions about inspection focus areas, with less emphasis on rigid "deep dive" methodology
- Routine ungraded inspections are removed, with monitoring inspections used when a setting is below the expected standard
- The new framework notes that **governance professionals may meet with inspectors**, especially where they play a key role in designing governance structures. In MATs, governance professionals are often best placed to explain how the scheme of delegation works in practice

Ofsted has confirmed further adjustments to its updated inspection methodology ahead of the spring term with expected sharper focus on leadership capacity, curriculum coherence and stakeholder voice including how schools ensure Governors and Trustees are well-informed.

Find key guidance updates on [Schoolsnet](#) plus information on the [GLOSSI Preparing for inspection under the renewed Ofsted framework session](#)



Autumn Term Checklist

Have all Governors / Trustees:

- ☐ Read and confirmed their understanding of KCSIE 2025
- ☐ Agreed meeting dates / business plan for the year
- ☐ Agreed monitoring visits and policy review schedule for the year
- ☐ Agreed Governor / Trustee training priorities for the year
- ☐ Agreed link Governor / Trustee roles for the year
- ☐ Approved the 2025-26 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ☐ Completed / booked / discussed safeguarding refresher
- ☐ Updated / confirmed declarations of interest
- ☐ Confirmed eligibility and declared any criminal records
- ☐ Agreed the 2025-26 Governance Code of Conduct
- ☐ Updated / confirmed Governor / Trustee record / contact details
- ☐ Considered the collection and publication of [diversity data](#)
- ☐ Completed / discussed annual governance review / skills audit

Spotlight on..... Online Compliance



Remember to keep your governance information up to date on your website, Get Information About Sschools and Companies House (Academy Trusts).



Governance Records

There are certain governance records the governance professional must keep:

Register of Governance

One of the key documents for your governance records is a comprehensive register of governance. This document holds the statutory information required for each Governor / Trustee, including name, date of appointment, type of Gand who they were appointed by and must include those we have been in post within the last 12 months.

Register of Interests

New Governors or Trustees must always complete and sign a register of interests form. This is then reviewed and confirmed annually. It is the Governors' responsibility to disclosure any additional interests as they arise to the Clerk. Top tip: Create an online Governor / Trustee Record form to get reviewed each year.

Attendance Records

It is a statutory requirement for Governors' and Trustees' attendance at Governance Board and committee meetings to be recorded and kept up-to-date and for attendance from the last academic year must be published on the school / Trust website.



Top Tip!

Include meeting attendance for the last 12 months in your Register of Governance.

Spotlight on..... Skills Audit

Skills audits help Boards evaluate and recognise areas of strength and areas where knowledge, skills and experience need to be developed in order to effectively fulfil the functions of the Board. Used correctly, skills audits not only provide a snapshot of knowledge but can be used to **support recruitment, training and succession planning**.

Skills audits are based on Governors ' / Trustees' rating their skills, knowledge and experience in relation to different areas including governance, education, finance, community engagement and strategic management.

Skills audits are usually completed on an **annual basis** and by new Governors / Trustees as part of their induction. Skills audits are often RAG (red, amber, green) rated and reported anonymously to the Board.



Policy Approval

Governing Boards have **ultimate responsibility** for policy management and compliance across a school or Trust. Statutory requirements for policies in schools and academies are set out in the following guidance:

- **Maintained Schools Governance Guide (2024)**
- **Academy Trust Governance Guide (2024)**
- **Scheme of Delegation** (in Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT)): An essential document which specifies the role and responsibilities of Local Governing Boards and schools within a MAT

DfE guidance no longer sets out approval levels for statutory policies; however, the named responsible body i.e. the Governing Board for all statutory policies or the level of responsibility named in a Scheme of Delegation, can be used as a guide when considering levels of approval.

As a rule of thumb; statutory policies should be taken to the responsible body (or a designated committee) for approval and non-statutory policies can be delegated to the senior leadership team (SLT) for approval.

Note: There are some non-statutory policies which would sit better at Governing Board approval level, for example a Whistleblowing or Finance Policy.

Approval level is ultimately for the responsible body to decide, noting the Governing Board remains **responsible for ALL policies** regardless of approval level.

Note: Regardless of approval level, all policies, whether statutory or non-statutory, should be reviewed and updated by the person or people best equipped to do so - generally the SLT.



Maintained Schools must approve statutory policies at a meeting (FGB or committee).

Academy Trusts may approve policies via email or through an online governance platform - noting approvals outside of meetings should be minuted at the next meeting.

Any non-statutory policies approved by the SLT should be shared with the Board.

Spotlight on..... Preparing for Panel Meetings

- Check / be familiar with relevant policies
- Check at what stage the Governance Professional is involved;, noting key roles may include:
 - Forming a panel
 - Setting date, time and venue - noting timescales
 - Collation and distribution of documents
 - Point of contact
 - Advising on process and procedure
 - Circulation of outcome and next steps



Upcoming Training

03 March 2026	19:00-20:30	Training for New Clerks (Part 1)
10 March 2026	19:00-20:30	Training for New Clerks (Part 2)

Find out more [here](#)



Schoolsnet

Find out more information on Schoolsnet [here](#) including Governor training courses, documents, forms and policies, previous editions of What's Up Gov, Headteacher recruitment, Clerk's Corner (previous Clerks' Briefings, Newsletters and job description) and Governor Welcome Pack.



Governor Services Helpline

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Please include the name of your school when contacting Governor Services and use your Clerk@ email address