

Newsletter for Clerks

For School Clerks and Governance Professionals | Edition 3 | June 2025

Proposed changes to Ofsted Inspections

The Ofsted and DfE consultations on proposed changes to school inspections have now closed.

Ofsted's [consultation](#) covered proposals related to report cards, education inspection toolkits, inspection methodology, full and monitoring inspections, and identifying schools causing concern. The DfE's [consultation](#) covered school accountability principles, school profiles, and a stronger approach to school improvement through intervention for state schools.

Ofsted's [report](#) monitoring the progress of actions from its Big Listen consultation confirms that the revised 'Education inspection framework' will be implemented from 3 November 2025 – inspections will not take place in the autumn term until this date.

Curriculum and Assessment Review

On 18 March 2025, the DfE published an [interim report](#) outlining the initial findings of its ongoing Curriculum and Assessment Review. So far, the review has found that changes are needed to improve specific subjects and to keep pace with technology. It also found issues for pupils with SEND. The final report will be published in autumn 2025.



Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE), the DfE's statutory guidance on safeguarding and safer recruitment, is updated every year. The DfE usually releases a draft version between May and July, accompanied by a public consultation on the proposed changes. Once final edits are made, the updated version of KCSIE comes into force in September.

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

The DfE has stated that an updated [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#) (EYFS framework) will come into force in September 2025, though the final version is yet to be released.



Take Action! Check key documents, including funding agreements, financial policies, and internal governance records, to ensure they remain accurate and up to date.

Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill is currently undergoing scrutiny in the House of Lords after passing through the Commons.

The DfE has published [various impact assessments](#) for the Bill including regulatory and non-regulatory evaluations relevant to children's social care and the education sector.

Companies House Changes - *Academy Trusts Only!*

From Autumn 2025, Companies House is introducing mandatory identity verification for all company directors and People with Significant Control (PSCs). This is part of wider reforms to improve transparency and prevent fraud.

ESFA Closure

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) officially closed on 31st March 2025 and all responsibilities have been transferred to the Department for Education (DfE).

This marks a shift in the way funding and oversight will be managed and means that any policies, governance documents, or references to the ESFA should be reviewed and updated accordingly to reflect this change.



Academy Trust Handbook

The [Academy Trust Handbook](#) (ATH), the DfE's statutory guidance on effective financial management and other controls for academies, is usually updated annually between July and August, with the new edition coming into effect in September. Following the [closure of the ESFA](#) the ATH 2025 will be the first edition issued by the DfE directly.

Spotlight on..... Single Central Record

The single central record (SCR) is a legal requirement for all UK schools and colleges. It is an essential safeguarding document that records details of identification and DBS checks for all members of staff, governors and other relevant volunteers and contractors.



Ensure any updates to your governing board are sent to whoever is in charge of updating the SCR - include them in your Register of governance updates circulation list.



Effective Minute Taking

Minutes are the official written record of governance business transactions at meetings, including committees. Minutes provide an opportunity for the governing board to be held to account and demonstrate effective governance.

Minutes should:

- record a **summary of discussions**
- accurately record any **decisions** which have been made by a majority vote of the governing board, or those which will be recommended to the governing board by a committee
- identify and record any **actions**, including the person responsible for the action, and any agreed timescale - what, who and when
- record **progress and challenge** to the senior leaders for the performance of the school

As a general rule of thumb, minutes should include sufficient detail to enable a governor not present at the meeting to understand fully what business was transacted.



Top Tips!

- **Be prepared** - write down key information, create a minutes template from your agenda, have a list of apologies etc.
- **Record discussion in the order it happened but itemised as per the agenda** - If the agenda is reordered make a note in your minutes *"governors agreed to bring item 4 forward on the agenda"*
- Use **short, concise sentences** and paragraphs
- Keep the tone of minutes **neutral**, avoid unexplained acronyms
- **Ask for clarification** when needed
- Use of initials / job titles – Chair's preference, you may wish to identify the speaker using their initials or job title; however, "fully" attributive minutes are usually unnecessary – best to **use collective phrases** such as The Committee discussed.... or governors recognised..... unless deemed necessary to attribute
- Use **past tense** – explained, reported, contacted etc.
- Use of **colour coding** for challenge / questions and responses plus to highlight any decisions and actions

Policy Management

Statutory Requirements for Policies

There are a number of places to check statutory requirements for policies in schools and academies:

- **Maintained schools governance guide (2024)**: Including specific information on policies
- **Academy trust governance guide (2024)**: Including specific information on policies
- **Scheme of Delegation (in a Multi-Academy Trust)** : An essential document which specifies the role and responsibilities of Local governing boards and schools within the MAT and ensures policy management is understood and delivered at all levels

Statutory policies **MUST** be held within your educational setting. Non-statutory policies are additional policies pertinent to your setting.

Policy Review Schedules

Policy review schedules and processes must be robust, compliant and effective. It is also important to ascertain who is responsible for ensuring policies are reviewed according to statutory requirements and updates.



Note! The clerk is **NOT** responsible for the content, review and management of policies. However, you can take an active role in supporting your governing board and school leaders in ensuring robust systems are in place.

Spotlight on..... Succession Planning

Governance is not permanent. In order to ensure continuity it is pivotal that boards have an element of succession planning in place. This includes identifying, developing and recruiting individuals in preparation for filling roles when others step down. Whilst an element of stability is important, it should also be considered normal for governors to naturally move on in a planned, positive way.



Your board may consider capping terms of office to 1.5 or 2 terms to help encourage natural succession planning.

Creating a Culture of Succession Planning

- Start including succession planning in general discussions
- Invite expressions of interest for individuals to develop their leadership skills
- Support mentoring or shadowing and development opportunities
- Support governors in their current role through training, resources, allowing adequate time to read and question information



Preparing for 2025-26

Here are some suggested tasks for the summer:

- Check and update all meeting actions
- File final signed minutes (NB: AGM (*Academy Trusts only*) and summer term minutes in draft)
- Ensure confidential minutes are filed securely
- Ensure all non-confidential minutes have been sent to key stakeholders (for example the Local Authority (*maintained schools*), Diocese or Central MAT (*Academy Trusts only*))
- Draft meeting dates and key agenda items for 2025-26
- Ensure your register of governance and website are up to date
- Check for any terms of office coming to an end at the start of the new academic year
- Ensure meeting attendance for the last 12 months is up to date
- Check for any statutory updates, including the Academy Trust handbook (*Academy Trusts only*)
- Ensure GIAS and Companies House (*Academy Trusts only*) are up to date

Upcoming Training

Training for New Clerks (Part 1 & 2) 21 October 2025 09:30-11:00 & 13:00-14:30

Training for New Clerks (Part 1 & 2) 3 & 10 March 2026 19:00 - 20:30



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 Newsletter for Clerks and job description) and Governor Welcome Pack.

Changes on your governing board

As well as updating your school website and GIAS, clerks in maintained schools are asked to update Governor Services with any changes on their governing board. Forms are available on the Governor Services website. Please note that the forms have recently been updated to make them more user-friendly.



Governor Services Helpline

Email : governor.services@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01452 427802 / 427804



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