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## DGAT Governance Briefing

Volume 3: September 2020

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A warm welcome back to the new academic year. I hope the summer brought you some joy, rest, and relaxation despite the continued restrictions.

The new year will not be like any we have experienced before and the term 'a new normal' is being widely used. This is important to remember – we are not trying to replicate what usually happens but having to plan for something different. Children will be returning having missed chunks of learning, many of them having been at home for 6 months. Staff are coming back to new routines for classroom and school organisation, some of them returning after a period of shielding. As governors you are returning, after a period focussing on support, to your role of both support and challenge. I fully recognise that Covid continues to bring additional pressures for our school leaders and you must remain alert to this, however equally important is ensuring our children settle back into school, are supported with their mental health and wellbeing, and catch up on their missed learning.

I recognise that we will face challenges along the way but 'we are stronger together' and I look forward to our Chairs of Governors' and Clerks' Forums where we can work together to overcome these and share good practice. These are really essential meetings so if you are unable to attend please do send a representative along.

With my continued thanks for giving your time so generously to serve on our local governing boards.

Every blessing

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



## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

[Guidance for full opening: schools](#) sets out the government's plan for opening schools to all pupils in September. This guidance will be used to plan for the opening of schools to all pupils and to develop school's recovery curriculum, which Headteachers will share with local governing boards in due course.

As highlighted in our end of term Governance Briefing the latest DfE guidance recommends that the following policies are reviewed in preparation for the opening of schools to all pupils:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Uniform Policy

DGAT will review and update relevant Trust policies but local governing boards should ensure that non-Trust policies have been reviewed and updated where necessary.

All statutory KS1 and 2 assessments are expected to return in 2020/2021, in accordance with their usual timetables.

Schools must prepare a contingency plan for the event of a local outbreak – this may involve a return to remaining open only to vulnerable children and those of critical workers, and providing remote education for all other pupils. It is expected that many of the measures implemented in the Summer term will remain in place in the Autumn term with the expectation that they will be further embedded so that children who did not attend

[Managing school premises during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) sets out the requirements to ensure that all statutory health and safety arrangements are in place and is a useful source for your health and safety governor.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) provides the most up-to-date guidance for early years settings opening to more children.

The DfE has updated the guidance on the exclusions process for exclusions occurring between 25th September 2020 and 24 March 2021. The updated guidance can be found [here](#).



The Trust has prepared a protocol and procedures for schools returning in September, these have been shared with Headteacher's and include the following expectations, which local governing boards should include in their question and challenge and monitoring activities in the Autumn term.

- The LA template risk assessment will be completed and shared with Trust to be signed off by 31<sup>st</sup> August.
- All school websites will have published Risk Assessments, Appendix to Child Protection and Safeguarding , Behaviour and Attendance policies for September.
- The expectation is that children are entering the new academic year at age related expectations (ARE) - external assessment will take place at end of the academic year and the goalposts have not changed!
- All schools will have a remote education plan in place by end of September 2020, with all staff able to use and apply. This may be a different platform to recognise age and stage of pupils.
- Use of formative and summative assessment to ensure that in every school clear analysis of gaps in Reading, Writing, and Maths by end of September and leaders are clear how this will impact on teaching and learning next steps.
- A clear catch-up and sequenced plan should be in place to ensure that all in school understand what the gaps are and how they are to be addressed and by when. Schools should consider how these will communicated to parents and consider vulnerable pupils groups.
- In other curriculum subjects, school leaders should be aware of key concepts missed and what adaptations to the curriculum have been put into place to ensure these are caught up, including any use of flexibilities.
- Data drops will show the baseline and then normal progress checks. Data drops will take place at the end of September for Yr. 1-6 to indicate gaps via Target Tracker statements and then again at the end of Spring 1 and Summer 2. In EYFS baseline will be entered onto Target Tracker at the end of Autumn 1.

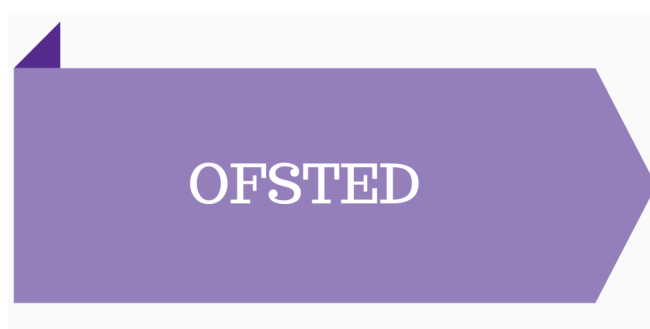
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funding. This will include the school's remote education plan in case of isolation or a local lockdown. A separate section will also be included how schools are supporting both staff and pupil's well-being.

- All schools to have appointed a well-being champion in the Autumn term and to have reviewed the Trust Pyramid with own staff to reflect local provision.

Local governors should monitor how school leaders have considered the school's distinctive Christian vision and associated values when delivering the curriculum offered in the Autumn term.

We have produced a list of questions local governors may wish to use in the Autumn term to support their question and challenge and monitoring of Trust expectations. These are available on the [Local Governors' members' area on the DGAT website](#).



There is no change to the confirmation that routine inspections will remain suspended for the remainder of the Autumn term. The inspectorate intends for the normal inspection schedule to resume from January 2021 but the exact timings are subject to review.

During the Autumn term, Ofsted will inspect a small sample of schools in a phased return to inspections to 'discuss how they are managing the return to education of all their pupils.' These visits will start with schools currently judged as 'inadequate' as well as a small sample of schools currently judged as 'Outstanding', 'Good', and 'Requires Improvement'.

The visits will include collaborative discussions, taking into account the curriculum and remote education expectations, and will not result in a judgement – a brief letter will be published containing information agreed with school leaders about their next steps in managing the return of all pupils to school.

Ofsted will still conduct registration visits and regulatory activity in early years settings. Pre-registration visits and emergency section 8 inspections in maintained schools and academies will also continue to be undertaken. You can read further information [here](#).

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## SIAMS

There is no change to the confirmation from The Church of England Education Office that SIAMS inspections remain suspended for the remainder of 2020. Further information will be shared in the Autumn term when it is clear how inspections will be rescheduled.

The Diocese of Gloucester Education Team has 'Introduction to SIAMS' training scheduled in the Autumn term. Details can be found [here](#).

## PAY AND BUDGETS

The DfE has now confirmed how the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) catch-up premium](#) will be allocated.

£650 million will be split between primary and secondary schools and £350 million will be used by the DfE to establish the National Tutoring Programme for the duration of the 2020/21 academic year. This programme will provide schools with access to subsidised tutoring sessions and free tutoring coaches for the most disadvantaged pupils.

Schools will be allocated £80 per pupil, paid in three installments across the 2020/21 academic year. An initial payment will be paid in the Autumn term, with the second payment being made early in 2021. The second payment will be based on pupil data from the October census.

The second payment will take account of the initial part payment made in autumn 2020 so that schools will receive a total of £46.67 per pupil or £140 per place across the first 2 payment rounds.

A further £33.33 per pupil or £100 per place will be paid during the summer term 2021.

Schools are able to use the funding as a single amount and to direct support and resources to those pupils whose learning needs have been identified as a priority.

Local governing boards should include on their finance committee agenda confirmation of the school's allocation and intentions for spending the funding. The finance committee should discuss how local governors will monitor the catch-up funding, how it is spent, and confirm this is in line with the school's catch-up priorities.

affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. Schools can use the catch-up funding to access the subsidised tutoring. There is also available a reception year early language programme which will provide free training and resources to schools but there are limited places available and schools must register and apply for a place on the scheme.

The DfE has also announced an £8 million programme to boost teacher and pupil wellbeing. The investment will pay for a new training scheme to improve mental health and wellbeing support in schools. The Wellbeing for Education Return programme will commence in September and will support staff working in schools and colleges to respond to the additional pressures some pupils may be feeling as a direct result of the pandemic, as well as to any emotional response they or their teachers may still be experiencing from bereavement, stress, trauma or anxiety over the past months. You can read more about the programme [here](#).

A purple arrow-shaped graphic pointing to the right, containing the text 'ACADEMIES FINANCIAL HANDBOOK' in white capital letters.

## ACADEMIES FINANCIAL HANDBOOK

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) have published the [Academies Financial Handbook 2020](#), (AFH) ready for changes to be implemented by academy trusts in September 2020. It is a statutory requirement for all academy trusts to comply with the AFH as a condition of their funding agreement. Get up-to-speed on all the changes [here](#).

A purple arrow-shaped graphic pointing to the right, containing the text 'DFE GOVERNANCE UPDATE' in white capital letters.

## DFE GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The DfE published a further 'School governance update' for academy trusts in July which provided further information for governing boards around key messages related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. You can read the update [here](#).

The guidance clarifies that current Coronavirus guidance for education settings does not prevent local governors and Trustees from going into school, it is recommended that where visits can happen outside of school hours they should. School leaders and local governing boards should include local governing board meetings and local governor visits to school on the school's risk assessment. We recommend the following issues are considered when

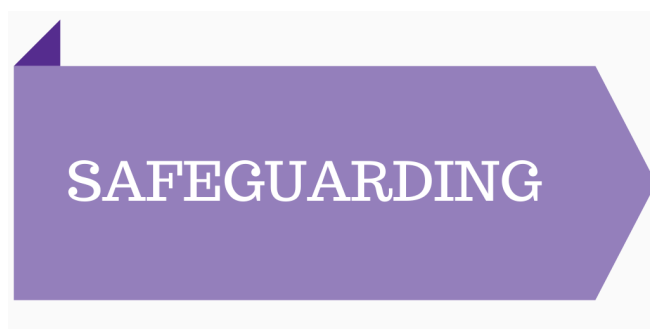
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- How social distancing measures will be maintained – the size of the school building and available rooms will vary school-to-school.
- How the timing of visits will be arranged – visits and meetings should be outside of school hours where possible.
- How local governor visits and meetings will impact on the workload of school staff.
- How furniture and equipment will be cleaned, and by whom, following local governing board meetings in school, and the impact of this on the workload of school staff.
- How refreshments will be organised – local governors should be encouraged to bring in their own and avoid sharing school equipment.

Local governing boards may decide that a suitable risk control measure is to continue to meet remotely for a period of time and if this decision is made should continue to follow previously agreed processes for meeting remotely.

It is expected that considering the guidance above, normal governance arrangements will resume in the Autumn term. Local governing boards should resume their normal items of business and re-instate committee meetings.

The Governance update also includes a reminder to ensure [Get information about schools](#) (GIAS) is up-to-date with details of the school's local governance. Please ensure your Clerk to Governors or someone from the local governing board checks the information published on GIAS and that it is up-to-date and accurate.



[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(from 1 September 2020\)](#) is now published and should be followed in place of previous guidance. A summary of the changes can be found [here](#).

The DGAT scheme of delegation provides authority for local governing boards to monitor compliance with all safeguarding practices, including the appointment of a safeguarding governor and to monitor the implementation of the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. To effectively monitor compliance we recommend that all local governors read KSCIE and make themselves aware of the changes. The DGAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and any other related safeguarding policies will be updated ready for implementation in September.



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# DGAT Scheme of Delegation 2020/21



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Over the Summer break, the DGAT central team reviewed the Trust scheme of delegation and are now inviting comments and feedback from local governors. There are no significant changes to the delegated responsibilities, some delegations have been clarified to reflect practice throughout the Trust.

The updated scheme of delegation plus a detailed log of changes has been sent to all Clerks to Governors and Chairs of Governors with a request that they forward both to all local governors. You can also access the updated Scheme of Delegation [here](#) and the change log [here](#).

Please read the updated scheme of delegation alongside the log of changes and forward any comments or feedback to your Chair of Governors by **Wednesday 23rd September**. Chairs will be asked to share feedback and comments from local governing boards at the Chair of Governors' Forum on 29 September ahead of the scheme of delegation being taken to the Trust board for approval.

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## Recommended Resources



Inspiring Governance is a free, online service that connects schools and trusts in England with skilled volunteers in your area who are interested in becoming a school governor. Inspiring Governance works with a number of employers, professional networks, FE providers and universities to find individuals interested in becoming school governors. Volunteers come from a wide range of professions and sectors, with skills and expertise in areas such as finance, human resources, law, marketing and education.

The [Inspiring Governance website](#) includes some useful videos on using the site to recruit volunteers. We have arranged for DGAT governors and clerks to be given a live tour of the Inspiring Governance site and demonstration on how to use it by the Inspiring Governance Regional Manager, Richard Ellam. The demonstration will be held on Wednesday 23 September, is free to attend and will last no longer than 45 minutes. You can register to attend [here](#).



Governors for Schools is a free service that also finds, places, and supports skilled volunteers as governors and trustees on school and academy boards.

Governors for Schools supports schools across England and Wales to run effectively by finding high calibre governors to bring their skills and expertise to the table – and improve



The National Cyber Security Centre and DfE have published a list of eight questions for governing boards and to ask school leaders, to help improve a school's understanding of its cyber security risks. The questions are split into the following three themes:

- Information seeking
- Awareness
- Preparedness

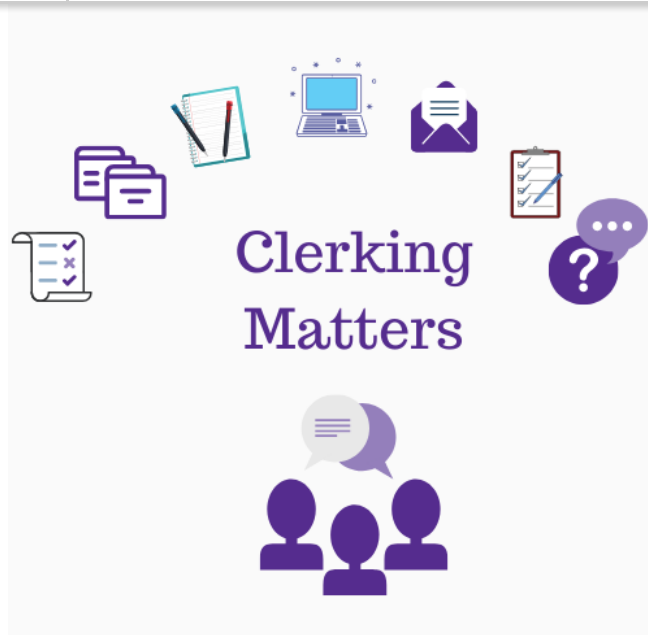
The questions are not intended as a checklist, they have been written to start the cyber security conversation between the governing body *and* the school leaders, with the local governing board taking the lead. The questions can be found [here](#).



The Diocesan Education Newsletter – The DEN – is published by the Diocese of Gloucester education team and includes important news and updates about available resources, governance, SIAMS, RE and more. It is a useful resource for local governors to remain informed and connected to the Diocese and access additional training and resources.

To sign up to receive the DEN, please click on this [link](#), complete the form with your email address and name, and click on the box next to “Diocesan Education News”. You must also tick the permissions “Email” box. Finally, click on “Subscribe to list” at the bottom of the page.

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



## IMPORTANT

If you haven't yet returned the local governing board information spreadsheet sent out by Nicki earlier in the year please arrange for this to be actioned ASAP. It is really important that we have an up-to-date record of our local governing board members and their contact details.

Nicki has sent you a link to your governing board's individual data spreadsheet which you can complete on the DGAT OneDrive. This will hopefully make the process smoother. If you have any questions, please contact Nicki directly.

## Retention of Local Governing Board Minutes

A query was raised at the Clerks' Forum as to how long minutes of local governing board meetings should be retained. The Trust's Data Protection Officer has confirmed that the Trust follows the IRMS guidelines for data retention. With regard to minutes of the Local Governing Board, we follow the guidelines for maintained schools which is that although minutes are generally kept for the life of the organisation, the Trust would only be required to make these available for ten years from the date of the meeting.

Minutes of the Local Governing Board should not be destroyed even after ten years without permission from the Trust.

## Terms of Reference

Please ensure that your local governing board reviews its committee terms of reference at the first meeting of the academic year. The terms of reference for the Finance and Resources Committee have been updated and can be found in the Clerk to Governor's member area on the DGAT website. We have also provided on the website example terms of reference for the Standards and Ethos Committee.

## Election of Staff Governors

We have reviewed and updated the process for electing staff governors. There is no longer a requirement to seek approval from the Trust Board or Diocesan Board of Education for the election of a staff governor. Once elected by staff eligible to vote in the election, a staff member will automatically be appointed to the local governing board for a four-year term of office. Updated guidance has been published on the DGAT website and template letters are also available to support the election process. The confirmation of election letter may now be sent to the elected staff member by the Clerk to Governors. Please ensure the Governance Lead at DGAT is made aware of all local governing board appointments.



### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The dates for the Clerks' Forum next year are:

20th October 2020 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

9th February 2021 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

22nd June 2021 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

**Venue to be confirmed**

Please let us know if there is a specific topic you would like us to cover.

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



#### **DGAT Election of Staff Governors Resources**

We have updated the process for electing staff governors and have added a range of templates and guidance to support the election process.



#### **Local Governing Board Committee Terms of Reference**

We have updated the template terms of reference for the LGB Finance and Resources Committee and added example terms of reference for a Standards and Ethos Committee.



#### **Local Governor Induction Pack**

We have published a suite of documents to support the induction of new local governors, the resources include an induction checklist, an induction feedback form, an acronym buster, guidance to prevent overwhelm and FAQs!



#### **Admissions Guidance**

David Williams from the Diocese of Gloucester Education Team has published useful guidance for Admissions in 2021/22. The guidance includes key dates and an update on the admissions process.

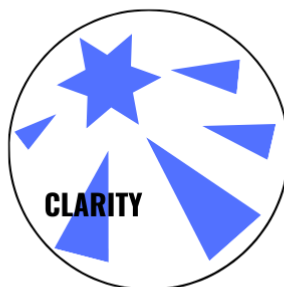
# DGAT Governance Training 2020/21



Our governance training offer for 2020/21 is now available to view via the DGAT CPD brochure on our [website](#). We have created a range of training and CPD opportunities based on feedback from local governors and clerks, we will add finance training later in the academic year. Clerks and local governors are welcome to attend any training course available.

Please book training via the website booking form.

## Governor Clarity



The Diocese of Gloucester education team would like to tell you about Governor Clarity, a new training and networking opportunity for all governors and trustees in the Diocese of Gloucester family of schools.

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governance, these sessions will begin to explore how the school vision is lived out in governance. How might vision be monitored and evidenced in the work of the governing board, giving confidence that all governors are able to articulate their school vision when asked about it by others.

All governors and trustees from the Diocese family of schools are warmly invited to join the Governor Clarity sessions where you will be able to meet others and broaden your governance network.

Governor clarity sessions will be held on the following dates:

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 18.00 pm – 19.30 pm: Cirencester Baptist Church  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020 - 18.00 pm – 19.30 pm: Bream Church Centre  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 - 18.00 pm – 19.30 pm: Bream Church Centre  
Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 - 18.00 pm – 19.30 pm: Cirencester Baptist Church

Places can be booked [here](#).



**'Natter with Nicki' is a new opportunity to network within the DGAT family. Join our Governance Lead, Nicki to ask questions, chat all things governance and connect with local governance colleagues from across the Trust.**

**5th October 2020**  
9.30 am - 11.30 am and 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm

**9th December 2020**  
9.30 am - 11.30 am and 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm

**10th February 2021**  
9.30 am - 11.30 am and 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm

**7th April 2021**  
9.30 am - 11.30 am and 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm

**9 June 2021**  
9.30 am - 11.30 am and 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm

**Simply contact Nicki or ask your Clerk for the Zoom link and join any time between the times shown and join the conversation!**



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