

# AUTUMN TERM NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025



## S4S CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR BRIEFINGS

All are welcome to attend the S4S  
Chair and Vice Chair briefings held on:

- Tuesday 9 September
- Wednesday 10 September
- Monday 12 January
- Tuesday 13 January
- Monday 20 April
- Tuesday 21 April

The following link can be used to book  
a place:

Services 4 Schools - Governor  
Training - Booking by Bookwhen



## S4S TRAINING – INTRODUCING THE TRAINERS!



### PEN PORTRAIT - ANDY CHELL

With over 20 years of experience in school governance, I bring a deep understanding of strategic leadership in educational settings. As one of the original National Leaders of Governance, I have a strong track record in supporting and developing governance structures, conducting External Reviews of Governance (ERGs), and delivering targeted governor training to ensure best practices.

My extensive experience has given me insight into the complexities of governance, from accountability and compliance to the strategic oversight needed to drive school improvement.

I spent two years as Interim CEO of a Multi Academy Trust, so have a profound understanding of the balance between operational aspects and strategic insight.

In my professional capacity as Director of Curriculum at a university, I lead on leadership and management degree apprenticeships, which provides me with a strong background in shaping effective leadership in educational contexts. This dual perspective — combining governance expertise with a focus on leadership development — enables me to bring a unique and informed approach to the reviews I conduct, ensuring that schools are well equipped to meet both their immediate challenges and long-term goals.

## VIRTUAL MEETINGS

### Why Virtual Meetings Are Making Sense for School Governors

With work, family and other commitments, juggling busy schedules can be a massive challenge for all of us. When you are a School Governor too, those – although vital – meetings are another demand on your time.

We know that part of effective School Governance is about getting the right people in the right place but getting them all around that table at the right time can be a real challenge for the Clerk!

Although we might not like to think back on a certain period in our recent history, it did make us adapt to a different way of working and the temporary solution of virtual meetings has quickly become a practical and effective way to keep school governance running smoothly.

Reasons why more and more governing boards are making the switch to virtual (or at least mixing it up): -

#### 1. No travel time

Virtual meetings mean no more rushing from work, battling through traffic or arranging childcare.

#### 2. More flexible and inclusive

It's often easier to attend online; not everyone can make an in-person meeting. This opens the door for wider participation, especially for governors with mobility issues or caring responsibilities; it could be part of the answer to governor recruitment difficulties.

## REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

The autumn term means it is time to update your business interests.

Help your Governing Board and Clerk by completing this ready for the first meeting of the year!



## S4S 2025/26 TRAINING DATES

Our 2025/26 training brochure has been shared with schools. Available courses and dates are all set. Take a look and book [here](#).



### 3. Better attendance

With fewer logistic barriers, meetings are less likely to be poorly attended or not quorate. That means that the work of the governing board runs more efficiently.

### 4. Easy access to resources

Screen sharing makes it simple to share a policy document or show a budget spreadsheet, plus meetings can be recorded (with permission), so that those who are not able to attend can stay up to date.

### 5. Cost effective

Virtual meetings can be easier on the school budget. There's a saving to be made in not having to keep the school open late, or – in the colder weather – keeping the heating on! A reduced rate for the clerking of your meetings may be applicable for virtual rather than in-person meetings.

Not convinced? Consider going hybrid and mixing it up!

- It may suit to hold your committee meetings virtually
- Governors (and your Clerk) may appreciate meetings being held virtually during the late autumn/early spring terms to avoid travelling in the dark and/or adverse weather conditions.
- You could be really daring and have a blend of in-person attendees and virtual attendees at the same meeting!

### In summary.....

Virtual governor meetings aren't just a convenience – they are a smart way to make school governance more accessible, efficient and inclusive. Whether used occasionally or regularly, they can help governors to focus on what is important – supporting the school community.



# LINK GOVERNOR ROLES

## Strengthening Governance through Link Roles: Part One

**In this issue: What is a Link Governor and how should these roles be assigned?**



**Part Two: In the Spring issue: Top Tips for Link Governors**

**Part Three: In the Summer issue: Reviewing Link Governor roles for the new academic year**

### What is a Link Governor?

A Link Governor takes responsibility for overseeing a specific area of school life. They should be prepared to carry out visits to speak with relevant school staff, as well as stay up to date with key developments and they should report back to the Governing board.

### Assigning roles – why does it matter?

There are several benefits to assigning link roles correctly, including: -

- Focussed oversight: providing dedicated attention to specific areas, ensuring that they receive the scrutiny and support they need.
- Stronger, supportive relationships with staff: building closer relationships with staff, encouraging better communication and being an advocate for their area of responsibility, ensuring it remains a priority and that the needs of pupils are met.
- Improved monitoring: Tracking progress against school improvement priorities, ensuring that actions are followed up and impact is monitored effectively.
- Accountability: Supporting and challenging school leaders constructively, helping to ensure that the school meets its statutory duties and delivers the best outcomes for pupils.

### Assigning roles - guidance

There are 3 main things to consider: -

#### 1. Matching roles to Governor's skills and interests

You can nominate someone to be a link governor because of their specific skills and knowledge but you should also allow governors the chance to put themselves forward for a link role they want to do.

## 2. Ensuring that the Statutory Link Governor roles are filled

At a minimum, a school is required to have a Safeguarding Governor, a SEND Governor and (in secondary schools) a Careers Education and Guidance Governor.

## 3. Aligning roles

Make sure your Link Governor roles align with your school's strategic priorities in the SIP; for example, If literacy is a big focus in the SIP, you should appoint a Literacy. If attendance is an area that needs improvement, you should appoint an Attendance Link Governor.

However, the Top Tip for Governors is always this – ask “How does this benefit our pupils? If it doesn't, why are we doing it?”

# CONSIDERING BECOMING CHAIR?

**Autumn means it is time to appoint a new Chair and Vice Chair for some Boards.**

Here are the key duties:

- Leading effective governance with strong leadership and clear strategic focus, making sure all statutory requirements are met
- Developing the board by recruiting effective governors and making sure they contribute their relevant skills and experience, upskilling as necessary
- Working with school or trust leaders by offering them challenge, support and encouragement
- Putting improvement at the centre of all policies and strategies, and making sure all scrutiny is focused on the school or trust's priorities

Below is a helpful example of the role and the time needed in comparison to being a Governor:

- Setting out the meeting cycle for the year ahead (about 1 hour)
- Review of Performance Management process (normally October, in school for 2 hours)
- Permanent Exclusion Panels if needed - these are normally 2 hours in school
- Calls with the Headteacher - these generally involve issues that the Headteacher needs to inform the Chair (Permanent Exclusions, serious incidents etc)
- Additional normal governor activity (link visits and board meetings)

# TRAINING DATES

## WHAT'S GOING ON THIS TERM

**THURSDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 10 AM – 11 AM**

**A GOVERNORS GUIDE TO  
SAFEGUARDING AND THE KCSIE  
UPDATES**

**TUESDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 6 PM – 7 PM**

**CHAIR/VICE CHAIRS BRIEFING**

**WEDNESDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 10 AM – 11 AM**

**CHAIR/VICE CHAIRS BRIEFING**

**WEDNESDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**A GOVERNORS GUIDE TO SAFEGUARDING  
AND THE KCSIE UPDATES**

**THURSDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER 10 AM – 11 AM**

**AN INTRODUCTION TO  
GOVERNANCE – ACADEMIES AND  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUSTS**

**TUESDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**MONITORING & EVALUATION**

**TUESDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**ACADEMY FINANCE FOR BEGINNERS**

**TUESDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH  
PARENTS**

**WEDNESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 10 AM – 11 AM**

**WORKING WITH YOUR GOVERNANCE  
PROFESSIONAL**

**WEDNESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 6 PM – 7 PM**

**AN INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSITY, EQUALITY  
AND INCLUSION**

**WEDNESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 6:15 PM – 7:15 PM**

**MEETING THE NEEDS OF PUPILS WITH  
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND  
DISABILITIES**

**FRIDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM**

**A GOVERNORS INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH  
EDUCATION**

**TUESDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 10 AM – 11 AM**

**PRESENTING TO GOVERNORS' MEETINGS**

**TUESDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**A GOVERNORS ROLE IN SCHOOL  
IMPROVEMENT**

**WEDNESDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**VISION AND VALUES**

**THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 6 PM – 7 PM**

**THE CHILDREN'S WELLBEING AND SCHOOLS  
ACT 2025**

**TUESDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER 10 AM – 11 AM**

**A GOVERNORS GUIDE TO SAFEGUARDING  
AND THE KCSIE UPDATES**

**WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**A GOVERNOR'S ROLE IN AN INDEPENDENT  
REVIEW PANEL**



# TRAINING DATES

## WHAT'S GOING ON THIS TERM

**WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**CHAIR'S EFFECTIVENESS**

**WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER 6:15PM – 7:45PM**

**THE SEND LINK GOVERNOR: ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES AND HOW TO EFFECTIVELY CARRY OUT THE ROLE**

**THURSDAY 2ND OCTOBER 10:30AM – 12PM**

**A GOVERNORS INTRODUCTION TO MENTAL HEALTH & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING IN SCHOOLS**

**WEDNESDAY 8TH OCTOBER 6:15PM – 7:45PM**

**UNDERSTANDING THE STATUTORY DUTIES OF GOVERNORS IN RELATION TO THE FOUR AREAS OF SEND UNDER THE CODE OF PRACTISE**

**TUESDAY 14TH OCTOBER 5:30PM – 7PM**

**ADVANCED ACADEMY FINANCE**

**THURSDAY 16TH OCTOBER 6PM – 7PM**

**AN INSPECTOR CALLS...OFSTED INSPECTIONS DURING 2025/2026**

**TUESDAY 21ST OCTOBER 5:30PM – 7PM**

**ADVANCED SAFEGUARDING**

**WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER 6 PM – 7 PM**

**THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IN LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

**THURSDAY 2ND OCTOBER 10AM – 11:30AM**

**A GOVERNOR'S ROLE IN PUPIL EXCLUSIONS**

**WEDNESDAY 8TH OCTOBER 5:30PM – 7:30PM**

**A GOVERNOR'S ROLE IN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

**THURSDAY 9TH OCTOBER 10AM – 11AM**

**ADMISSION APPEALS – AN INTRODUCTION FOR PANEL MEMBERS**

**TUESDAY 14TH OCTOBER 6:30PM – 8PM**

**RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION (RSE): THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

**MONDAY 20TH OCTOBER 10AM – 11AM**

**A GOVERNOR'S GUIDE TO ONLINE SAFETY**

**TUESDAY 21ST OCTOBER 5:30PM – 7:30PM**

**A GOVERNOR'S ROLE IN HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**S4S Training** 



**Wolves**  
Business Partner



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