

Governance Academies & Schools

Service Level Agreement



Barnsley Governor Clerking & Development Services

Service Level Agreement

2024 - 2025



BARNSELY
Metropolitan Borough Council

INTRODUCTION

With the focus and responsibilities associated with school governance continually increasing, the value of a high quality, professional clerking service, complimented with an offer of current and relevant governor development and training sessions, has never been greater. Barnsley MBC Governor Services, led and managed by a governance professional, is committed to supporting and working alongside its key stakeholders, in order to ensure that they have the knowledge, skills and support necessary to carry out their roles effectively and improve the outcomes and life chances of the children and young people of Barnsley.

Benefits to schools and academies:

- ★ We ensure that school/ academy governance is undertaken in compliance with legislative requirements (in LA Maintained Schools) and Schemes of Delegation (in Academies).
- ★ We ensure deadlines are met in relation to sending out meeting papers.
- ★ We ensure that minutes comply with and meet required standards
- ★ We ensure that accurate advice and guidance is provided by a governance professional.

Governor Services offers the following:

- ★ Support in preparing for Governing Body meetings (and Committee meetings where purchased).
- ★ Trained Governing Body Clerks.
- ★ Governor Recruitment – appointing LA Governors and providing guidance when recruiting Parent and Staff Governors.
- ★ Regular, high quality and relevant governor development and training sessions (tailored, bespoke training can also be provided if required).
- ★ Provision of and development of useful resources for Governors (e.g. Governing Body Annual Planner and Development Plan).
- ★ Regular Governor newsletters, informing governors of changes to legislation, mandatory requirements and the sharing of good and best practice.
- ★ External Reviews of Governance (for LA Maintained Schools and Academy Governing Boards)

We have a team of experienced and dedicated Governing Body Clerks to minute Governing Body and Committee meetings, including additional meetings of a confidential nature, where it is recommended to have an external Clerk to undertake the clerking role (e.g. Complaints, Pupil Exclusions).

Governors of schools who purchase our annual service package receive relevant and high quality advice and guidance from an experienced governance professional.

The role of Governor has never been more important, and our governor development sessions are designed to support and develop governors in their role, giving them the knowledge and confidence to challenge the school to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people.

We have received positive feedback from a number of schools about the services and support we provide, but we welcome and encourage any suggestions on how we can improve things.

We continue to support schools and academies which hold virtual meetings and have become well versed in using the technology required for these meetings. This has moved us towards an even more paperless environment, with most meeting papers now being circulated electronically. However, we still offer a printing and posting service to those schools who request it.

Reluctantly, we have been forced to increase our charges by 3% this year. However, we are confident that our service still represents excellent value for money compared with our statistical

neighbours. We are pleased to report that governor training session charges will continue to be subsidised for the remainder of the 2023-24 Academic Year. (Academic Year 2024-25 charges/ subsidy to be confirmed.)

Given the challenges that schools continue to face with their budgets, "GovernorHub", costs have again been fully subsidised in 2024-25. We hope that you are enjoying the range of benefits of this software system which is designed to help and support the work of Governors. Further details can be found by visiting the GovernorHub website: [GovernorHub](#)

We hope that you will once again sign up to our SLA and we very much look forward to continuing to work with your school/ academy this year and beyond.

For any enquiries, or if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Governor Services:

Peter Bell/ Denise Brown:

E-mail: Admin-GovernorsServices@barnsley.gov.uk

GOVERNOR SERVICES OFFER

The Governor Clerking Service is committed to supporting the work of schools and academies raising standards of achievement for all pupils by developing effective services to help improve the governance in schools.

The clerking service has a central role in providing specialist procedural, administrative and organisational support to governing bodies. The support we offer extends beyond administrative aspects of clerking. We provide advice on a day-to-day basis to assist governors and schools in making sure that their governing body is functioning properly and effectively so that they can demonstrate that they are meeting statutory requirements, as well as keeping governors up to date with the latest information and policies from the LA and ensuring best practice.

We provide a variety of clerking services to meet your needs by delivering expert advice, guidance and administrative support on all matters of school governance, including: providing draft agendas for consideration and finalising in collaboration with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Business Manager; providing an experienced clerk to produce the minutes; maintaining a database including the constitution of the Governing Body, members and expiry dates of their terms of office; and provide professional advice and guidance on School Governance matters.

Governor Recruitment

Appointing Local Authority (LA) Governors

The LA is responsible for appointing and nominating Local Authority Governors in all maintained schools and academies (if applicable). This task is co-ordinated by Governor Services. Vacancies are advertised and nominations are dealt with via a selection process in collaboration with the school and chair of governors.

Governor Elections

The LA will provide advice and guidance on the election process for both parent and staff governors in community, community special and voluntary controlled schools. Where a school buys into the clerking service under a service level agreement, whatever the school category, all associated appointment paperwork will be provided, and a central database of governors will be updated and maintained.

Advice on governor elections is given in accordance with the requirements of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012.

The LA will also liaise with the appropriate Diocese Office on the appointment of Foundation Governors in Voluntary Aided Schools.

Support for Clerks

We offer all clerks specialist support, training and guidance and all clerks are:

- recruited and managed by Governor Services
- mentored by a senior experienced Clerk and governance professional
- required to attend termly briefings to raise their awareness of current issues facing schools and academies
- provided with support from Governor Services
- given access to all guidance and support documents
- given access to CPD opportunities
- required to submit their minutes within 10 days
- mindful and respectful of the need for confidentiality.

Creating a New Instrument of Government/Revised Instrument of Government

Any change to the instrument brought about by a reconstitution /change in status will be covered as part of the LA's statutory function.

The LA is responsible for creating new and revised instruments of government. The Governor Clerking Service carries out this task for all schools in liaison with governing bodies and the relevant Diocese/Foundation where appropriate.

All instruments of government will be drafted in accordance with the requirements of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 and are checked by the Governor Clerking Services.

Guidance on any changes to the constitution of your governing body is available by contacting Governor Services.

Governor Development

Training and development courses are available to all Governors throughout the academic year and include useful content to support them in their role.

Governor Services offers **interactive training sessions** which are run by an experienced external training provider and gives governors the opportunity to meet and interact with governors at other schools and to ask any questions related to the session. Sessions have been developed to help keep Governors up to date with relevant legislative requirements. There are new and updated development opportunities available for Governors at every level of experience. Forthcoming development opportunities are advertised on our Barnsley School Governors website together with further details of the sessions.

Modern Governor online provides **unlimited e-learning development opportunities** for all governors via an annual subscription which is available for schools to purchase. This provides Governors with the flexibility to undertake as many on-line training sessions as is necessary, and at any time that suits them.

Bespoke Governor Development

Training can be developed and delivered specifically for your school governors, either at the school or virtually, to address the particular needs of the governing body e.g. data, preparing for Ofsted if you are perhaps due an inspection imminently, understanding progress and attainment etc.

As always, our aim is to continue to maintain and deliver a high-quality service which meets your needs, therefore please do not hesitate to contact Governor Services if you need to discuss options further before submitting your return.

Once a decision has been made on your clerking requirements for 2023/24, please complete and return the buy-back pro-forma at your earliest convenience and no later than 15th March 2024.

CLERKING SERVICE PACKAGES AVAILABLE

Overview of the service packages available to schools and academies:

Option 1 – Provides a full governance support service including:

- ★ Advice and guidance on:
 - ★ Governance procedures
 - ★ Constitutional matters
 - ★ Appointment/election of governors including monitoring attendance
 - ★ Establishment of committees
 - ★ Model constitution and terms of reference
- ★ Up-to-date information and links
- ★ Comprehensive support for **three** governing body meetings per financial year including:
 - ★ Draft termly agendas which are finalised in liaison with the Headteacher and Chair
 - ★ Preparation and electronic dispatch of agendas and supporting documents (*please note that printing and posting will incur an additional charge*)
 - ★ Attendance of a trained clerk at each meeting to take minutes and provide advice
 - ★ Word processing of draft minutes
 - ★ Processing enquiries arising from the minutes
 - ★ Maintenance of a database for Governing Body members and expiry of their terms of office
 - ★ Access to Governor Hub
- ★ Advice, support and guidance to governors and Headteachers to assist them in meeting their legal and procedural responsibilities for school governance, including up-to-date guidance from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)

Option 2 – Provides a full governance support service including all of the above for three meetings, plus the services of a Clerk for an additional three meetings a year (total of 6 meetings)

Option 3 – Provides a partial governance support service

This package provides for all the support included in Option 1 with the exception of:

- ★ Liaising with the Headteacher and Chair to finalise the agenda for the meeting
- ★ Preparation and dispatch of agendas

Option 4 – Provides support for additional meetings as and when required

Option 5 – Confidential meetings: Provides support and a clerk for School Improvement Strategy Group (SISG) Meetings/ Rapid Improvement Committee (RIC) Meetings/ Complaints/ Disciplinary meetings, including witness statements/ IEB Meetings or confidential matters that may arise.

Option 6 – Bespoke Service: Access to the draft agenda, LA Reports, advice and guidance (The services of a Clerk are not included in this option)

SCHEDULE OF CLERKING CHARGES

Option 1 (Full Service): Advice/ Guidance/ Reports/ Liaison with Chair and Headteacher for preparation of agenda and electronic distribution to governing body members (printing and posting costs are additional); Attendance of a trained Clerk for three governing body meetings per financial year

★ Primary School: £POA

★ Secondary School: £POA

Note: Meetings that continue for longer than 3 hours will be charged an additional £X per half hour thereafter.

Option 2 (Full Service): Advice/ Guidance/ Reports/ Liaison with Chair and Headteacher for preparation of agenda and electronic distribution to governing body members (printing and posting costs are additional); Attendance of a trained Clerk for six governing body meetings per financial year

★ Primary School: £POA

★ Secondary School: £POA

Note: Meetings that continue for longer than 3 hours will be charged an additional £X per half hour thereafter.

Option 3 (Partial Service): Advice/ Guidance/ Reports/ Attendance of a trained Clerk for three governing body meetings per financial year

★ Primary School: £POA

★ Secondary School: £POA

Note: Meetings that continue for longer than 3 hours will be charged an additional £X per every half hour.

Option 4 (Additional Meetings As And When Required):

To provide a minute clerk for Additional Governing Body/ Extraordinary Meetings

★ Primary School: £POA per meeting

★ Secondary School: £POA per meeting

Note: Meetings that continue for longer than 3 hours will be charged an additional £X per every half hour.

For Committee Meetings

★ Primary School: £POA per meeting

★ Secondary School: £POA per meeting

Note: Meetings that continue for longer than 2 hours will be charged an additional £X per every half hour.

(Subject to the availability of a clerk)

Option 5 (SIGS/ Complaints/ Disciplinary Meetings, including witness statements/ IEB Meetings or confidential matters that may arise)

To provide a minute clerk

- ★ To provide a minute clerk to attend the meeting and produce minutes: £POA per meeting
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Option 6 (Bespoke Service)

- ★ Access to the draft agenda, LA Reports, advice and guidance only (no clerk): £POA year
- ★ **Cancellation charges:** If a face-to-face meeting is cancelled at such short notice that the Clerk cannot be contacted and stopped from going to the meeting, then 50% of the normal cost for the meeting will be applied.



GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

Overview of the services offered to schools and academies:

Governor Services Annual Development Programme

We provide a wide range of courses for new and experienced governors through our Annual Training Programme which are advertised on the [Governor Services website](#).

Sessions are being offered in person, but are also available to be delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams where requested. All sessions are appropriate for both LA maintained schools and academies unless otherwise stated.

In the event that insufficient governors book onto development sessions, Governor Services reserve the right to cancel the session if it is deemed not to be cost effective. We will make every effort to advise you as soon as possible if this is likely to occur.

Multi-Agency Training by [Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board](#) is free for Governors to attend, and the details can be found on their website and in the Governors Newsletter and Development Brochure.

Modern Governor

The Modern Governor Online Development is available for schools to purchase an annual subscription which enables school Governors to develop their skills online whenever and wherever they have an internet connection, with manageable online learning modules that can be completed at their own pace at any time convenient to them. The courses are broken down into relevant categories including: Introduction to Governance; Governors responsibilities; Governance in Specific Schools; Inspection and Safeguarding; Core Skills in Communication; Core Skills in Leading Change; Core Skills in Personal Effectiveness. Please be aware it is more cost effective to purchase this service by signing up through Barnsley Governor Services.

Governor Forums

In addition to our annual central development programme we offer a couple of 2-hour briefing sessions in conjunction with [Barnsley Governors Association](#) which focus on new initiatives and topical issues, or which respond to requests from governors. These briefings are **free** to all governors, even schools that don't purchase our service.

Bespoke School-Based Development

We are able to provide tailor-made school-based training sessions to governing bodies. Please contact us directly to discuss your specific requirements.

Cancellation Charges

Please note that if you are booked onto one of the development sessions and are no longer able to attend, you will need to advise Governor Services no later than 48 hours before the session to avoid the school incurring a fee.

EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF GOVERNANCE

Overview of the External Review of Governance Process

The external review of governance is intended to be a supportive process and will be undertaken by a governance professional. After a period of initial research, following which a series of meetings with stakeholders will be held (along with a review of evidence presented by the Governing Body), a written report will be drafted by the governance professional which will provide Governors with an overview of identified strengths, areas for development and, finally, a list of recommendations for the Governing Body to take forward.

Work involved with the review process includes:

- 0.5 days preparation and pre-review research (review Ofsted Report, School/ Academy website, SDP, SEF, pupil data, meeting minutes etc.).
- 0.5 days in school talking to the Headteacher and Governors, plus looking at governance related paperwork retained in school (e.g. committee minutes, notes of governor visits etc.)
- 1 day writing up the report and any associated follow up work.

Charge per School Governing Board/ Academy Governing Board - £POA

GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT SERVICE CHARGES

The cost of Governor Development is currently being fully subsidised and is therefore free for Governors to attend.

Governor Modern Governor Online e-learning development (annual subscription)

Per School / Academy / Trust Board - £POA

Giving all governors access to the online training system.

Governor Bespoke Development

Cost for tailor-made school-based training sessions to governing bodies provided is dependent upon the nature and request of the developmental need. Please contact Governor Services to discuss your specific requirements and obtain a quote.



Modern Governor online E-Learning Development Service Buy Back Proforma

1 APRIL 2024 – 31 MARCH 2025

Name of School/ Academy	Cost	Required? <i>Please indicate Yes/ No</i>
	£POA	

Signed

Date:

Please provide the information below so that Modern Governor can contact you to get the account set up.

Name of Administrator: _____

Position: _____

E-mail address: _____

Contact number: _____

Please return this completed confirmation form by email to:

Admin-GovernorsServices@Barnsley.gov.uk