



**'As a church school governor,  
you are involved in a life changing ministry,  
with eternal consequences'**

Mike Simmonds

Dear Governors,

Happy New Year!

I really hope Christmas has been a restorative time for you and your families.

Governors have a fundamental role in transforming the lives of young people and on behalf of the Diocesan Board of Education, thank you for everything you are doing to bring 'life in all its fullness' into your church schools and the communities they serve.

In 2022 my termly briefings will focus primarily on supporting you with 3 key governance topics - effective church governance, governor recruitment (inclusion & diversity) and greener governance! Please do not hesitate to get in touch, if you think I can be of help.

May God bless you and your schools, as we begin anew.

Alison

**Diocesan Admissions & Governance Officer**

**[alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org](mailto:alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org)**

Tel: 01636 817230

**If you are an academy in a Church MAT you may wish to check with your Trust before actioning any of the guidance or advice offered in this briefing.**

## Dates for your Diaries

### **NCC Governors Conference**

Saturday 26 March 2022 – Eastwood Hall

Keynote Speaker – Andy Cope – Brilliant Schools/The Art of Being Brilliant

### **Monthly Chair of Governor catch up (online)**

These informal meetings are held once a month online (via Zoom) and are led by Nigel Frith. In an ever changing educational landscape it simply isn't possible for CoGs to stay on top of everything they need to know and so these meetings offer an opportunity to share wisdom and connect with other church schools or academies. Collaborative working is the key to the success of the diocesan family of schools, so if you would like to join us, you would be very welcome. Please send your email address to Nigel at [dde@southwell.anglican.org](mailto:dde@southwell.anglican.org)

## Governor Recruitment



Governor recruitment and retention continues to be extremely challenging for governing boards. The DfE requires appointing bodies to appoint governors who will bring relevant skills to a board. In addition, governing boards have been found to be more effective when they include a diverse and dynamic combination of governors.

In 2020 the NGA School Governance Report identified that the current make up of governing boards is approximately:-

- 73% Aged between 40 and 70
- 5% from ethnic minority backgrounds
- 60% identified as female
- 3% identified as LGBTQ+

Unfortunately, these statistics do not reflect the current breadth of society across the UK and in our schools. As Sharon Warmington, Founder and CEO of the National Black Governors Network has noted, young people need to see people like themselves, represented in school governance and leadership roles and it is vital going forwards that governing boards seek to be skilled, but also inclusive and diverse.

## So what can governing boards do to recruit more governors and address under-representation on their boards?



### **Make recruitment and under-representation on the board an agenda item.**

- Make recruitment intentional, rather than an afterthought.
- What skills does your board still need?
- Does your board understand its community and local context?
- How could a more diverse board contribute to and improve your vision for your school?
- Is the board operating in a way that acknowledges inclusivity and diversity?
- Does the composition of your board reflect the community you serve?
- If not, how are you under-represented?
- How can you access the people in your communities who are not represented on your board?



### **Myth Busting!**

- Many people think you have to be a parent of a child at school, to be a school governor.
- Recognise that some people may be intimidated about applying to become a governor because they don't have an educational background.
- Be clear that the governing board's role is strategic not operational.



### **New Governor Inductions**

Ensure all the hard work you put into recruiting governors is backed up by a comprehensive and welcoming induction process, that will encourage new governors to stay (mentoring/buddying/shadowing).



### **Meeting Times**

Consider being flexible about meeting times. Are the times of your meetings accessible to the people you are trying to recruit? Consider offering blended meetings (a mixture of face to face and online) to support busy governors.



## **Sign up to organisations which support school governor recruitment. To fill Church vacancies you can specify that applicants to be practising Christians**

### **Governors for Schools:**

Governors for Schools finds, places and supports skilled volunteers as governors and trustees on school and academy boards. You can register a vacancy online and then GfS will start to search for a volunteer that best matches your requirements.

Link: [Governors for Schools - Effective Governors, Excellent Schools](#)

### **Inspiring Governance:**

Inspiring Governance work with educational stakeholders to find and place school governors. They also work with Operation Black Vote, The Civil Service Race Forum, and the Young Black Professionals network, all of whom promote the role of school governor to their members.

Link: [Inspiring Governance - Become a School Governor](#)

### **Academy Ambassadors:**

Their free, bespoke recruitment service pairs an expert, Senior Regional Adviser with every academy trust to refine the role and short list only the best candidates for the trust.

Link: [Academy Ambassadors](#)



## **Professional Memberships**

Sign up to the National Governance Association (NGA) or The Key (your school or academy may already be members) who provide resources to support governor recruitment PLUS tons of useful governance information and training!



## **Identify and contact organisations who pay their staff to have time off for governor meetings and actively promote their staff to volunteer in this way.**

Eg:-

- Local Authorities
- Universities
- Banks
- The Civil Service



## **Expand your networks to support recruitment and also diversity**

- School Community – staff, parents, grandparents and alumni of the school
- Local Community – local businesses, Parish or District councils, volunteer groups, U3A, community groups
- The Church Networks (for Church governors)

- Advertise vacancies on LinkedIn
- Advertise vacancies on Community Facebook pages
- Identify and contact National Volunteer Organisations
- Contact the National Black Governors Network, the Society of Black Lawyers/ Black Solicitors Network, the Black Members Community of ICAEW, the Black Police Association



## Remote Governance

A global pandemic doesn't offer many positives, but the National Governance Association recently noted "All our many discussions with governing boards and their governance professionals have made it clear that almost all of you intend to keep the best of virtual governance for some of your business while returning to face-to-face discussions and visits where they make a real difference in establishing relationships and understanding the institution you govern."

### **So what are the possible benefits of blended governance?**

Governors for Schools has been exploring the idea of appointing a remote governor to governing boards.

So, for every 6 governors who live locally and who fulfil their governor role in person, you might wish to consider appointing a virtual or remote governor. These are governors who aren't able to visit the school, for a variety of reasons, perhaps because they live too far away or have mobility issues. However they have a particular skill set which the board needs and they are willing to be recruited in a virtual capacity.

In order for a remote governor to attend governor meetings you would need to put in place the necessary IT equipment to make this work, but it is an approach to governance that might enable governing boards to be intentionally more inclusive or diverse.



## Who is eligible to serve as a Diocesan Governor?

When recruiting diocesan governors, as well as giving consideration to applicants who worship at Church of England churches, you can also consider applicants who worship at other Christian denominations, for example Baptist, Methodist, or United Reform churches.



## Be clear about the benefits of being a governor to potential applicants.

Particularly for young applicants, being a governor is a great opportunity for professional development and to add to their skill set.

I hope this resource is helpful, it is a collation of my own thoughts and ideas shared by the Nottinghamshire Association of Governors Executive Committee (NAGS), Sharon Warmington, Founder and CEO of the National Black Governors Network, the NGA, Governors for Schools and Inspiring Governance. My thanks to everyone for the work they do to empower school governors and trustees. I would like this resource to be a live document, so if you have any ideas to support governor recruitment and address under-representation, then please contact me at [alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org](mailto:alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org) and I will add them to this resource.

## UPDATED Church Governor Application Paperwork

The diocesan governor application paperwork was recently updated in September 2021, however, having separate paperwork for church schools and church academies was still causing some confusion.

I have now created one application form, which can be used by both church schools and academies:-



Church Governors.  
App + Eligibility. Dec.



3. Flow Chart.  
Governor NOMINATIC



1. Flow Chart.  
Governor APPOINTMENT

### Please Note:-

- applications which are not on the new paperwork, cannot be processed.
- NEW applicants must provide 2 referees for church appointing bodies to contact
- Diocesan governor training is now mandatory for NEW appointments.
- It would be very much appreciated if applications could be submitted electronically

## Wellbeing Resources

Governing boards have always had an ongoing duty of care to promote wellbeing in their schools/trusts and to ensure that school policies and procedures promote pupil and staff wellbeing. This has never been more important amid concerns about delayed mental health issues, emerging as a result of the pandemic. Below are 3 key wellbeing resources available for schools to access:-

- Mental Health and Wellbeing guide from the National Church of England Education Office (NCEEO).



Mental Health and  
Wellbeing Guidance 2

- 'Never the Same' - the National Church of England Education Office, supporting schools dealing with life post Covid.



'NEVER\_1.PDF

- The Rainbow in the Clouds is a resource written by my colleagues in the Diocesan Education Team, offering support to schools in helping children and staff move through this time.



The Rainbow in the  
Clouds 6.20 PRIMARY

## Reconstituting Your Governing Body?

If you are a governing board at a church school or academy with a membership of 12 or more members then it might be worth spending some time thinking about reconstituting down to a smaller membership, particularly if you are carrying some long term vacancies.

I can support governing boards through this process, so please feel free to contact me at [alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org](mailto:alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org)

## Admissions Arrangements 2022-23

- **2022-23 Admissions:**  
Check your determined arrangements for 2022-23 are on the school or academy website.
- **For September 2022 admissions** - plan in dates for governors to consider applications and carry out ranking in accordance with the timelines of Nottinghamshire County Council's coordinated admissions scheme  
<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-admissions/key-dates>

## Admissions Arrangements 2023-24

### Determining Admissions Arrangements for 2023-24

All admissions authorities must determine their arrangements by **28<sup>th</sup> February 2022**, so please have regard to this date and the processes to go through if changes are being made, so that you can meet the required timetable.



We would ask that you send your proposed arrangements to both the Diocese [alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org](mailto:alison.jacobson@southwell.anglican.org) and LA Admissions team well in advance of this date, as it may be necessary for some changes/additions to be made, to ensure that your arrangements are compliant with the Admissions Code.

Once admissions authorities have determined their admissions arrangements they must publish a copy of the arrangements on their **websites**, displaying the policy for the whole offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made)

The deadline for all Admissions Authorities to send a copy of their determined admissions arrangements to the local authority is **15<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

### **In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions (County Schools and academies)**

If you are an Own Admissions Authority (OAAs) – ie. a VA schools or a Church academy, do you know if you currently co-ordinate your in-year admissions via the Local Authority?

Although it is permissible for OAAs to manage this process themselves, the LA has recently highlighted some of the reasons why co-ordinating in-year admissions with them makes more sense and is safer.

**Safeguarding of Children** – when the LA co-ordinate in-year admissions they are more easily able to track children arriving in the county to make school applications.

When schools manage their own admissions there can be delays in the LA getting that information. by which time the child is already potentially at risk/missing education.

**Managing the Process** – the LA processes all the applications for those schools that use their in-year scheme. The school or academy just needs to provide a link on its website to the LA's in-year admission pages on their website. The LA records any information received and retains it for all applications made. All correspondence is sent out directly from the LA to the parents/carers.

**Admissions** – There is no change in the decision making process. Although the LA co-ordinates the process and the response, it is still the responsibility of the school or academy (as the admission authority) to apply their oversubscription criteria, rank applicants and offer places.

**Cost** - there is **no cost** at all to admission authorities to access this service.

**Given all of the above, I would strongly recommend that Church OAAs in the County consider co-ordinating their in-year admissions with the Local Authority.**