

Appendix F – GovernorHub and getting started as a Governor or Director

This section outlines the tasks you need to complete and information you need to know when you start out as a governor.

Setting up your GovernorHub account

ESCAT uses GovernorHub as its online portal for sharing documents and important messages with governors. It also helps you record key information about yourself.

You will be sent an email asking you to set up your GovernorHub account. Please keep your GovernorHub password safe, and do not share it with anyone else. You can access GovernorHub via its web address (www.governorhub.com) and/or by downloading the GovernorHub app from the App Store or Google Play Store to your tablet or smartphone.

Contact GovernorHub support or your Clerk if you have difficulties with the GovernorHub site or need support to access meeting papers on an ongoing basis.

Meeting papers will be uploaded to GovernorHub a week before each meeting. You will receive an email via the Clerk when they are ready for you to read.

We recommend that you access your meeting papers through GovernorHub, either online or by downloading them to your personal device to read during the meeting. We do not provide printed hard copies of papers. If you print the papers off for yourself, please store them safely where no one else can read them and dispose of them appropriately afterwards by shredding them. All meeting papers are confidential and should be looked after carefully.

You should use your GovernorHub profile to record:

- Your contact details
- Your DBS certificate details
- Your declarations of interests
- Your diversity data
- That you've read and understood 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- That you agree to our Code of Conduct
- Details of any training you complete, such as online training modules or in-person training sessions. There is also a noticeboard where you can share ideas and information with the rest of your LGB. Publication of your details as governor

Schools which are part of a MAT are required to share information about their governors with the DfE and publish the names of their governors on their websites. This ensures that governance is transparent, and everyone knows who is responsible for making decisions. Your information will remain on these sites for 12 months after you leave the LGB.

Your information will be published in the following places:

- Get Information About Schools will show:
 - your name
 - who appointed you a governor
- The school's website will show:
 - your name,
 - who appointed you a governor
 - your declarations of interest,
 - when you started your term of office, and
 - how many meetings you have attended

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

All governors need an enhanced DBS certificate, which is provided through the school. Your school will help you apply for a DBS certificate and check your identification documents for you, before you are appointed as a governor or immediately after your election or co-option, as appropriate.

The DBS check tells us about any unspent convictions and conditional cautions, plus any information held by local police that is relevant to your governor role. The school will also carry out a "section 128" check. This refers to section 128 of the Education and Skills Act, and checks that you haven't been banned from managing a school or other educational institution.

Declarations of interests

Governors must declare any 'interests' they have that might affect their ability to act in the best interests of their school and its pupils. Telling ESCAT or the local governing board about any outside interests helps us manage any potential conflicts of interest.

Interests can include:

- Businesses you own or receive financial benefit from, especially when these businesses are providing services or goods to the school
- Relationships, such as family, friends, or partners - this could be a relationship with a staff member at a school or in a business that supplies services to the school
- Any other governance roles you have, such as being a trustee or governor at another school or trust

You need to record your declaration of interest on your GovernorHub profile and update this each year. If you don't have anything specific to tell us about, you can write "No interests to declare".

You should also tell the Chair at the start of the meeting if you have a potential conflict of interest with any item of the meeting agenda. You must not participate in any discussions where you have a personal interest and cannot vote on these issues. The Chair will ask you to leave the room during these conversations.

Keeping Children Safe in Education and Safeguarding

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) is a key document for governors and all those who work in education. It is updated on an annual basis. It outlines statutory guidance on safeguarding children and carrying out safe recruitment.

We ask all governors and Directors to read Parts 1 and 2 or others as determined by KICSI guidance, of these documents on an annual basis and then record on their GovernorHub profile that they have read it. Reading KCSIE will help you carry out your duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Each school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a senior member of staff and takes responsibility for safeguarding and child protection issues.

Governors and directors are required to complete annual safeguarding training via the The Key system. An email notification will be sent to you when it is time for the training to be undertaken.

Prevent duty

As a governor you will need to fulfil the Prevent duty under the Counterterrorism and Security Act. This means you have a role to play in protecting vulnerable children and young people from risk of radicalisation and extremism, as part of your safeguarding duties.

You should have a general understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism, how to identify children who might be vulnerable to this, and how to support them. The Prevent duty is included in your safeguarding training.

GDPR and confidentiality

GDPR means "General Data Protection Regulation". GDPR guides how organisations collect, manage, and use personal information. Governors need to complete GDPR training provided by our Governance Manager to get an understanding of how the regulation applies to academies, and their role in ensuring it is followed. Your place may be booked via the GovernorHub training page.

As part of your role as governor, you will see information about the school, its pupils, staff, and its finances. You will learn a lot about the school's operations, sometimes before this information is made public or shared with staff. All this information should be treated as confidential and should not be shared with anyone outside the LGB.

You should keep all the material you receive from the school or the ESCAT securely, ideally accessing it only via GovernorHub. You should use your school provided email address for your work as a governor.

If you spot something in your meeting papers that you think breaches GDPR, you should tell the Chair and/or Headteacher immediately so they can remove it; this might include personal information about a pupil or staff member.

Governor Development and Training

We do not expect our governors to be experts when they're appointed or elected. We know that there is lots to learn, so we have a list of required and recommended training you'll need to complete to make sure you understand your responsibilities and can do a good job of being a governor. ESCAT will provide a list of all required and recommended courses for governors.

There are many other training modules available via our external partners which may be relevant depending on your experience, interests, and governance responsibilities. If you are unable to find a relevant course, please contact our Clerk to the Board, who will assist you.

We offer a range of development opportunities:

- In house training provided by ESCAT staff – details of the current term's programme may be found in the Resources section GovernorHub, where you can also book your place. Our events and training are offered free of charge to all governors within ESCAT.
- The Catholic Academies and Schools Office, Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth offer briefings and induction for governors. Governors should receive these invitations direct so if you are not receiving them, please contact the team at schools@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- GovernorHub Knowledge, your essential on-demand training and knowledge bank that provides support when you need it - giving you confidence in your actions and the knowledge to be truly effective. All governors in the ESCAT have access to GovernorHub Knowledge at no additional charge. To access please click on the link in your GovernorHub account.

Induction

On appointment as a governor, you will be offered an induction session with your Chair of Governors and Headteacher.

Once your local induction is complete, please get in touch with our Clerk to the Board, who will introduce you to the role of governance within the ESCAT. These sessions are offered one-to-one, or in small groups, as new governors are appointed.

This session supplements the induction training offered by the Catholic Academies and Schools Office, Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth and local induction in school with your Chair and Headteacher.

Termly Briefings

We hold online termly briefings for all governors within the ESCAT. These briefings are an opportunity to stay up to date up to date with developments affecting our schools. You will hear from key members of ESCAT staff as well as have an opportunity to ask questions and share ideas. Slides and a recording is shared on GovernorHub.

