Southwark Governor Services

Quality Support for Excellent Governance

Working in Partnership

2019-2020 SLA offer for
Clerking, Support and Advice
Governor Training and Development
Supporting the key strands of school governance

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Right skills, experience, qualities and capacity:
- Drives up standards and financial performance

Vision, ethos and strategy:
- Reinforce defined roles and responsibilities

Clarity in role of Governing Body and Headteacher:
- Agenda Plan

Working with Headteacher to develop joint vision:
- Scheme of Delegation (academies)

School development plan:
- Link governors

Understanding data:
- Regulations and procedures

Robust questioning of senior leaders:
- LA advice and support

Understanding value for money:
- NGA Tools to self evaluate

Committees with clear terms of reference and agenda plan:
- Up-to-date, compliant policies

SFVS:
- Skills audits to identify training and recruitment need
Quality Support for Excellent Governance – Working in Partnership

Governor Services offer a comprehensive support and development service for governors across the borough serving in a wide range of different schools. During 2018-19 we have provided support to schools, nurseries, academies free schools and federations.

We are an integral part of the Standards Team and the support we can offer governors goes hand in hand with the support which they offer to schools. Our team works closely with School Improvement Advisors and HR to support governors in their vital school improvement work.

We recognise that the role of a governor grows ever more complex and demanding. In order to be able to focus on their key strategic role, it is essential that governors have access to high quality support, advice, information and training.

High quality professional clerking is crucial to the effective functioning of the board. The clerk should be the board’s ‘governance professional’. Their role is not only about good and effective organisation and administration, but also, and more importantly, about helping the board understand its role, functions and legal duties and supporting the chair to enable and facilitate strategic debate and decision making. This is crucial in helping the board exercise its functions expediently and confidently, so that it can stay focused on its core functions. Governance Handbook 2017

As part of induction and continuous development, effective boards encourage everyone involved in governance, especially those new to their role, to make the most of the resources, guidance and training available to develop their knowledge and skills. Governance Handbook 2017

The key things we can offer to support governors

- A professional, reliable and knowledgeable Clerk
- Access to up to date information so governors are aware of changes to regulations and the requirements placed on them
- Training and development opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge they need
- Support for governors to develop confidence to take on new roles and responsibilities
- Bespoke training to suit the needs of your Governing Body
- Extensive knowledge of all aspects of governance regulations
- Guidance and assistance when you are going through major changes in the structure of governance
- Enabling partnerships and mutual support between governing bodies

There are two strands to our offer which are purchased through separate SLAs / Clerking, Support and Advice Governor Training and Development
Clerking, Support and Advice – Service Level Agreement

A handpicked team of professionals

- The Head of Governor Services is full time and works all year round to support the team in giving a high quality service to our schools and providing advice, guidance and support to any Governing Body which requires it.
- Our Governor Development Advisors are skilled professionals, selected on the basis of their knowledge and skills in providing a comprehensive support package to Governing Bodies.
- As a team we have regular training and briefing and are committed to ensuring our knowledge of governance regulations, procedures and requirements is up to date.

High quality advice and support

- We can answer any queries that you may have and give advice, guidance and support on a range of governance issues including the latest regulations, policies and procedures. We are available to you via e-mail or telephone during term throughout the school year.
- We will support and advise schools who are going through major change such as considering entering a Federation or MAT, or recruiting a new Headteacher.
- We can provide advice on a range of issues such as managing conflict and problems, dealing with complaints, and can support schools on a range of issues such as setting up panels.

Reliable Information

- An induction pack is sent to new governors including the NGA Welcome to Governance booklet.
- Our website includes a wide range of information, news, guidance and policies. This includes a range of model procedures, policies and templates, for example parent and staff elections, equality information, charging policy.

Support for effective meetings

You will have an allocated Governor Development Advisor who will attend to clerk and advise at all of the meetings that you have bought into. This service includes

- a draft agenda based on a model carefully drawn up to ensure that you meet all of your statutory duties and are kept abreast of developments in governance and changes to legislation, tailored to meet your individual requirements and which flags up any action needed. This is sent to the Chair (or committee Chair) and Headteacher at least two weeks prior to the meeting to allow them to discuss and amend it
- Papers will be collated and sent out to meet the statutory deadline that governors receive their agenda seven clear days before a meeting.
- Reports we can produce for a Governing Body meeting include the following information:
  - Governing body membership and vacancies;
  - Governing body meeting attendance;
  - Training attendance, by course and by governor;
  - Committee membership and link governors;
  - Policy schedule.
- Advice and guidance during your meeting

- Minutes will be drafted and sent to the Chair (or committee Chair) and Headteacher within ten school days of a meeting.
• They will be circulated to governors as soon as possible following the receipt of any comments.
• As well as including a clear record of all of the governing body decisions and actions, minutes will reflect the support and challenge offered to Senior Leaders, to provide evidence to Ofsted that the governing body is fulfilling this function.
• Any actions and follow up from the meeting will be undertaken as quickly as possible.
• We will set an annual timetable of dates and times for future meetings.

Governance Development –
• The Governor Development Advisor will work closely with the Chair of Governors and Headteacher to support the development of the Governing Body and promote good governance.
• We will signpost tools for carrying out a skills audit of the governing body and advise on considering the outcome.
• We promote regular self review and provide on our website key resources such as the NGA 20 questions and Governance Framework.
• We provide guidance on link governor visits to help governors to get to know their school better.
• We can advise on reviewing the structure of your Governing Body and assist with reconstituting.
• We support and promote regular review of your committee structure to ensure it is effective and there are clear term of reference.
• We will keep track of policy review and ensure that statutory policies have been adopted, and are reviewed when required
• We review and improve our range of model policies and procedures that are available to governing bodies to ensure they are compliant.
• We provide a termly “news and updates” section on our website to provide information, guidance, news and policies all in one place at http://schools.southwark.gov.uk/governance.

• 360° support – Governor Services are part of the Standards Team and our service is part of the complete support package available to schools.
• Southwark Standards Team are committed to working in partnership with all schools to improve outcomes for young people and families by strengthening our collaborative, collegiate and inclusive approach to high quality informed and effective school improvement.
• The close partnership working between Governor Services and colleagues in the Standards Team contributed to effective school improvement and improved outcomes for pupils.

Key features
• We are conscious of the increasing financial pressures on school budgets, and we have kept the cost of the service at the same level as last year. For many schools the cost of our SLA has fallen since 2014/15.
• Our prices are based on a per meeting cost with a separate rate for Governing Body meetings and committees.
• We will continue to offer a preferential rate for Governing Body meetings to schools who are prepared to work on an electronic basis. This reduces staff time spent on copying papers as well as saving the council money in paper and postage costs.
There is no increase, for the fifth year, in the cost of additional meetings such as complaints, disciplinary and grievance and pupil discipline committees and in our charge for the administration of such meetings (where a full clerking service is not required)

**Next Steps**

Please use the pro-forma to confirm your requirements for 2019/20. Please note that the rate per Governing Body meeting is reduced if papers are sent electronically and not in hard copy. Committee meeting papers are sent electronically.

In order to manage the service effectively and keep our costs to a minimum we need a response from you by 5th April. If we do not hear from you, and you have bought into our service for 2018/19, your service will continue at the same level as was provided in 2018/19 and you will be charged accordingly.

If you would like to vary the level of service you receive or buy in for the first time please ensure you complete the pro-forma.

If you wish to reduce or withdraw from the service you must give a full term’s notice.

You are reminded that the decision to change the clerking service you are using rests with the Governing Body.

We will endeavour to fulfil any requests for additional meetings to be clerked this year and to take on new business although I will have to confirm that we have the capacity to provide the level of service you are requesting.

We look forward to our continuing working partnership in the year ahead!

Maureen Boyle
Head of Governor Services
020 7525 0376 Mobile: 07592 115560
Maureen.boyle@southwark.gov.uk
http://schools.southwark.gov.uk/governance
Governor Training and Development
Service Level Agreement

Leadership and management of schools continue to be prominent in the Ofsted framework and their judgement will continue to encompass governance. A defining role of successful governance is to maintain good or better outcomes, bring about sustainable school improvement and create robust accountability and rigorous oversight of the school’s financial performance and value.

Governors require a range of important skills and qualities to build a governing body which is an effective strategic decision maker accountable for ensuring the best possible education for every child or young person. The governing body’s continued professional development is an integral part of school effectiveness and growth. It is thus essential that governors have access to high quality guidance, support and learning opportunities.

Our SLA offers a diverse and relevant range of opportunities to help governors successfully fulfil their roles and responsibilities and engage in key areas of school improvement and strategic management. Our service has been working in partnership with schools for over 20 years to develop and support school improvement with creative and effective governance practice.

Our training programme is open to governors from maintained, academy and free schools. It offers a wide range of courses, briefings and events which are led by high calibre, experienced trainers and governance practitioners, both from the local authority and independent providers. The contents of the programme are updated regularly to reflect changing legislation, local and national developments and initiatives and can be modified to meet the specific needs of an individual governing body on request.

According to the feedback received from governors and schools, our service is highly valued and our aim is to continue to provide a quality service to suit your needs.

Key features
A comprehensive annual programme of training courses and events for school and academy governors covering a wide range of governance and educational matters.

- A range of induction modules offering a complete introduction to governance
- Unlimited access to all centrally run courses and events – 15 to 20 sessions each term - for all members of your governing body.
- A bespoke whole governing body training session in an area chosen by the governing body. This will be tailored to meet the needs of the governing body and where appropriate will reflect the school’s information/data.

This service includes
- Training and development sessions delivered by experienced trainers and facilitators with the relevant subject knowledge.
- Regular electronic programme updates on courses on offer (hard copies of the programme will be made available upon request).
- Telephone and email support and advice on governance, training and development. Available all year-round (Monday to Friday).
- Electronic copies of presentations and training materials to share with your governing body.
- Maintaining a record of all training and development for each member of the governing body to facilitate skills audits and governance reviews.
• Certificates of attendance can be provided for each governor undertaking training and development.
• Regular evaluation of training and development to ensure that delivery objectives have been met and to quality assure the provision.

Terms of agreement

The service is provided on the basis of an annual Service Level Agreement.

This agreement covers services to the named school only. Schools in collaborations, MATs or formal federations under the direction of one school leader, such as an executive headteacher, will be considered as one named school for the purposes of this agreement and costs will be calculated with reference to the total pupil numbers across all schools in the collaboration, federation or MAT.

The SLA covers the period from 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020. If you would like to take advantage of our highly competitive SLA rate please return your signed pro-forma at your earliest convenience.

Price Structure

Our prices are based on the size of your school. We are conscious of the increasing financial pressures on school budgets, and we have made only a slight increase, equivalent to just half the price of a single course attendance. This is the first increase in two years.

For schools who do not purchase the SLA, your governors may still access any of our training and development programme on a pay-as-you-go basis. They will need to book in advance any session they wish to attend.

The cost to the school will be as follows:
The induction programme - £80 per governor per module
Any other course on the programme - £120 per governor per course

Cancellations

A reduced cancellation fee of £35 per place will be charged to the school for non-attendance or cancellation of any sessions within 3 working days of the session date. The fee may be waived in exceptional circumstances. Non-subscribing schools will be charged the full cost of the session (£110/£120). This is to cover the costs incurred on your behalf with regard to course administration, room hire and catering.

General performance standards

We aim to deliver excellence in the services we provide and will work closely with schools to ensure we are supporting you in the most appropriate and effective way.

We undertake a regular customer satisfaction survey (in collaboration with the clerking service, usually every 12 to 18 months) and welcome your views and suggestions about our service. Governors have an opportunity to provide their feedback and comments at the end of each training event through the session feedback form.

Next Steps

Please complete the attached proforma and return it to ela.cleary@southwark.gov.uk
If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ela Cleary, Governor Training Co-ordinator,

Tel: 020 7525 5107 Email: ela.cleary@southwark.gov.uk
What they said!

The support we have received from our clerk and from Governor Training has been instrumental in our transition from a school Requiring Improvement to a Good School. Jonathan – St George’s CE School

Governors, many of whom are new to the role, receive effective training to ensure that they are able to hold the leadership effectively to account.

Ofsted 2018 - Camelot

The Governor Services Team have offered extensive invaluable support and guidance to Bessemer Grange Governors and Senior Leadership Team. We have always found the team happy to help and very responsive to our often urgent needs.

Karen – Chair Bessemer Grange

I have worked with Governor Services for a while now and I have been very impressed by their expertise, knowledge and support. They are always available to consult or offer advice when needed. Good value for money and a very reliable service. We have also accessed the excellent governors training which really helped strengthen the group.

Saliema – Executive Headteacher River Hill Federation

Governors’ high-quality training has helped develop their skills to hold leaders to account more effectively.

Ofsted 2019 – Bessemer Grange