



GOVERNANCE NEWSLETTER.

Summer 2024

Governance Helpdesk - **01438 544487**

Governance Training - **01438 544478**

Clerking - **01438 544459**

Welcome

As we head towards the busy summer term and realise we are over halfway through the academic year already, please take the time to remember the differences you have already made for the pupils in our schools.

The education sector is an extremely busy place at the moment with new initiatives and updates to statutory guidance appearing on a regular basis. The Governance Team is available to help subscribing boards in Hertfordshire and beyond to keep on top of all their responsibilities and encourage best practices.

This term saw a continued focus on innovative training for governors with new courses both “live” and online being produced to support governors. The highlights were “Exclusions Training – Law and Process; getting it right” and “Strategic Governance to Better Serve Underserved Learners”. As always, our Chairs Strategic Briefing and Clerks Networks were well attended keeping your boards up to date with the latest information and support on offer.

This issue contains the usual mix of useful information, reminders, updates, and interesting articles, so we hope you find it useful and then have a great Easter break!

The Governance team

Please have a look at our [website](https://www.hfleducation.org) or contact governance@hfleducation.org

COMING SOON.....NEW HFL SERVICE

The HFL **Complaint Investigations Service** will be launched around March/April 2024.

It will offer schools and settings the option of commissioning an independent investigation of formal complaints at Stage 1 or Stage 2 of the school's complaints process.

The new service will also offer other complaints-related resources upon request, including flowcharts, toolkits, suggested templates and webinars.

Key benefits:

- By being able to commission an external investigation, school leaders should have more time to focus on other priorities, such as school improvement and performance.

- Spending less time dealing with complaints should help to improve staff morale and wellbeing.
- It should also help to improve staff and governor recruitment and retention.
- The option of the new service presents a way forward in cases where the relationship between the complainant and the school may be strained or where cases have reached an impasse.

Further details will be made available shortly. Any requests can be directed to governance@hfleducation.org

2024 SEPTEMBER PRIMARY INSET.

Monday 2nd September, 2024
Hertfordshire Development Centre, Stevenage



Stronger in knowledge together

FIND OUT MORE...

HFL

THE HFL EDUCATION

HR CONFERENCE. *Maximising Impact*

Thursday 13th June 2024 9am-4pm
In person at Wyboston Conference Centre, Wyboston Lakes Resort, Bedfordshire.



Save the date

This year's face-to-face HFL HR Conference at Wyboston Conference Centre, Bedfordshire, titled, Maximising Impact will be held on Thursday, 13th June and will enable school leaders to gain valuable insights into how to handle HR challenges. We will share real success stories from the field and bring together experts to talk about fostering a positive culture, resilience, and mindfulness!

Our first keynote speaker is Jude Hamer – Paralympian and medallist

Jude, a wheelchair basketball athlete and three-time Paralympian will be speaking to us about resilience.

[Click here for more information and to book](#)

NEW FREE STRATEGIC SUPPORT PILOT FOR MAT TRUSTEES, LOCAL GOVERNORS AND CLERKS/ GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONALS.

STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE SUPPORT PILOT FOR ACADEMY TRUSTS.

Testing new ways to support our customers

We are trialling a free pilot support service for Herts trustees, local governors and clerks / governance professionals to support you with your governance queries.

Emailing trustgovernance@hfleducation.org for support will be free of charge until the end of the summer term 2024.

We will be using this pilot to understand whether there is a need for this type of service and the nature of queries that those involved in trust governance are looking for support with.

FREE support!

HFL Education



CHAIRS NETWORKS

**North West Herts –
District Chair: Jo Lawson**

**East Herts –
District Chair: Peter Falconbridge**

**South West Herts –
District Chair: Rotating chair**

Delegates will be sent clear guidance on how to log in and join the meeting a week before the event.

You will be able to join the briefing from 5.55pm, to allow sign in prior to the start time of 6.00pm.

The session will end at approximately 7.30pm.

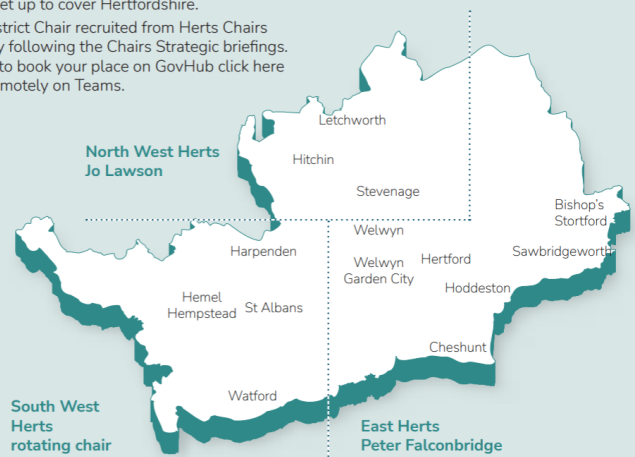
There is no charge for attending this event

CHAIRS NETWORKS – RUN BY HERTFORDSHIRE CHAIRS FOR HERTFORDSHIRE CHAIRS.

Three networks are now set up to cover Hertfordshire.

- Each network has a District Chair recruited from Herts Chairs
- Meetings will be termly following the Chairs Strategic briefings.
- For further details and to book your place on GovHub click here
- Meetings are hosted remotely on Teams.

Three districts cover and are chaired as follows:



**Upcoming dates:
Monday 8th July 2024 at 6-7:30pm**

EXCLUSIONS TRAINING – LAW AND PROCESS; GETTING IT RIGHT

In March, HFL teamed up with Tees Law to deliver a session for governors “Exclusions Training – Law and Process; getting it right” which was extremely well received by all the delegates that attended. We are following this up with a headteacher/deputy head only session that will take place on **Monday 24th June, 9.30am – 4.30pm in person at Hertfordshire Development Centre, Robertson House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage and will be delivered by Polly Kerr, Legal Director, Tees Law.** Delegate parking will be available.

Please see full course details and booking link below.

Exclusions Training – Law and Process; getting it right –

Headteacher/deputy head only session.

With an increase in Governor Discipline Committee (GDC) decisions being challenged at Independent Review Panel (IRP) it is becoming increasingly important for Headteachers to be supported with additional knowledge with regards to the Exclusions process. Exclusion rates are increasing in Herts as are the numbers of IRP hearings with significant disadvantage having been caused to children and young people as a result.

The face to face, full day training will support Headteachers in their role and help them understand the importance of getting it right. The training will focus on the law and process around exclusions.

The session will be a full day at Hertfordshire Development Centre, Robertson House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage.

The morning session will cover:

The Decision to Exclude – What happens next?

- An overview of the statutory scheme to review.
- Governors' Disciplinary Committee
- Headteacher and Governors' duties
- Preparing for the meeting
- Running Order
- Considering the evidence. What is the governors' role – the standard of proof?
- Making a decision

The afternoon session will cover: Independent Review Panel

- IRP's duties
- Preparing for the review
- Running Order
- Considering the evidence. What is the IRP's role – the standard of proof?
- Making a decision – what options are available to the IRP and what does this mean in practice.

Cost Subscribers: £76 per person.

Non-Subscribers: £186 per person.

Refreshments – Tea and coffee will be provided on arrival and after lunch. You are invited to bring your own lunch, or this can be purchased from the on-site restaurant.

Venue - HDC, Robertson House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ

Trainer - Polly Kerr, Legal Director, Tees Law.

To book a place, please click [HERE](#).

MODERN GOVERNOR UPDATE



We have recently launched two new modules to support School Budgeting which we know is an incredibly challenging area for schools. As the expectations for maintained schools and trusts are different, we have created two modules covering monthly budgeting to support each setting type; **Academy management account** and **Monthly budget monitoring**.

We also have the following modules which cover all the financial elements you will be reviewing this term: **SVFS, Academies financial management** and **Financial management for governors**.

We have updated our **GDPR** module to reflect the extensive breath this topic covers for schools and the legislative expectation under KCSIE. The module will support you to understand why GDPR applies to settings, what the responsibilities are, how to be complaint and key questions you can ask as a governor to ensure compliance in this area plus further resources.

We have made an update to our Converting To Academy Status module to reflect the changes to the processes school undertake when converting. This is renamed as **Joining a Trust**.

NB All modules will be updated to reflect the changes in the recently published Governance Guides (Maintained school and academy trusts).

Coming soon is a new bite sized module to guide you through the platform features including completing a module. This will support governors who have yet to find their way around the subscription and guide users to get the best from the training available. We will confirm once this has been launched.

This year has also seen the launch of the new DAR (Designated Administrator Role) feature which will enable a nominated user to have an overview of the school/ trust board on Modern Governor including:

- Personal profile data set up under the school board, including name, email address and date user last accessed
- Training records for each user, showing named module completions

Further information can be found on the 'Getting Started' section of the platform.

To access the current Catalogue of Modules: [CLICK HERE](#).

This can also be found within the Getting Started section on the platform.

If you have any queries, there are two ways to contact us:

Technical helpdesk available 24/7 - 0345 0744 114

Email support:
support@moderngovernor.com

HFL UPDATES

Click on the image below to go straight the latest and ever popular Governance blog.....



What follows is neither an endorsement of the new DfE guidance or a criticism of its aims and scope but rather a piece to hopefully stimulate discussion by boards so that a new perspective can be brought to bear on this thorny topic.

GOVERNORHUB UPDATE

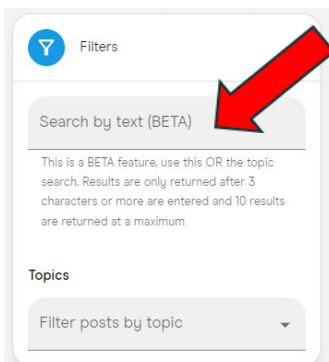
Have a look at the new free word search function on your board's noticeboard page to help you locate historical posts quickly.



GovernorHub

[Noticeboard](#) [Calendar](#) [Documents](#) [Governing Board](#) [About](#)

Type here to ask a question or send a message to the governing board



And coming soon.....
a new video tutorial that explains how to make the most of the HFL Governor Services area within GovernorHub.

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

The annual/termly safeguarding reports to governors have been updated on the Hertfordshire GRID. Please see link for details:

<https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/child-protection/policies-procedures-and-forms>



SFVS RETURN

The SFVS return is a mandatory annual requirement from the Department for Education (DfE). The deadline for the submission of this to the Local Authority was 29th March 2024.

To ensure that you comply with the DfE requirements please make sure that you have submitted your completed SFVS return to SIAS (sias@hertfordshire.gov.uk) in word format. SIAS will continue to post any further updates on the Grid and via Bulletins should any further changes be announced.

Please contact sias@hertfordshire.gov.uk if you have any questions regarding the SFVS return.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Effective monitoring of Health & Safety in schools

The governing body have a key part to play in tackling risk aversion, providing a wider sense of perspective and helping the school to get the balance right on managing risk.

We'd expect Governors to work in close partnership with the head teacher and senior leadership team to identify priority areas for monitoring and support which should be aligned to the school's risk profile.

In-particular whether policy expectations in higher risk areas, such as fire, asbestos, legionella and general premises compliance are being met.

There are updated versions (Oct 23) now on the Grid for the school site inspection checklist (intended to be undertaken by school staff inhouse on a termly / 6 monthly cycle) and the annual Governor / SLT monitoring checks which together can form part of an overall strategy in order schools can demonstrate that the principles of **HSG 65 'Managing for Health and Safety'** is in place. These templates should be adapted to suit each school's environment / risks.

<https://thegrid.org.uk/health-and-safety-offsite-visits-premises/health-and-safety/monitoring-inspection>

H&S COMPLIANCE TRACKING

Governors and senior leaders should maintain clear oversight of key H&S areas and be able to track actions arising to completion.

To aid with this we have an Excel compliance tracker that details the expected cycle times for H&S inspection, testing and maintenance as well as other document reviews (H&S policy, COSHH inventory etc.) <https://thegrid.org.uk/Restricted-assets/h-s-compliance-tracker-sep-23.xlsx>

There are of course a number of other ways this can be achieved be that via

H&S software, the DfE compliance tracker as part of GEMS (Good estate management for schools) etc. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f84b003e90e077041376d18/Compliance_Tracker.xlsx, whichever tool is being used by the school governors should be able to easily get assurance that routine H&S inspection and checks are in place.

If you've any queries on effective monitoring of H&S within your school, then contact james.ottery@hertfordshire.gov.uk

NEW GOVERNANCE GUIDES PUBLISHED

The Department for Education (DfE) has published **2 new governance guides**, to replace the Governance Handbook - its essential reference guide to the roles and duties of governing boards.

There are **no new requirements**, so your board doesn't need to do anything right now, except to be aware of, and able to access, the right guide for your school type (they've been split into maintained and academy guides).

Also, to remove any copies of, or reference to, the previous Handbook in your board's files and documents.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/governance-in-maintained-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/governance-in-academy-trusts>



Department
for Education

OFSTED SCHOOL INSPECTION HANDBOOK UPDATES



The School Inspection Handbook was updated in January 2024.

There is now a focus on leaders' wellbeing

- Inspector training on mental health awareness
- Enhanced clarity on inspectors' conduct (para 9 of School inspection handbook)
- Check on headteacher's wellbeing in the inspection planning conversation (90 minute call) (para 96)
- Clarity around who can attend meetings (paras 22 & 94)
- Confidentiality of judgments and timing of publication of reports

Changes have been made regarding deferrals, concerns about inspections and pausing an inspection

- Clearer guidelines on how schools can request deferrals (paras 89-92) and what considerations are taken into account
- Opportunity to raise concerns during or after an inspection
- Clearer guidelines re pausing an inspection

USEFUL RESOURCES

[Ofsted blog](#)

[Ofsted Talks podcasts](#)

[School Inspection Handbook](#)

TEACHER WORKLOAD REDUCTION TASK FORCE

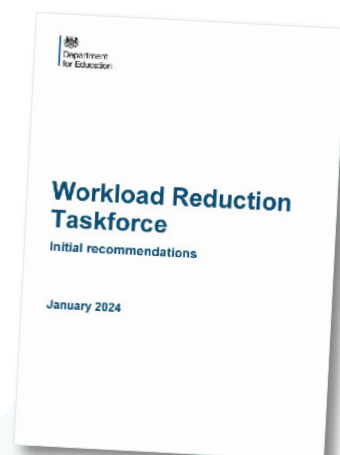
"The Workload Reduction Taskforce was remitted with agreeing recommendations on specific areas by the end of October and we are pleased to confirm acceptance of these initial recommendations, noting the Government's additional decisions below. These recommendations are an important milestone of the work of the Taskforce and along with the final set of recommendations in March, they will help support the Government's ambition to reduce working hours for teachers and leaders by five hours per week within three years, enabling them to focus on what matters most – high quality teaching."

- An ambition to reduce teachers' and leaders' working hours by 5 hours a week within 3 years
- Involving unions, LGA, NGA, trust leaders, sector bodies
- The Taskforce has published initial recommendations: [click on document](#)
- The full findings will be published in March 2024.
- Drive sign up to the education staff wellbeing charter
- re-publish the 'Clarification for Schools' document as a separate document, to include re-emphasising what is not required around marking
- Schools may want to consider using INSET time to look at addressing workload issues marking, planning and data
- DfE should commit to enhancing knowledge and accessibility of the School Workload Reduction Toolkit. -

Some of the recommendations

- Removal of Performance Related pay from STPCD 2024
- List of admin tasks Teachers should not be required to carry out as annex in STPCD 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workload-reduction-toolkit>



NSPCC PRIMARY SCHOOLS PROGRAMMES AND RESOURCES FREE

Hello! We are the NSPCC Schools Coordinators for Hertfordshire and would like to share with you and your schools all that we can offer you from our **Speak out. Stay Safe.** programme.

- KS1 and KS2 virtual pre-recorded assemblies
- Face to face workshops for your Year 2, 5 & 6 children, presented by our trained NSPCC Volunteers
- A fantastic SEND Speak Out. Stay Safe. Programme
- TALK Pants lesson plans and resources [PANTS resources for schools and teachers | NSPCC Learning](#)



We are encouraging ALL primary schools (including SEND schools), to book our **Speak out. Stay safe.** Programme for the Spring/Summer Terms 2024.

Speak out. Stay safe. Online programme

With the amazing support of Ant and Dec we have an online Assembly-Speak out. Stay safe. programme. This offer, available for children aged 5 to 11, includes access to video assemblies and supporting resources for use in the classroom. A BSL version is also available for d/Deaf children. Our specially adapted SEND version of **Speak out. Stay safe.** is also available.

For more information about this please do head to our website [Speak out Stay safe programme | NSPCC Learning](#) or alternatively contact one of us on the details below;

Jo Douse, Schools Coordinator
(South Hertfordshire)
NSPCC Schools Service
Email: Jo.Douse@nspcc.org.uk
Tel: **02037729662**

Cat Taylor, Schools Coordinator
(North Hertfordshire)
NSPCC Schools Service
Email: catherine.taylor@nspcc.org.uk
Tel: **02037729275**

NSPCC SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMME

Talk Relationships is the NSPCC's **new secondary** education service which supports schools to deliver inclusive sex and relationships education. It consists of **e-learning courses** for educators to feel confident when delivering sex and relationships education, **14 ready-to-teach lesson plans** created by experts from the PSHE Association and the NSPCC and a **dedicated helpline** to provide advice and guidance to educators delivering sex education.

We want all young people to understand healthy behaviours in relationships and recognise their right to be safe, heard and respected. And we want them to know how to get help from a safe adult if they need it.

Please do take a look here;
[Talk Relationships: resources to deliver sex and relationships education | NSPCC Learning](#) or contact Jo or Cat on above details.