

GOVERNOR TALK

Hello Governors

February 2019

Welcome to the Spring edition of Governor Talk. As we approach Easter our thoughts turn to the upcoming SATs in May - good luck to all our children with these; and to budget planning for 2019/2020!

In this feature, I've included a 'Check Point' section to act as a reminder for Governors, along with some exciting news about our development programmes for Governors. Happy reading! - Jill

New Schools

We are pleased to announce that Ravensdale Junior School has been awarded their Academy Order and full approval has been given by our Trustees for the school to join us in the summer. Ravensdale Junior is our fifth Derby school and we are very much looking forward to them joining us.



Chairs Forum

The date of the next Chairs' Forum is Tuesday 19 March at 8am. Remember this is open to all Chairs and Vice Chairs so please do come along.

Trust Board Update



We welcome Dame Susan Jowett to our Board of Trustees who was appointed in January 2019 by our Members. Until her retirement in August 2017, Susan was the CEO and Trustee of The Spencer Academies Trust, which was then a group of ten primary and secondary schools. She was awarded her DBE for her contribution to education.

Useful

Information

Chairs of Governors

Sadly, we said farewell to Steve Stafford, the Chair at Allenton and Arran Whitehouse, the Chair at Zaytouna. Steve has gone back to being a Headteacher and Arran felt the time was right to hand over the reins after the school joined the Trust - we thank them for their contribution and wish them well.

I am sure you will join me in congratulating Cathy Sheehan and Arshed Ahmed who have taken up the mantle of Chairs in Allenton and Zaytouna - good luck in your new roles.

GovernorLine

GovernorLine is a national helpline offering free, confidential and independent advice, information and support to school governors, clerks and individuals involved directly in the governance of schools and multi-academy trusts in England. GovernorLine comprises of a telephone advice line.

Free: 0800 151 2410 between 9-8pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

Clerking Service

Mary Farmer has joined Sheila Laithwaite on our team of Clerks for the Trust. Mary will be Clerking the North Partnership schools and William Booth. She will also be clerking our Guardians (Safeguarding) Groups.



Safeguarding Update

Vernon Lloyd is our named Safeguarding Trustee. The Trust's safeguarding team meet with Vernon prior to every Board meeting, keeping him up-to-date on all things safeguarding.

We have produced a governance framework for all things 'Safeguarding' which is currently being reviewed by our Guardians. Once this has been completed, a copy will be issued to all Governing Bodies so that you are familiar with the framework.

Thank you to those Safeguarding Governors who have been able to attend the Trust's Safeguarding Governors briefing. Feedback tells us that you want an opportunity to network with other Safeguarding Governors and that you want clarity about what the role entails which we are working on. You have also said that you find the support and information from the Trust very useful - thank you!

Modern Governor

<https://tinyurl.com/ybzo4nqh>
- Online learning for Governors.





Horizon Scanning

The SATS are fast approaching – week commencing 13 May 2019. Please ensure that your Governing Body allocate a Governor who is able to go into school during the SATS week to monitor the administration process for the SATS. There is a very simple form that we ask Governors to complete. Upon completion, we ask that you send a completed copy to Jill Wilkinson, jill.wilkinson@transformtrust.co.uk.

Budget Planning – Governing Bodies should ensure that they have scheduled a meeting in which to discuss and recommend their budgets to the Trust. Most Governing Bodies find that having a dedicated meeting for this is useful, but so long as it is incorporated into one of your meetings that fine. Your Clerk can help you with this if not already in the diary.

From a recent audit, it was flagged how Governors approve the 'sold services' – services bought back from your LA. I have asked our Clerks to remind Headteachers/Budget managers to ensure this is included in part of your budget conversations.

Check Point

- Prevent Action Plans – please be aware of when the school last presented their Prevent Action Plan and whether they are due for reviewing.
- Equality Objectives – it is a statutory requirement that schools publish their equality objectives on their website. We have conducted a very simple review and many schools need to update this area. Please ask about this at your next meeting.
- Governor Training – we expect ALL governors to have at least completed basic safeguarding training annually and have undertaken Prevent and GDPR training as a minimum. All of which can be done via your own workplace; via our online training; by attending one of our training sessions or through your school.
- When you know you have a new Governor, please alert Sheila or Mary your respective Clerk straight away.
- For Chairs – a reminder to schedule in your interim Headteacher performance management review.

What's New/Coming Soon

We are looking to develop our own bespoke 'Local Leaders of Governance' network to celebrate and acknowledge the fantastic work and commitment of our Governors. A draft framework will be discussed at the next Chairs' Forum with an intended launch in Summer 2019.

Building on from our successful 'Leadership Development Programme' pilot, facilitated by Fiona Moore – a leadership development and talent specialist, we are looking to offer this programme again in the summer. It will be open to all governors and there will be a nominal cost of £50 per school – regardless of the number of governors who attend.

Additionally, we are excited to announce that we are also developing a brand new programme: Chairing @ Greater Depth. This is based on Steve Radcliffe's Future Engage Deliver [FED] programme which all of our schools are doing. This will allow Chairs to understand and share the same FED language.

Useful websites

National Governors' Association

www.nga.org.uk - General information and advice for all Governors. The Trust has bought a corporate membership package so Sheila Laithwaite can provide you with their discrete login to be able to allow you to access the members' area.



The Key for Governors'

<http://bit.ly/1Km9XSy> - General Information and advice for all Governors. There is a membership charge for this organisation which is not covered in your package.



The School Bus

<https://tinyurl.com/yagorkbf> - This is another great website with lots of resources, articles and model policies etc for Governors and Schools but comes as a membership which is quite costly.

