



BRENTWOOD DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE

*“Supporting Catholic schools to provide excellent education where pupils flourish,
and Christ is made known to all.”*

Governor News – March 2025

This is a monthly summary to help Governors keep up to date with key themes of national education policy, the local Diocesan context, research and good practice.

NEWS

Employment Rights Bill - What Does This Mean for Schools and MATs?

Since the ERB was first announced in October 2024, a significant number of changes have already been proposed. It is expected that more changes will follow before we arrive at a final position, and more likely than not secondary legislation will be required to give effect to some of the proposals. [Employment Rights Bill Updates March 25.docx](#)

Government Sets Out Plans to Target ‘Stuck’ Schools

[Link to article](#)

The Secretary of State announced new plans to tackle forgotten schools as part of [proposals for a significantly strengthened school accountability system](#) that works for parents.

There are more than 600 ‘stuck’ schools in England that have received consecutive poor Ofsted judgements, and which are attended by more than 300,000 children. Those attending these schools leave primary school with results 14 percentage points worse on average and secondary school with results a grade per subject worse on average.

Plans unveiled by the Education Secretary provide for a stronger, faster system, spearheaded by an initial £20 million investment in new regional improvement teams, known as [RISE teams](#) which will prioritise these stuck schools. They will draw up bespoke improvement plans with those schools, with government making up to £100,000 available initially to each school for specialist support. This compares to a £6,000 grant that was available previously for similar schools.

Ofsted Report Cards

[Ofsted has unveiled the new report cards](#) which they propose will evaluate schools across 9 separate areas. They also set out proposals for evaluating areas from ‘exemplary’ to ‘causing concern’, holding schools to a higher standard and providing far greater information for parents.

School Meals

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) should be enrolled automatically, according to MPs [\[BBC News\]](#)

DfE Guidance for Governors on SEND Oversight

[Link to article](#) - Updated February 2025

This guidance is intended to:

- support school governing boards’ understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities
- empower governors and trustees to hold their schools to account

Data From the Office for National Statistics

New data from the Office for National Statistics suggest more young people were **not in work, education or training** at the end of 2024, than at any point in the past 11 years. [\[BBC News\]](#)

School Leaders Facing Abuse

Over 80% of school leaders face abuse from parents/carers, with 1 in 10 having been a victim of assault. Many leaders are at breaking point due to increasing hostility, with a poll of 1,600 members

of the National Association of Headteachers revealing some leaders are subsequently struggling with anxiety and depression [[Schools Week](#)].

GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

Governor Vacancies - Please see the list of [current vacancies](#)

Chair and Vice Chair - Please note that only **Foundations Governors** can be appointed as the Chair or Vice Chair of a Governing Board.

Foundation Governors - In respect of the school or college for which a person is or is to be a Foundation Governor, he or she must not at any time be:

- related to any member of the school or college staff, teaching, or non-teaching;
- related to any governor whether elected, appointed, or *ex-officio*, of the school;
- employed (whether as a teacher or otherwise) at the school.

A person (other than the parish Priest) will not be re-appointed as a foundation governor of a particular school or college if he or she has just completed three terms of office on that particular governing body.

This message appeared in a July 2024 Friday mailing, and it has come to our attention that some schools are still not adhering to this. We will now be making contact with individual schools to ensure the situation is rectified.

TRAINING

For all training and events see Diocese website:

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/events/>

Key Information for Governors - Documentation and Policies

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/school-governance-2/diocesan-guidance-model-policies/>

Academies' Day and CMAT Development Conference

We are running the Diocese's CMAT Development Conference on Monday 7th July 2025 09:30-15:15, at The Campion school, Wingletye Lane, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 3BX

There is no charge for attending this conference and a light lunch will be provided.

The invitation to attend is extended to all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors (or Vice Chair if they are unable to attend) of all schools in the Diocese – whether your school is a VA school, Single Academy, or part of a Catholic Multi Academy Trust (CMAT).

This is an important opportunity to hear about the successes and challenges from some current CMATs, their journey so far and their plans for the future. There will be an opportunity to share good practice and network with colleagues. For those schools not yet part of a CMAT it will be an opportunity to find out more about and consider ways in which to engage with the Bishop's vision for education in our diocese.

This is a significant opportunity for school leaders, and we ask you to prioritise it in your diary.

[To book your place](#)

Chairs' Forum – Tuesday 17th June: 4.30pm - 6.00pm

This important termly Chairs' Forum for Chairs and Vice Chairs will cover key topics as well as advice on recent Diocesan and national educational developments.

Facilitators: Rob Simpson, Director of Education and Maria Shepherd, Deputy Director

[To book your place](#)

Governor Induction

As well as in-school induction, it is important that new Governors attend induction training to gain confidence and knowledge of their role within a Catholic setting. Diocesan induction training consists of **two modules** and the expectation is that Governors attend both to complete their induction training. **Whilst it is preferable to attend Module 1 first, they can be done in any order.**

Module 1: The Distinctive Nature of Catholic Schools – 3rd June (5.00pm – 6.30pm)

This module explores the distinctive ethos of church schools and the role of governance within a Catholic setting.

[To book your place](#)

Module 2: An Introduction to the Roles and Responsibilities of Governors – 1st July (5.00pm – 6.30pm)

This module will help governors gain confidence and knowledge of the three core functions of governance and share good practice.

[To book your place](#)

Gift-Ed - the Gift-Ed library of online courses, supporting Governors in their role, has been funded for 4 years but there is now a subscription for this valuable training tool. You will not be able to access Gift-Ed courses without a subscription. **Does your school subscribe?** Completed order forms should be returned to info@anspear.com

[Link to order form.](#)

CLERKS

Clerking Diocese schools

It is important that full Governing Boards are clerked by a professional Clerk/Governance Professional rather than a school employee such as a Secretary, PA or Business Manager. We understand that there is a cost implication, but the Clerk carries out a significant role and where this is done professionally this will have real benefits for the Governors as well as avoiding any suggestions of a conflict of interest. As well as organising and minuting Governing meetings and supporting the Board with administrative tasks, such as record keeping, to make sure everything runs smoothly, a professional Clerk makes an important contribution to the efficient and effective functioning of a Governing Board by providing expert advice and guidance on a range of statutory and procedural matters to ensure efficiency and compliance. This includes working in partnership with the Chair to keep the Governing Body focussed on its core strategic priorities and providing independent advice on procedures, statutory guidance and policies and the annual tasks and decisions that need to be made.

Information:

[**\(TZA\) v R, A Secondary School \[2025\] Court of Appeal - 4 March 2025**](#)

Unsuccessful challenge to child's exclusion from school; 15-year-old black Caribbean boy with SEN permanently excluded for serious assault, decision of HT was not unlawful for failure to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Seriousness of the pupils conduct and/or harm of allowing them to remain will be such as to make no difference that they belong to a high-risk group or have received inadequate support in the past.

NEWSLETTERS

Past Chairs and Governor Newsletters:

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/school-governance-2/governors-newsletters/>

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