

## DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

### Job Description

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Clerk to Governors</b>		
<b>Location</b>	Clyst Hydon Primary School		
<b>Reporting to</b>	Chair of Governors		
<b>Position Number(s)</b>			
<b>Grade</b>	D		
<b>Directorate/Section/School</b>	Education		
<b>Effective date of JD</b>	28.03.2022	<b>JE Job Number</b>	G.0308

#### The Role of the Clerk to Governors

The clerk to governors plays a key role in governor involvement in school improvement and accountability. S/he is responsible for advising the governing body on constitutional matters, duties and powers and will work within the broad current legislative framework. S/he will secure the continuity of the governing body's business and observe confidentiality requirements. The post holder will be accountable to the governing body, working effectively with the chair of governors, head teacher and other governors.

#### The Role of the Governing Body

Governing bodies help schools provide the best possible education for their pupils by:

- thinking and working strategically to help to raise standards and underpin school improvement activity
- monitoring and evaluating progress towards the school's priorities and targets
- supporting the head teacher and staff as well as challenging their expectations and acting as a critical friend
- accounting to all stakeholders for the school's overall performance and for the decisions they have made
- maintaining the strategic overview and management of school finances
- ensuring the school is run in accordance with the legislative framework

#### **Job Purpose including main duties and responsibilities:**

##### **Meetings**

##### **The post holder will:**

1. work effectively with the chair of governors and head teacher before governing body meetings to prepare a purposeful agenda which takes account of national government, local authority and church authority (where appropriate) issues and is focused on school improvement;
2. encourage the head teacher and others to produce agenda papers on time;
3. produce, collate and distribute the agenda and papers so that recipients receive them at least seven clear days, and preferably ten days before the meeting;
4. record the attendance of governors at the meeting and take appropriate action re absences;

5. advise the governing body on governance legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after the meeting;
6. take notes of the governing body meetings to prepare minutes, including indicating who is responsible for any agreed action;
7. record all decisions accurately and objectively with timescales for actions;
8. send drafts to the chair and head teacher for amendment /approval by the chair;
9. copy and circulate the approved draft to all governors within the timescale agreed with the governing body;
10. advise absent governors of the date of the next meeting;
11. keep a minute book, or file of signed minutes, as a an archive record;
12. liaise with the chair, prior to the next meeting to receive an update on progress of actions agreed previously by the governing body;
13. following the approval of the minutes at the next meeting, forward a copy where agreed, to the appropriate church or foundation authority;
14. chair that part of the meeting at which the chair is elected.

## **Membership**

### **The post holder will:**

1. maintain a record of names, addresses and category of governing body members, and their term of office;
2. advise the local authority when there are changes of membership of the governing body;
3. maintain copies of current terms of reference and membership of committee and working parties and nominated governors e.g. safeguarding
4. advise governors and appointing bodies of expiry of the term of office before term expires so elections or appointments can be organised in a timely manner;
5. inform the governing body of any changes to its membership;
6. maintain governor meeting attendance records and advise the governing body of non-attendance of governors;
7. ensure that a register of governing body pecuniary interests is maintained, reviewed annually and lodged within the school;
8. check with the LA, and, where appropriate, the church authority that Criminal Records Bureau disclosure has been successfully carried out, together with Declaration of Eligibility on all new appointees and re-appointees

## **Advice and Information**

### **The post holder will:**

1. advise the governing body on procedural issues;
2. have access to appropriate legal advice, support and guidance;
3. ensure that new governors know how to access the *Guide to the Law for School Governors* and other relevant information;

4. take action on governing body's agreed policy to support new governors, taking account of information and courses provided by Devon Governor Support;
5. advise on the requisite contents of the school prospectus and any other statutory documentation;
6. maintain an annual cycle of business for the governing body, which includes an annual calendar of meetings and the cycle of agenda items for meetings of the governing body and its committees.
7. ensure that statutory policies are in place and stored in school where they are accessible. All statutory policies should be on a review cycle to ensure they are up to date
8. maintain records of governing body correspondence

## Professional Development

### The post holder will:

1. attend a new clerks training day or its equivalent;
2. attend clerks briefings and participate in professional development opportunities;
3. keep up-to-date with current educational developments and legislation affecting school governance and familiarise themselves with the relevant websites.

### Optional Extras

The post holder may be asked to perform as part of his/her duties any of the following. **There should be sufficient hours in the contract to allow for these additional duties**

- clerk meetings of any (non statutory) committees the governing body chooses to set up;
- assist with the elections of parent, teacher and staff governors;
- give advice and support to governors taking on new roles such as chair or chair of a committee;
- participate in, and contribute to, the training of governors in areas appropriate to the clerking role;
- maintain a file of relevant DfE and LA documents;
- maintain archive materials;
- prepare briefing papers for the governing body, as necessary;

**Devon Governor Support recommends that the clerk to governors be employed to clerk all meetings of the governing body including all its committee meetings. Governing bodies should ensure that there are sufficient hours in the contract to allow for this.**

**This is the GLPC part of the Job Description and the manager needs to complete this giving careful consideration to the duties of the job**

**1. Supervision and Management:**

There are no line management responsibilities.

**2. Creativity and Innovation:**

The post holder is expected to work within a set of procedures and protocols outlined in the Guide to the Law for School Governors supported by information available through the Devon Governor Support website. S/he is also required, however, to work unaided to set up systems for storing and retrieving data (minutes and other information relating to the work and membership of the governing body) which are appropriate and effective.

The post holder is expected to use creativity in setting up appropriate templates for agendas and minutes as well as to have oversight of a plan of the governing body business for the year including a policy review cycle. S/he should be able to advise the governing body on an effective pattern and frequency of meetings.

The post holder has to use his/her initiative in preparing for meetings, sourcing such information and advice as s/he considers may be necessary to ensure that the meeting adheres to statutory and best practice.

By attending training events and keeping up to date, the post holder will be able to advise the governing body on the latest recommendations for good practice.

**3. Links with other officers, Service users or Members of the Public:**

The post holder will be in weekly (on average) contact with the head teacher and chair of governors, following up actions and the impact of decisions arising from meetings, passing on correspondence, making arrangements for future meetings

The post holder will be in fortnightly (on average) contact with governors providing information to governors, updates to meetings, correspondence and other arrangements

The post holder will be required to liaise with parents, local and other officers, other agencies and members of the public on behalf of the governing body as required - for example:

- Devon Governor Support to update membership of the governing body and arrange in-house training
- Human resources to set up staff discipline & other statutory committees
- Education and re-integration officers to set up meetings in relation to student exclusions
- Audit and finance officers when a school audit is due
- Parents/carers in connection with statutory processes and procedures
- Prospective governors from the parental body and from the local community

**4. Levels of Responsibility**

The post holder has a degree of independence and autonomy. Support from, and contact with, the chair of governors and the head teacher may not be regularly available.

For example, the post holder is required to

- be proactive in managing the business of the governing body and needs to initiate the setting up of relevant meetings and follow through as appropriate
- look ahead to foresee the end dates of terms of office of governors and take appropriate action well in advance

- ensure that the memberships of statutory committees are maintained in readiness for a situation which may arise at short notice requiring a meeting to be convened
- ensure the list of statutory policies is maintained and kept up to date, thus ensuring the governing body meets its obligations in line with current legislation and reducing the risk of legal challenge.

## 5. Effects of Decisions

By developing and maintaining a good working knowledge of current educational initiatives, the DfE Guide to the Law and legislation affecting governance, the post holder is able to provide advice on constitutional matters, statutory duties and powers.

The post holder is responsible for giving reliable, accurate & timely advice to governing bodies, chairs of governors, individual governors and head teachers, possibly little notice. This means that the post holder has to foresee possible issues and prepare him/herself well in advance by familiarising him/herself with appropriate regulations and legislation and, if necessary, seeking outside guidance.

The post holder will administer, oversee and advise on procedure with regard to adherence to timescales for grievance and disciplinary matters of both staff and pupils.

The post holder will be called upon to act as clerk to governors' statutory committees which meet when required to hear such matters as pupil exclusions; staff discipline; staff redundancy and complaints against the headteachers. During these meetings the clerk may be required to provide procedural advice to the meeting. Governors should heed this advice when making decisions which have far-reaching consequences for individual pupils or staff as well as for the school and, potentially, for the local authority. The accuracy of minutes is also imperative for the reasons given above.

## 6. Resources:

The post holder may be responsible for a school laptop if one is assigned to them. In addition s/he is required to:

- Secure the minute book or file of signed minutes of all meetings of full governing bodies and governors committees as an archive record, and forward approved minutes if appropriate, to the Church or appropriate Foundation authority;
- Maintain records of Governing Body correspondence and relevant DfE and LA documents and archive the same;
- Maintain a record of names, addresses, categories and terms of office of Governing Body members and advise the Governing Body, LA and, where appropriate, the church authority of such changes so that elections and appointments can be organised in a timely manner.

If the post holder may be working from home s/he must ensure that any electronic files are regularly backed up and deposited at the school. These files are the school's intellectual property.

## 7. Work Demands:

The post holder needs to be able to manage and prioritise his/her own workload and to work flexibly. Ideally s/he needs to be available at short notice and may have to take on unplanned work if an unforeseen matter arises which involves the governing body's statutory committees or extraordinary meetings of the governing body.

The post holder will have to work to deadlines, for example the production, collation and distribution of the agenda and papers so that governors receive them at least seven clear days before a meeting. The post holder is responsible for encouraging the head teacher and other governors to produce agenda papers on time.

## 8. Physical Demands:

Normal lifting and carrying requirements only e.g. files, folders and documents, sometimes bulky.

**9. Working Conditions:**

Normal office working conditions, often working from home.

**10. Work Context:**

The work risks are those associated with homeworking as well as work in an office environment.

**11. Knowledge and Skills:**

The post holder should have some knowledge of schools, education and ideally school governance. S/he needs to have a commitment to learn and keep up to date as changes in education are frequent and non compliance can have legal consequences

The post holder must have excellent interpersonal skills, both written and spoken, with the ability to communicate effectively with stakeholders at all levels. This will ensure that advice and information is given clearly and succinctly both orally and in written form. Persuasion, influence and tact are also required. There is a need to foresee possible consequences of different courses of action and give advice based on this. Listening skills are also an important requirement.

The post holder will know where (and how) to seek reliable advice including that of local authorities, governors' organisations and partner schools. They should have the ability to use the internet and possess the ability to research appropriate procedural and legal issues in order to give timely advice to governors.

The post holder will have the ability to give advice to a wide range of people in an acceptable way; and will need to understand and respond to the needs of others. Good minute taking ability and the use of word processing and other IT programmes are also essential.

Professional Development

The post holder will be expected to attend a new clerk's training day or its equivalent and attend clerks' briefings. The post holder will need to keep up to date with current educational developments, regulations and legislation relating to education and school governance, familiarising his/herself with the relevant websites.

The post holder may also be interested in completing appropriate accredited training and qualifications as available.

**Signatures:**

**Job Description agreed by:**

**Chris Dack, Chair of the Governing Body:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Claire Collins, Post Holder:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mr Steve Mellor, Executive Headteacher :**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Structure chart – to be sent in by the manager as additional information with the job description and person specification if available**

Structure chart

