

# Clerking Essentials

## Session 3 (Maintained school governing body)

### Materials

This contains the materials you will need for Session 3 including

- The pre-work instructions explaining what you need to do before the Session
- The Overwood Case study materials you will use for your pre-work and in the session
- The powerpoint slide set used in the session

You will need to refer to them in the session and so unless you will be joining the session using a device with a very large screen or using more than one screen you must print these materials off before the session.

Here is a list of the materials with links to each to make them easier to use.

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# 1. Pre-work instructions

## Pre-work - Overwood School case study - 30 minutes total

### Setting the scene

Imagine that you have been appointed as clerk to the governing body of Overwood School. Penny, the previous clerk has sent you a handover email.

### Tasks

After reading through Penny's handover email please attempt the following tasks prior to Session 3.

1. From the information given to you by Penny, have a go at putting the agenda items into a logical order. Is there anything you think is missing?
2. From the list of governance files and records that Penny said are listed on the portal, which of these do you think you would need to access for the first meeting?
3. How will you find out how many parent governor vacancies there are? Hint you will need to look at both how many there should be and how many there are currently – see the governor membership information and Instrument of Government in the documents provided for Overwood School.
4. See if you can find any rules for the election of chair and vice chair for a maintained school, the process, their term of office and who can and cannot stand. Hint: useful sources of information
  - The maintained schools [The School Governance \(Roles, Procedures and Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2013 - Part 3](#)
  - The standing orders for Overwood School



## 2. Overwood School case study materials

### Handover email from previous clerk

From: Clerk@Overwoodschoo.sch.uk

To: Clerk@Overwoodschoo.sch.uk

Subject: Handover note for new clerk for Overwood School - Confidential

Hi there,

Sorry we couldn't meet up. I hope you enjoy your new role, the governors are a good bunch and I think they have the best interests of the school at heart.

### Governance files and records

I have emailed you a link to the online portal the governing body uses so you can access the following

1. Membership information
2. Standing orders
3. Committee Terms of Reference
4. Instrument of Government
5. Code of Conduct
6. Delegation planner
7. Meeting attendance register
8. Pecuniary Interest Register
9. Access to governing body agendas and meeting papers
10. Templates for the agendas and Minutes
11. Annual governance agenda planner
12. Policy folder with all relevant policies
13. Governor Induction Pack
14. School information

Frank the headteacher has offered to help you if you can't find anything.

### The governing body

A few things you might find useful to know.

Djamilla the Chair is a bit old school and not the best at delegation. Keep an eye on her and encourage her to move with the times and to succession plan! She (10 yrs) and Brendan (6 yrs) have been chair and vice chair for probably too long, despite my prompting.

Frank is lovely but a bit disorganised so will need plenty of advance warning for paperwork and a few reminders. Paperwork can be late and sometimes tabled at the meeting but he is very particular about the minutes – you just need to check he doesn't try to make unwarranted changes.

## Next board meeting

Djamilla has sent me this list of items for the September 25<sup>th</sup> agenda, the first FGB which is quite an admin-heavy meeting. She sent it after my end date so I am passing it on to you.

1. Election of Chair and Vice chair
2. Headteachers verbal report on the start of the school year to include safeguarding update
3. Agreement and adoption of:
  - Committees and link governors, ToR, delegation planner, Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, policy review schedule
4. Declarations of interest (and annual register)
5. Summer term data review
6. AOB
7. Governor vacancies pending
8. Agreement of 2024-5 School Improvement Plan and objectives and review of 2023-24 SIP
9. Safeguarding Policy

## Future board meeting dates

You will also need to agree the meeting and monitoring dates for the year at some point – we only set the date for the first meeting as we were not sure of your availability.

I've extracted below the actions table from the last board meeting minutes for you for info and to prepare for the meeting. You will need to pick up action 5 please.

Actions table				
Action no	Agenda item	Action	Who	Due by
1.	5.	Ensure review of 2023-24 SIP and draft 2024-25 SIP are ready for autumn 1 meeting	HT	Autumn 1 meeting
2.	6.	Bring annual Safeguarding report to meeting 1 (c/f)	HT	Autumn 1 meeting
3.	9.	Handover with new clerk	Clerk	Done by email
4.	8.	Consider key roles for September & any training needs	All	Autumn 1 meeting
5.	10.	Check number of parent governor and other vacancies for September ( <b>not done – for new clerk</b> )	Clerk	Start autumn term

## Chair and vice chair election

Also, just after my end date an email arrived from one of the governors asking for some advice which I've left for you to deal with. Hope that's okay.

*Hi, I wonder if you could help me with something. Djamilla, the chair has emailed all governors (you weren't copied in on the email) and said that she and the vice chair have discussed their roles, and both have decided that they want to continue in these posts for another year so the board will need to vote them in again.*

*However, I have been talking to Holly who is an associate member, and we would both like to stand – me as chair and Holly as vice chair as we feel it is time for a change and we could take the board forward.*

*Now that we have had this email does this mean we cannot put ourselves forward?*

I think that's it - good luck!

*Penny*



**INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT  
COMMUNITY AND COMMUNITY SPECIAL SCHOOLS & MAINTAINED NURSERY SCHOOLS**

1. The name of the school is **Overwood School**
2. The school is a Community School
3. The name of the governing body is “the governing body of Overwood School”
4. The governing body shall consist of:
  - a. 3 Parent Governors
  - b. 1 headteacher
  - c. 1 Staff Governor
  - d. 6 Co-opted Governors
  - e. 1 Local Authority governor
5. Total number of governors is 12
6. The term of office of the staff governor is two years.
7. This Instrument of Government comes into effect on 1st December 2018
8. This Instrument was made by order of Anytown Council on 25 October 2018



## **Overwood School**

### **Standing Orders 2024-25**

- 1. Membership.** The composition of the governing board (GB) is recorded in the **Instrument of Government**. The GB may appoint Associate Members to serve on a committee if they have the skills required and the FGB will decide on their voting rights. Associate Members are entitled to receive papers for and attend GB meetings but will have no voting rights at these meetings.
- 2. Conduct.** The GB will annually adopt a **Code of Conduct**. Governors must act in accordance with the agreed Code of Conduct at all times and failure to do so could result in suspension or removal.
- 3. Clerk to the Governors (Governance Professional).** The GB appoints and manages the clerk. In the absence of the clerk a governor (but not the headteacher) may take the minutes of a meeting. The GB must have regard to advice from the clerk as to the nature of its functions.
- 4. Meetings.** The GB will meet at least six times per school year. All meetings will be convened by the clerk including any additional meetings. The written notice of meetings, with an agenda and any papers to be considered at the meeting, will be made available at least 7 days before the meeting - it is an expectation that governors will have read all circulated papers prior to the meeting.
  - The Chair may ask the clerk to call a meeting with a shorter notice period if he/she considers that there are matters that demand urgent consideration, but the period of notice will be at least 7 days if the matters include certain specified matters such as the removal of the Chair or the suspension of any governor.
  - In addition, any 3 governors can request that the clerk convenes a meeting.
  - Governors must be present in person or virtually at a meeting to participate and vote. Virtual attendance will be permitted in line with the adopted 'Alternative Participation Protocol'.
  - If both the chair and vice chair are absent, another governor (but not any person employed to work at the school) can take the chair for that meeting.
- 5. Governor Interests.** The clerk will maintain a Register of Governors' Interests; governors must confirm these interests annually and as changes occur. Governors will also have the opportunity to declare any pecuniary or personal conflict of interests on agenda items at meetings. If there is a dispute about a person being required to withdraw from a meeting when an interest has been declared, the matter of withdrawal shall be determined by the GB. The register will be published on the website.
- 6. Quorum and Decisions.** The quorum for a GB meeting and vote is 50% of the total number of governors, minus any vacancies, rounded up. For committees it is 3 governors appointed to that Committee, two of whom will not be employees of the school.

All decisions are made by the GB, except where it has delegated this to a committee or an individual. Decisions are made by simple majority of governors present and voting. Voting by proxy is not permitted. All decisions and monitoring taking place outside of the GB meetings must be reported back at the next meeting or in line with the annual planner.

In the event of a tie the chair (or committee Chair if a governor) has a second, or casting, vote. This will not apply to panels, which must always be an odd number. Decisions of the governing body are binding on all members.

- 7. Chair and Vice Chair.** The GB must appoint a Chair and Vice Chair who is a governor. This cannot be employed by the school or an associate member as specified in the 2013 Regulations. If the chair or vice-chair resigns the governing body must elect one of their number to fill that vacancy at the next meeting. The Vice Chair will act as the Chair in the Chair's absence. The election of Chair and Vice Chair will follow the following process:
- a. *Governors will be asked to submit written self-nominations prior to the GB meeting. If no nominations are received in advance they will be taken verbally at the meeting.*
  - b. *The clerk will preside over the election of the Chair.*
  - c. *A ballot will be conducted even where there is only one nominee. The nominee(s) will be asked to leave the room whilst discussion and voting takes place; they do not have a vote.*
  - d. *The remaining governors will vote. If there is a tie the process is repeated until a nominee polls a majority of votes in their favour.*
  - e. *The nominee(s) will return to the meeting.*
- 8. Delegation of Functions.** The GB can delegate any of its statutory functions to a committee, a governor or to the headteacher, subject to prescribed restrictions – see the **delegation planner** and **committee terms of reference**. The GB remains responsible for any decisions taken, including those relating to a function delegated to a committee or an individual. The GB can still perform functions it has delegated. No action may be taken by an individual governor unless authority to do so has been formally delegated by the GB. This does not preclude the chair or vice chair taking “chair's action” under their emergency powers. The delegation of functions will be reviewed annually.
- 9. Link Governors.** Monitoring will take place at the governor days held 3 times a year, plus additional visits as required. For a few key areas of responsibility, governors will be assigned by the GB annually. For all monitoring a brief written report will be produced and submitted to the following GB meeting.
- 10. Equality Duty** In relation to the school's public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010, each committee must assess the impact of policies and practices (and the likely impact of proposed policies and practices) that are within the remit of the committee, taking account of any information received and noting details of any engagement that has taken place with interested parties in the process.

**11. Policies.** Policies will be reviewed and adopted at the levels of delegation set out in the most current edition of the '**Policy Review Timetable**' formally agreed by the GB.

**12.** This document was reviewed and agreed by the GB at the meeting held on 16.09.2024



**Overwood School**  
**Governing Body Membership**

Full Name	Appointment type	Original Date of Appointment	Date of Re-appointment	Term of Office	Date Stepped Down	Governance Role	Business, Pecuniary and personal Interests	Governance Roles in other Institutions	Material Interests arising from Relationships with School Staff	Attendance Record 2023-24
Frank Smith	Headteacher	01/09/2018	-	-			None	None	None	6/6
Arjun Shah	Staff	12/05/2022		2 years			Married to Shehal Shah, Governor	None	None	5/6
Vacancy	Parent			4 years						
Brendan O'Dell	Parent	01/10/2022		4 years		Vice Chair Pupil Premium	None	None	None	5/6
Gillian Wilson	LA nominated	18/03/2024		4 years			None	Anytown Town Council.	None	3/3
Paul Dove	Co-opted by GB	06/05/2021		4 years		SEND	None	None.	Married to Y1 teacher	5/6
Djamilla Coe	Co-opted by GB	17/09/2018	17/09/2022	4 years		Chair	None	None	None	6/6
Shehal Shah	Co-opted by GB	06/10/2021		4 years			Married to Arjun Shah, Governor	Director at ZMAT	None	2/6
Keir Wan	Co-opted by GB	10/10/2014	10/10/2019	4 years		Safeguarding	Works for School Photocopiers UK	None	None	6/6
Matt Gove	Co-opted by GB	17/09/2018	17/09/2022	4 years		Health and Safety	None	None	None	6/6
Vacancy	Co-opted by GB									
Holly Hughes	Associate member	17/09/2022		4 years						



## **Overwood School**

### **Governor Code of Conduct**

Once this code has been adopted, all governors agree to faithfully abide by it.

#### **We will abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:**

##### **Selflessness**

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

##### **Integrity**

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

##### **Objectivity**

We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

##### **Accountability**

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

##### **Openness**

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

##### **Honesty**

We will be truthful.

##### **Leadership**

We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

#### **We will focus on our core governance functions:**

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

**As individual board members, we agree to:**

**Fulfil our role & responsibilities**

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
3. We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
4. We shall fully cooperate with individual requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, such as disclosure and barring checks.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities to school staff, ensuring a safe working environment, support for their wellbeing, and acting fairly and without bias.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
14. We will have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

**Demonstrate our commitment to the role**

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.

4. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training, prioritise training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

### **Build and maintain relationships**

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community.
2. We will respect the remit of, and engage constructively with, relevant authorities and other schools.
3. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
4. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
5. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

### **Respect confidentiality**

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

### **Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent**

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business, and these will be recorded in the register of business interests.
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.

4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
5. We will act as a governor; not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information about Schools – GIAS ), some of which will be publicly available.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

**Adopted by:** Overwood School Governing Body on 16th September 2024

We agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually endorsed by the full governing body.

## Overwood School

### Governing body meeting transcript extract

#### Start of transcript.

**Keir** (chair): Thank you for going over the review of last year's School Improvement Plan Frank (headteacher) and for sharing the new priorities for 2024-25 with us. They are as we provisionally discussed at the last meeting and I have no further questions on them. Does anyone else have any questions for Frank?

**Brendan** (governor). No questions on the objectives themselves, I was just wondering how we were going to monitor them? We did discuss in the summer term having a governor linked to the 3 main overall objectives. Are we still thinking of doing that?

**Keir**. Yes, well remembered! Before we look at that shall we just see if there are any other questions or if we are happy to approve the SIP for this year?

(Governors shake heads)

**Keir**. In that case are we all happy to approve the SIP? (Governors raise hands) Yes? Great, that's approved.

**Keir**. Who would like to monitor priority 1, which is to develop strategies to improve attendance?

**Shehal**. I am interested in this area please and I do not currently have any other roles.

**Keir**: is everyone in agreement? (governors nod heads). Then Shehal you have priority 1, could you please make contact with the attendance officer to arrange a meeting, maybe after half term so you can report back at the next meeting in late November? (Shehal nods head).

**Keir**. If no-one else objects I would like to monitor the boys' reading priority as I oversaw that area last year and although it has come a long way there is still work to do and I am aware of what is being done. Any objections? (governors shake heads).

**Keir**. So that leaves priority 3, to further develop the teaching strategies for disadvantaged children and those with additional in order to narrow the gap in expected progress for reading, writing and maths. Any takers? (silence).

**Keir**. This would be ideal for the SEND governor to monitor, but if this feels like too much maybe it could be monitored by a couple of governors? What do you think?

**Brendan** (governor). If someone would be willing to do this alongside me I would appreciate it as I am new to the SEND governor role this year and want to focus on that as a priority.

**Keir**. Oh yes, that reminds me, Sarah (clerk) could you please find some training that Brendan can do around monitoring SEND? As soon as possible?

**Clerk.** Yes I will get straight onto that and send Brendan some links in the next week or so.

**Gillian** (governor). I would be happy to support Brendan and share the 3<sup>rd</sup> objective.

**Keir.** Great. No one else have a burning desire to do this? (silence). Then Brendan and Gillian have priority 3! Thanks everyone!

**End of transcript.**

### 3. PowerPoint slide set

**NGA**  
For Schools & Trusts

## Clerking Essentials: a practical introductory programme for clerks

### Session 3: Running your first meeting – maintained school

 **Please note:** this session is being recorded by the facilitator and will be made available to you and participants who were unable to attend for a limited time afterwards.

[nga.org.uk](http://nga.org.uk)

### Workshop protocols and tips - reminder

```
graph TD; A[Please participate fully] --- B[Asking questions]; A --- C[Phones/ devices on silent]; B --- D[Confidential ity]; C --- E[Come prepared]; D --- F[Breakout room protocols]; E --- F;
```

The diagram is a circular mind map with six nodes connected by lines. The nodes are: 'Please participate fully' (red), 'Asking questions' (orange), 'Phones/ devices on silent' (blue), 'Come prepared' (orange), 'Breakout room protocols' (red), and 'Confidential ity' (blue). The connections are: 'Please participate fully' to 'Asking questions' and 'Phones/ devices on silent'; 'Asking questions' to 'Confidential ity'; 'Confidential ity' to 'Breakout room protocols'; 'Breakout room protocols' to 'Come prepared'; 'Come prepared' to 'Phones/ devices on silent'.

**NGA**  
For Schools & Trusts

## An outline of today's workshop

Working through the various stages of a meeting we will look at practical ways and useful tips on how to:

- work with your chair, headteacher and any other relevant key stakeholders to arrange a governing body meeting
- use your governing body's constitutional and internal governance documents whilst complying with the Regulations and DfE Governance Guide
- advise on governing body decision making and quorums
- help manage conflicts of interest
- support the election, appointment and retirement of governors and chair
- minute a governing body meeting
- keep necessary governing body records
- help meet information publication requirements

We will be using the documents and tasks that were provided prior to the workshop and additional information added in the workshop



## The Overwood case study

- Throughout this session you will use the Overwood case study to provide some realistic context
- The case study assumes that you are the new clerk for a governing body coming up to its first board meeting
- Using the case study facts and documents and working alone and in groups you will work through the three stages **pre meeting, meeting and post meeting** completing activities and providing advice that you might expect in practice

### Case study facts

Will summarise the facts and circumstances on which the activity is based

### Activity

Explains the questions and tasks you are asked to complete

## What professional skills will you be using?



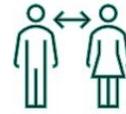
document analysis



research



problem solving



relationship building



planning



drafting and writing



advice & guidance



communication

### 1. Setting up your first governing board meeting

- Agenda creation and who to work with
- What items to include
- Accompanying paperwork
- Convening the meeting



## Governance works through a schedule of meetings

Before we look at your first meeting, let's consider what might impact on the timing of the governing body meetings

- **The school calendar** – term time only, school hours
  - **Set timeframes**, for example, data drops, school budget, SFVS, pay committee
  - **Availability** – of key people ie headteacher, chair, clerk, school business manager
- Forward planning is key – consider when to set dates and what needs to be discussed when – annual calendar of meetings/ governance planners etc

### Case study

In the previous clerk's handover note, you were told that the meeting dates need to be fixed for the year.

### Group activity

1. Would you add this to the agenda to be discussed and to be decided by all governors at the meeting or would you go about this differently?
2. How might you approach this?



## Planning your first agenda

### Case study

There was a list of agenda items from the chair which were included in the note from the previous clerk.

### Group activity

Using this list consider

1. When you might want to get the draft agenda out and to whom and who contributes to this
2. Anything you think is missing (also identify sources you could use to identify what else might need to be included)
3. How might you order and word the agenda items (thinking about the purpose of the item and what needs to be done or achieved)
4. Which papers might accompany each agenda item

Agenda timings

Agenda exemplar



## Working with the whole board and following correct procedures

### Case study

In the case study you received this email from a co-opted governor, Keir, in the run up to the first meeting.

*Hi, I wonder if you could help me with something. Djamilla, the chair has emailed all governors (you weren't copied in on the email) and said that she and the vice chair have discussed their roles, and both have decided that they want to continue in these posts for another year so the board will need to vote them in again.*

*However, I have been talking to Holly who is an associate member, and we would both like to stand - me as chair and Holly as vice chair as we feel it is time for a change, and we could take the board forward.*

*Now that we have had this email does this mean we cannot put ourselves forward?*

### Group activity

In your groups and using the research you undertook as part of the pre-session work, identify which of the actions on the next slide would be appropriate (you may choose more than one)



## Working with the whole board and following correct procedures

Go to  
Poll # 1

Which of the following would be appropriate actions (you may choose more than one):

- A. Tell Keir that as chair Djamilla leads the board and if she wishes to continue that is her call.
- B. Explain to Keir that any eligible governor may put themselves forward as it is up to the board who they elect as chair.
- C. Tell Keir that the associate member cannot stand as they are not eligible as they are not a governor.
- D. Tell Keir that you will get back to him and meanwhile contact Djamilla and tell her that Keir is trying to oust her.
- E. Prior to the meeting when sending out the agenda, circulate the nomination forms to return to you with a reminder that any eligible governor (not staff or associate members) may stand.
- F. None of the above.

## Working with the whole board and following correct procedures

### Group activity

Following on from the poll and referring to any information from your session pre-work research...

1. Where would you have found the information about the frequency and process for the election of chair and vice chair if the chair was to challenge you on this?
2. Do you think you should have been copied into the email sent by the current chair? If so, how might you approach this?
3. How do you think that this situation might have avoided?



## Convening the meeting - advance paperwork

### Case study

For this first meeting, you think the agenda needs to be sent out 7 days in advance. However, the headteacher has asked you not to send it out yet as he has not got all the paperwork ready.

### Group activity

In your groups and using the information you researched as pre-work, discuss

- What would you do in this situation and what source/s of information would you base this on?
- Whose responsibility do you think it is for all the papers to go out on time?
- What are the pitfalls of papers coming out late and how might you as clerk help to avoid this?



## Governor vacancies

### Case study

One of the actions on the actions table from the last meeting was to check the number of parent/other governor vacancies.

### Group activity

1. Where did you find this information for Overwood Primary?
2. You may have noticed there was a discrepancy between the number of parent governors on the constitution and the governing body membership sheet – which document is the one which must be followed?
3. Were there any other discrepancies you noticed in the governing body membership?

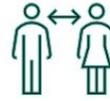


## 2. At the meeting

- The room set up and who's who
- Late paperwork
- Decision taking
- Election of the chair and vice chair
- Managing conflicts of interest
- Note taking



## Getting to know the governors



### Case study

Your first board meeting is coming up in two week's time. So far, you have only met the chair and the headteacher. The governing body has nine governors in post (including the headteacher) and one associate member. The deputy headteacher and school business manager are also expected to attend the meeting.

Who's who and role?

### Activity

Consider the two questions on the right and

- why these questions are important
- if and how this provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate your professionalism
- how you might help manage things to facilitate an effective board meeting
- what a sensible room placement would look like

Who has voting rights?

## Getting the room right

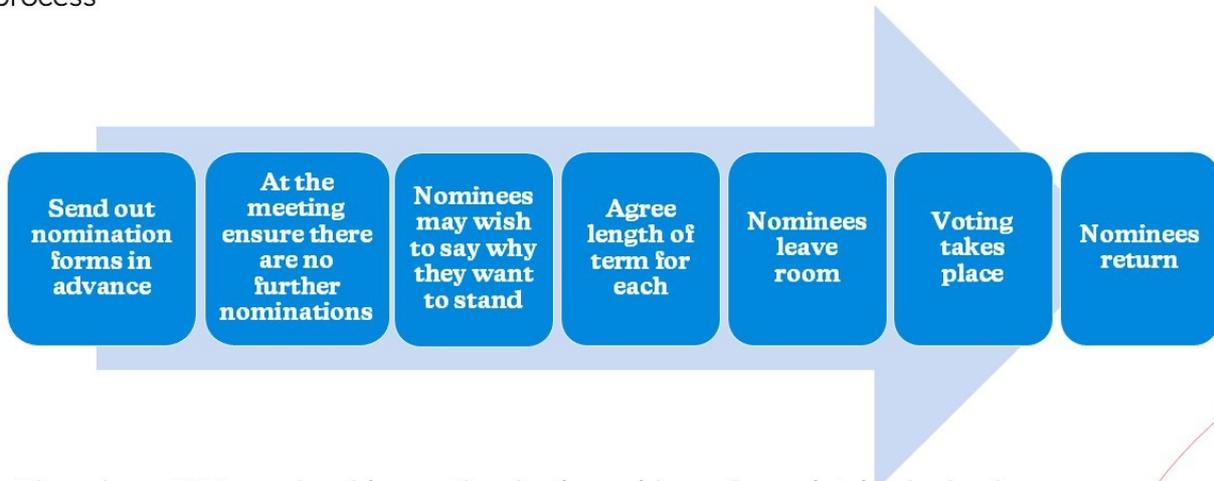
You arrive early for the meeting and the room booked looks like this.

What would you do?



## During the meeting – procedures

It is time to elect the chair and vice chair. Let's have a practical look at a suggested process



If you have NGA membership, see the election guidance for maintained school: <https://www.nga.org.uk/knowledge-centre/electing-chair-and-vice-chair/>



## Election of the chair and vice chair

### Case study

You have received 2 nominations for chair, for Djamilla, the current chair and for Keir, a co-opted governor. Before the meeting, a governor mentions to you that she does not want anyone to know how she has voted as she does not want to upset anyone. Both nominees have presented the reasons why they wish to stand, and it is now time for the discussion and voting. You ask them both to leave the room and Djamilla says this is not necessary as she wants to cast her vote.

### Group activity

1. How should you respond to Djamilla – what is the procedural rule?
2. Does a term of office need to be set and who makes the decision?
3. Do the nominees need to leave the room?
4. How should the vote be conducted?



## The Vice Chair

### Case Study

There have been no nominations sent to you for the role of vice chair. The current vice-chair Brendan, who has not turned up, has not indicated to you that he wishes to stand even though the chair had mailed governors about this. Two other governors say they were considering it but are worried about the workload. The associate member Holly asks, as there are no nominations, if she could be considered.

### Activity

Using the poll, how would you advise the situation the role of vice chair be resolved.

1. Carry forward the election of vice chair to the next meeting while people consider it.
2. Suggest the associate member takes on the role in the interim until someone else comes forward.
3. Suggest they re-elect the previous vice chair Brendan in his absence.
4. Say the board does not need to have a vice chair, as long as there is a chair in place.
5. Ask if the governing body would consider the option of having co vice chair.
6. None of the above.



Go to Poll #2



## How to manage a conflict of interest during the meeting

### Case study

At the meeting, the individual governor responsibilities are being allocated.

On the pecuniary interest register, Paul Dove has declared that he is married to a year 1 teacher, Kenez.

Paul was the SEND Governor last year and expresses a wish to continue in this role this year.

The headteacher's report shows that the staff member just appointed to the role of SENDCO is Kenez, running alongside her role as a year 1 teacher.

### Group activity

1. Does Paul need to declare any relationship with the SENDCO?
2. Would Paul taking on this role be considered a conflict of interest?
3. What course of action would you recommend?

*Note: you may wish to refer to Overwood's Code of Conduct and/or standing orders for this question*



Go to Canva



## The meeting - recording decisions

### Case Study

This first meeting has a packed agenda and there are several decisions that you will need to clearly record for the minutes.

### Group activity

1. Looking at the agenda items can you identify at least 5 things that you will need to record a decision for?
2. How do you think decisions should have been reached during the meeting - and where will you find this information for Overwood Primary?



## The meeting - making your notes

Remember, when you are at the meeting you are not taking minutes, you are taking notes. You will have watched the module “How to: minute a meeting effectively”. This set out what must/should be captured in the minutes and what should not be recorded.

When you are new to clerking, it can be tempting to try and write down every word. However, this is likely to result in the final product being a verbatim record *rather than a summarized record of the meeting capturing key points*.

Let’s have a look a few key skills you may need to develop to help you produce good notes leading to a robust set of minutes

Preparation

Active listening

Summarising

Attention to detail



## The meeting - making your notes

### Case Study

In the pre-work bundle you were provided with a short transcript from the first meeting.

### Group activity

Using the transcript, consider and agree in your groups what information you would need to capture in your notes for inclusion in the minutes.



Minute  
exemplar

## 3. After the meeting



## Meeting review

Go to Canva

### Case Study

As this was your first meeting with Overwood, it might be helpful to meet with the chair (this could be online) to discuss how the meeting went and how you might want to approach the conversation.

### Group activity

In your groups, considering all the information you have been given, what sort of things might you wish to discuss with the chair?



## The minutes

The unresponsive Chair

### Case Study

There is a process to follow after a governing body meeting. After this first meeting with Overwood you will need to draft a set of minutes from the meeting, which will need to be provisionally approved before the next meeting

### Group activity

1. Who should you send the minutes to and by when?
2. What happens to the minutes once they have been provisionally approved and when do other governors get to see them?
3. How might you ensure that all those attending - and not attending - are aware of their actions?
4. Who is responsible for formally approving the minutes?



Go to Canva

## Post meeting actions for the clerk to consider

### Case Study

After this first meeting, as well as reviewing the meeting and producing and circulating the minutes there will be other actions you need to carry out as the clerk

### Group activity

Try and think of at least 3 actions you will need to take following on from this particular meeting at Overwood School. It might be useful to consider the following areas

1. Changes to board membership/ responsibilities
2. Updating governance records
3. Publishing requirements



## Post meeting scenario

### Case Study

The chair has found someone to fill the co-opted vacancy. As there is not a meeting for a while, he says she will take chair's action and approve the appointment as he does not want to wait.



### Group activity

1. What is chair's action, and can it be used in this way?
2. Is there anything else you think applies to the appointment of a co-opted governor? Where would you find this information for the setting(s) you work in?



## In this session you have used and applied

- Internal governance documentation**

  - Standing orders
  - Governing Body Membership
  - Code of Conduct
  - Instrument of Government
  - Meeting minutes extract (actions)

**External regulation**

  - Maintained Schools Governance Guide
  - The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013
  - The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012



## Next steps

Well done, you have now completed the Clerking Essentials programme - we hope that you have enjoyed it and found it helpful and wish you good luck in your clerking career.

Please ensure that you now take time to

1. Reflect upon your learning on the programme and consider how you will apply this to your clerking practice
2. Check that you have completed your e-learning to be eligible for the Certificate confirming your successful completion of the Clerking Essentials Programme

Looking ahead to your clerking practice and continuing support, we would recommend that you consider the Level 3 programme, the [\*\*Level 3 Certificate in the Clerking of School and Academy Governing Boards\*\*](#)

