



Welcome to our governance news update

Happy New Year! We hope you had a restful break over the festive season.

We have some important updates to start the year, introducing our new head of service, and an update on migration, as well as some guidance on tasks for this term and the usual updates from the DfE etc.

As always, if you have any questions about the contents of the newsletter, please do get in touch.



Jeremy Masson
Interim Service Manager
for School Effectiveness
and Governance



Helen Tate
Governor Support
Officer



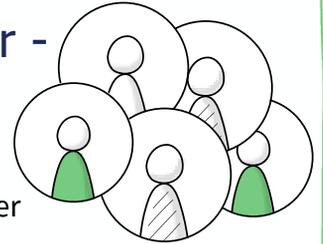
Ruth Pangu
Clerk to Governors
Team Lead

Contact us

For **governance** queries
email: governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Phone: 0330 0249 046
For **clerking** queries
email: clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Updates

Introducing our new interim service manager - Jeremy Masson



It is my pleasure to introduce myself as the new interim Service Manager for School Effectiveness and Governance. This is a newly created post designed to bring much needed capacity and strategic leadership to this important part of our work, but I will also be working closely with Kim Wilson, Assistant Director, Schools and Settings (Standards, Performance and Effectiveness), during my time with Oxfordshire to support her in both evaluating and planning for a reshaped school effectiveness and governance offer, to ensure that this vital service is delivering real value and is meeting your needs both for you personally and your schools.

It's a real privilege to join you all, and I want to begin by thanking you for everything you are doing day in, day out, to lead your schools with such dedication and care.

I'm looking forward to building strong relationships with you and working together as partners. As we look ahead, there are some exciting projects on the horizon, including opportunities to enhance the services we provide and to strengthen the support available to schools. My hope is that, by working closely together, we can make sure these developments are shaped by your experience and priorities, and that they bring real benefit to your communities.

Contact us

For **governance** queries
email: governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Phone: 0330 0249 046
For **clerking** queries
email: clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk

News Update

Important Migration update Governance platform project – temporary pause and next steps



From Jeremy Masson:

We have **paused the project** to move from GovernorHub to the SLA Governance module so we can **re-evaluate timing, capacity and operational requirements** which following the Pilot phase and in light of some broader evaluative work being undertaken across the Children Services Directorate around traded services and our core offer for schools.

The pause and further work will ensure any future migration is compliant and manageable for schools and governance professionals during a time of wider system change. **GovernorHub will therefore be extended for a further academic year (initially)** to provide stability while we complete the review, and to provide time for any onward actions that may arise.

We are also **exploring moving training bookings onto the Education Services system** to make access and invoicing simpler; we will update on this shortly.

A more detailed letter has been sent to Headteachers and Chairs of Governors to update on this.

Any training that had been booked around the SLA migration and platform use will now be cancelled.

For queries, please contact governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk (governance) or clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk (clerking), 0330 0249 046.

Contact us

For **governance** queries
email: governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Phone: 0330 0249 046
For **clerking** queries
email: clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk

News Update

Ofsted – next inspection guidance

Ofsted has produced this video so that you can see when you are likely to be inspected next. You are recommended to discuss this as a board and use it in your planning.

[When can schools expect their next inspection?](#)



Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

Deadline 13th February

OCC Finance contacted schools before Christmas with the details of this year's SFVS, and confirming the deadline for submission as **13th February**. The SFVS needs to be reviewed by the board and signed by the chair by this date.

We are currently in contact with OCC Finance to get the Schools pages updated with the same information which was sent directly to schools.

[Schools financial value standard - GOV.UK](#)

Free “Children in Care: Guide for Governors” now available to download

This new guide, *Children in Care: Guide for Governors*, is recommended for all school governors and trustees in Oxfordshire, especially if you have any children at your school who are cared for by the Local Authority or were previously cared for by the Local Authority. In Oxfordshire we refer to this group of children as **Children We Care For**.

The short, accessible guide gives governors clear information about the needs of children in care, practical questions to ask in meetings and direct links to the 2025 Ofsted toolkit. It also explains basic processes that your school may refer to such as *What is a PEP?* allowing governors to focus on higher-impact work.

<https://9000lives.org/children-in-care-governors-guide/>

Contact us

For **governance** queries

email: [**governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk**](mailto:governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Phone: 0330 0249 046

For **clerking** queries

email: [**clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk**](mailto:clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

News Update

Spring term priorities for governing boards

Key Priorities from the [Annual Schedule of Governing Board Business](#):

Strategic Leadership: Drafting and approving the budget for the new academic year for maintained schools (approval deadline at the start of the summer term)

Collaborative working: who are we working with to enhance professionalism of staff or quality of education? (e.g. working with the LA or trust)

Accountability: Receiving reports on data, benchmarking, comparison with previous years, budget monitoring, performance management, external accountability e.g. diocesan visits or School Improvement visits

Compliance: Monitoring of H&S, employment law, safeguarding, SEND, inclusion, equality & diversity, whistleblowing

- The spring term is a time for visits to school to monitor action against your school development plan.
- Monitoring actions from the safeguarding audit report.
- Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is due at February half term
- Discussions on the school budget for the next academic year should be starting this term resulting in a budget for sign off at the start of the summer term.
- If your board still has vacancies, here are some resources to help you to fill them [Recruiting governors and academy trustees: resources - GOV.UK](#)
- Ensure your governor data is accurate on GovernorHub, the school's website and Get Information About Schools (GIAS)
- Ensure your website is up to date and compliant:

[What maintained schools must or should publish online - GOV.UK](#)

[What academies and further education colleges must or should publish online - GOV.UK](#)

Contact us

For **governance** queries

email: governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Phone: 0330 0249 046

For **clerking** queries

email: clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk

News Update

National Updates



Guidance about the use of physical restraint in schools

'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools' will replace the current 'Use of reasonable force in schools' guidance from 1 April 2026.

[Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK](#)

Children's wellbeing and Schools bill

Documents have been updated to reflect the new government measures tabled at Lords Report stage along with a small number of other changes in line with amendments.

[Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2024: policy summary - GOV.UK](#)

[Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill: impact assessments - GOV.UK](#)

Academy Trust inspections

Plans have been announced for new academy trust inspections to boost transparency for parents and strengthen outcomes for children

[Government to introduce academy trust inspections - GOV.UK](#)

RISE reception quality webinars

Series of webinars on RISE reception quality in schools led by senior education sector experts

[Reception quality webinar series: autumn 2025 - Case study - GOV.UK](#)

[RISE teams: everything you need to know - The Education Hub](#)

Contact us

For **governance** queries

email: governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Phone: 0330 0249 046

For **clerking** queries

email: clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk

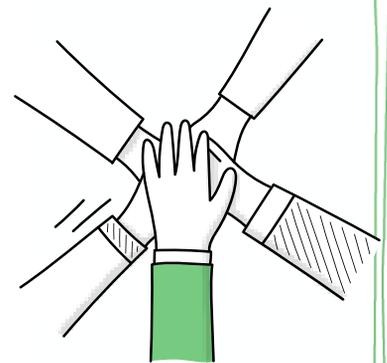
News Update

Governor Services Training

Spring term training programme out now

Our Spring training programme is now in full swing. Full details of our Spring term training programme are now available on the Schools website here: [Governor training | Oxfordshire Schools](#) and all sessions are available to book on [GovernorHub](#)

Don't forget to have a look at our free Bitesize training which you can access at any time [here](#)



FREE

Affordable Schools: a strategic look at school finances for maintained schools

We would like to draw your attention to our FREE training session next Monday 19th January on Affordable Schools. Useful training to take before you start looking at next year's budget [Book here on GovernorHub](#)

Charging for training – a reminder

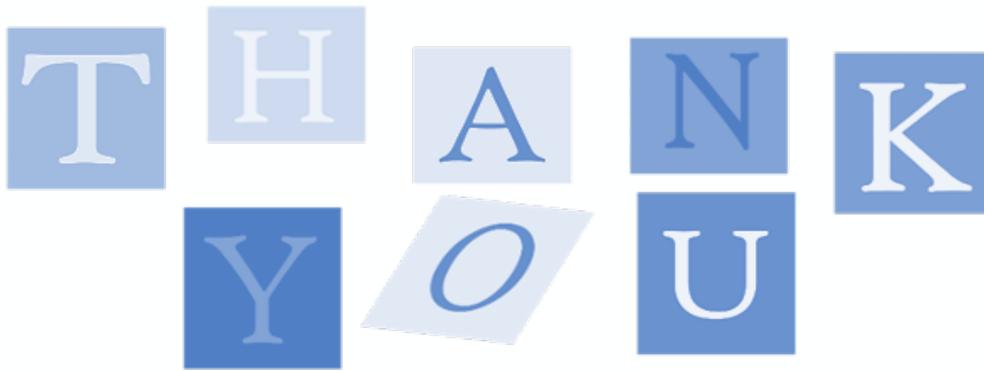
Please check if your board has subscribed to the Governor Services training package before booking. Governors at schools that subscribe can register for as much training as you like at no additional cost.

For governors at schools that do not currently subscribe, there is a charge to attend, and schools will be invoiced after the event. Any free briefings or events are clearly indicated

Contact us

For **governance** queries
email: governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Phone: 0330 0249 046
For **clerking** queries
email: clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk

News Update



...for everything you do for children in Oxfordshire

We hope you have a great start to the spring term. We are here if you need any advice or support.

Our next newsletter will be published on 30th January 2026

With best wishes

The Oxfordshire Governor Services Team -

Jeremy, Helen and Ruth

Contact us

For **governance** queries

email: governorservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Phone: 0330 0249 046

For **clerking** queries

email: clerking.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk