



## Crowcombe and Stogumber C of E Primary Schools

### JOB DESCRIPTION Clerk to Governors

#### Employment details

Job title:	Clerk to Governors
Reports to (job title):	Chair of Governors
Hours of work:	12 hours per month
Salary:	

#### **Main Purpose of Job:**

The clerk is the school governance board's governance professional and is required by law, to manage the constitution, administrative arrangements, and processes of the governance board. Provide expert advice and guidance on the board's duties, responsibilities, and compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks to support the governance board and its committees.

#### **Main Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Operate and administer a range of activities in accordance with statutory requirements, government policies and legal procedures.
- Provide support for the operation of the board, its committees and take responsibility for ensuring effective running of the board, eg forward planning with all affected parties, meeting arrangements, draft agendas, circulate background papers, ensure meetings are legally quorate, record confidential items, draft minutes and undertake all follow up actions as required, and within the legal timeframes.
- Advise the board on governance, legislation, and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after meetings and understand and advise on the potential consequences of non-compliance, eg intervention by the LA, Ofsted or other government bodies. Identify, and share with their board, any changes to relevant legal, regulatory or compliance requirements, eg interpret, implement and advise the board on government policies and legislation during usual business of the board and in various specialist circumstances/situations, eg exclusion panels, complaints panels or investigations.
- Support and challenge the chair and board to ensure the board focuses on strategic rather than operational decisions. Challenge when meetings are not conducted in a proper or orderly manner, or the programme of work does not embody the principles of good governance.
- Ensure that the board is properly constituted within the legal requirements. Maintain records of the structure, membership, and terms of reference of each committee, scheme of delegation and ensure these are available to everyone involved in governance. Support the board to recruit, induct and train individuals with the right set of skills and maintain training records of individuals. Run ballots in compliance with legislation where appropriate. Ensure that new and re-appointed governors have undertaken necessary safeguarding disclosures required within 21 days of appointment.
- Act on the board's agreed policy to support new governors, take account of guidance and induction materials made available by the Department for Education, Local Authority, and other organisations and co-ordinate the induction process. Ensure that new governors receive legally required information and documentation.

- Chair the parts of the full governance board meeting as legally required, such as the appointment of a Chair of Governors.
- Work with senior leaders to provide the information and data that the board requires about education standards and financial performance in a timely manner.
- Understand how and where conflicts of interest and loyalty (financial, non-financial, real, and perceived) may arise on the board and, where appropriate, provide advice to the board on how these can be addressed. Know-how and with whom outside of the school to share concerns where they suspect misconduct of the board or individuals on the board, eg the Local Authority, such as finance services, governance support services, school improvement teams, Ofsted, Regional Delivery Directorate, etc.
- When required access specialist third party advice or guidance, including legal advice, as directed by and on behalf of the board.
- Ensure compliance with the statutory responsibility and requirements for Exclusion Appeal Committees, Complaints Panels, and other official bodies.
- Follow up complaints and appeals from parents/carers or other stakeholders in line with the school's complaints and appeals procedure, eg arrange meeting/interviews, any subsequent administration involved in the procedure, ensure legal guidance is adhered to and minute taking. This may occasionally involve minuting meetings/interviews in challenging and fractious circumstances.
- Where required co-ordinate and ensure appropriate consultation is undertaken concerning proposals, changes to the school day etc, to ensure that the view of stakeholders are considered.
- Ensure that statutory policies are in place, maintain a file of policies and other documentation approved by the board and a policy review schedule is kept up to date and presented to the board as and when required.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Every full board of governors is required by law to meet once each term. Most will meet twice each term.
- Some boards operate non-statutory committees. These also, typically, meet twice each term.
- Statutory committees include pupil exclusion considerations, staff dismissal and staff dismissal appeals, staff grievance and staff grievance appeals. In addition, complaints must be heard by a panel of three governors and require clerking.
- Meetings are typically held in the evening and usually last up to two hours.
- Boards comprise of a minimum of 7 governors under constitution regulations from September 2012, although there is no stipulated maximum, each individual board constitution will vary.
- Governors serve a term of office of at least one year but no more than four years, as stipulated in the legal Instrument of Government.
- Will be subject to line management and annual appraisal processes. While it is not a conventional management situation it would be undertaken by the Chair of Governors on behalf of the board, it should be recognised that Chair's terms vary from 1-4 years and as volunteers can resign at any time, so changes are frequent.

### **SUPPORTING PROCESSES**

#### **Problem Solving and Creativity:**

- Will require a commitment to update knowledge and training to understand and implement legislative, regulatory and policy changes to secure best practice and improved performance of the board. Best practice advice on governor recruitment, development and the operation of the board.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of administrative systems and processes to ensure they are meeting the needs of the board and to make improvements where necessary.

#### **Decision Making:**

Will decide on the best processes and systems to implement in the effective project management to ensure the efficient and effective running of the board. The position of clerk does not attract a high level of strategic decision-making, but will advise others, principally the Chair, other members of the board and the headteacher on legal requirements and good governance practice.

### **Physical Effort and Working Conditions:**

- Clerking is subject to 'bursts' of intensive activity around the time of meetings, publishing required reports, inspection by OFSTED and the activation of statutory committees.
- Depending on circumstances, some clerks work from home and are expected to have and be able to effectively use IT, including word-processing and email.
- Most meetings and much of the work of the board, and therefore the clerk, is undertaken in the evening.
- Clerking involves lone working on a regular basis.

### **Contacts and Relationships:**

- Must establish good relationships with all governors, particularly the chair and committee chairs (if applicable) and the headteacher. The chair/head/clerk relationship is particularly important in effective governance.
- Will need to establish good working relationships with the LA and its officers, particularly with 'Governor Services' staff.

### **Additional Information:**

The clerk needs to be able to work at times convenient to the governors', often in the evening, be able to travel to meetings and be available to be contacted at mutually agreed times.

### **Knowledge, Skills and Experience:**

- Knowledge of board of governors' procedures; education legislation, guidance and legal requirements; the respective roles and responsibilities of the governors, headteacher, LA, Church authorities and Department for Education (DfE); Equal opportunities and Human Rights legislation; Data Protection legislation.
- Good listening, oral and literacy skills.
- Organise meetings, write agendas and accurate, concise minutes.
- ICT, including keyboard skills.
- Use the Internet to access relevant information.
- Organise time and work to deadlines.
- Keep records, retrieve information and disseminate data and documents.
- Develop and maintain contact with outside agencies.
- Attend appropriate training and development.
- Work in an environment where experiences include taking initiative and self-motivation.
- Work as a member of a team.

Personal attributes to include integrity; confidentiality; impartiality; sympathetic to the needs of others; openness to learning and change; positive attitude to personal development and training; good interpersonal skills; flexible approach to working hours.

Please be aware that no job description can be an exhaustive list of all the activities the postholder will be required to undertake, and that further duties may be required in accordance with direction from Chair of Governors / Headteacher.