

**Job Description & Person Specification**

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| **Post Title** | Governance Advisor and Support Officer | | | | |
| **JE Reference** | W1106 | **Grade** | E | **SCP Range** | 17 - 19 |

**Reporting line:**

Manager of Governance Support Service

Governance Adviser and Support Officer

N/A

**Job Purpose:**

The purpose of the post is to contribute to the effective governance of schools and other education boards through delivery of professional quality clerking to governing boards in maintained schools, academy trusts and other education related management boards and committees.

The post holder will provide expert and impartial advice on governance, constitutional and procedural matters to ensure boards comply with the relevant regulations, guidance and other legal documents. They will provide effective support in structuring and operating multi-faceted governance arrangements and ensure that the processes and procedures of governance are administered effectively – including planning the annual cycle of business, preparing agendas, co-ordinating the distribution of meeting papers, taking high quality minutes of meetings and manage processes and information relating to the membership of the boards. The post holder will also contribute to the ongoing development of the service, including provision of information and guidance documents and strategies for the recruitment and retention of governors.

**Relationships:**

**Accountable to:** Manager of Governance Support Service

**Accountable for:** N/A

**General Contacts:** Chairs of governing boards; school governors and academy directors/trustees; head teachers and school staff; School Improvement Advisers and other local authority officers; foundations and trusts responsible for appointing governors; national bodies such as the Department for Education, National Governance Association, Companies House, Education and Skills Funding Agency, School Governors’ One-Stop Shop, Inspiring Governance and Academy Ambassadors; and the parents of pupils.

**Key duties and responsibilities:**

1. To act as Clerk to a number of governing boards, delivering the role and functions in line with the national Clerking Competency Framework, including but not restricted to the following responsibilities:
2. Advise governing boards before, during and after meetings on regulatory and procedural governance matters, tailored to each board and its context, in accordance with the relevant school governance regulations for maintained schools, statutory guidance, Academies Financial Handbook, articles of association and schemes of delegation for academy trusts and constitutional and procedural documents for other management boards and committees;
3. Design and implement structures and procedures for the sound governance of the organisation;
4. Ensure the board remains compliant with the appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks, contractual obligations, education and employment legislation and governance requirements and, to advise on the potential consequences for non-compliance. Escalate concerns around non-compliance, through the appropriate channel;
5. Build and maintain strong and effective working relationships with chairs and others;
6. Develop best practice in multi-faceted governance arrangements, including on matters such as structures, monitoring arrangements, self-evaluation, policy review and governor training opportunities, making available nationally and locally available guidance documents or producing briefing papers and guidance where required;
7. Work effectively with the Chair and Head Teacher to prepare purposeful agendas for board meetings, which are focussed on school improvement and take account of national and local developments in education and governance;
8. Co-ordinate the collation and distribution of meeting papers in a timely manner within required deadlines;
9. Attend governing board meetings to give accurate and impartial advice on procedural and other governance matters, ensuring meetings comply with the requirements of the relevant governance framework;
10. Produce accurate, timely high quality minutes of meetings attended which reflect the board’s discussions and decisions at the meeting and evidence the challenge and scrutiny of the head teachers/executive leaders in order to demonstrate the overall ability and capacity to govern the organisation well;
11. Undertake appropriate follow-up work on behalf of the governing board after meetings, including providing a set of meeting papers to be made available for public inspection in the school;
12. Advise the governing board on the relevant constitutional requirements, providing suggested constitutional models and, in the case of maintained schools, drafting instruments of government on behalf of the governing body;
13. Use a range of methods to contribute to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the board and recommend actions to strengthen governance;
14. On behalf of academy trusts as required, undertake the duties and functions associated with the role of Company Secretary, including submission of statutory returns to Companies House by published deadlines to avoid financial penalties;
15. Plan and co-ordinate strategies and processes to support governing boards in the election/recruitment, appointment, induction and removal of governors – including eligibility and safer recruitment requirements
16. Update and maintain appropriate records and files on behalf of the governing board, including governor details and appointment records; attendance records; minutes of meetings; meeting papers; registers of interest and other governing body documents. Ensure that the updated information required for statutory publication is provided to the school and that the processing of personal data is compliant with GDPR.
17. Assist with the development and implementation of quality monitoring systems and effective governance structures.
18. Assist with the induction of new staff, as and when required.
19. Responsible for the preparation of reports, exemplar documents and notes of advice and guidance for schools, governing boards and other establishments and present these at relevant forums as required.
20. To assist in the interpretation and implementation of a wide range of school governance and company legislation, including the Constitution, Procedures, New Schools, Federation and Collaboration regulations in relation to maintained schools and funding agreements, articles of association, Academies Financial Handbook in relation to academy trusts.
21. Contribute to the co-ordination of effective learning and development opportunities for governors, including induction and continuing professional development.
22. Assist with governor recruitment and retention strategies, including publicity material and overseeing election arrangements.
23. Assist with calculation of charges to schools, procurement of goods and services and processing of order and invoices.
24. To participate in regional and national meetings on school governance as appropriate and disseminate information to the Governance Advisory and Support Service team and to governing boards.
25. Provide advice and support to governors, head teachers and parents in matters associated with the handling of complaints.
26. Provide advice and support to governors in matters relating to the exclusion of children, in accordance with the provisions of statutory guidance, and convening and clerking governor meetings with the purpose of reviewing exclusion decisions made by head teachers.
27. To take responsibility for personal development and keep up-to date with developments in education and school governance by attending relevant briefings, undertaking training and reading new guidance, legislative updates and briefings available nationally and locally.
28. To play a full part as a member of the Governance Support Service team, undertaking additional duties allocated by the Manager of the service as required to support the functioning of the team and to support governing boards outside of the normal allocation.

**General/Corporate Responsibilities:**

1. To undertake such duties as may be commensurate with the seniority of the post
2. To ensure that the Council’s corporate Health & Safety policy is followed and training is undertaken in all pertinent health and safety procedures
3. To partake in the Council’s and Directorate’s staff training and development policies as well as the Council’s system of performance appraisal
4. To treat all information gathered for the Council and Directorate, either electronically or manually, in a confidential manner
5. All employees are required to demonstrate a commitment when carrying out their duties which promotes and values diversity and the equality of opportunity in relation to employees and service users which is in line with the Council’s Equality & Diversity Policy.
6. To be responsible for identifying and managing all risks associated with the job role through effective application of internal controls and risk assessments to support the achievement of Corporate and Service objectives
7. To ensure the highest standards of customer care are met at all times
8. To ensure the principles of Value for Money in service delivery is fundamental in all aspects of involvement with internal and external customers
9. To ensure that the highest standards of data quality are achieved and maintained for the collection, management and use of data.
10. To positively promote the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and ensure that it is recognised that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; and to engage in appropriate training and development opportunities which enhance an individual’s knowledge and skill in responding to children, young people and vulnerable adults who may be in need of safeguarding.

**Last Updated:** July 2021 **Author:** Martin Featherstone

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| **POST TITLE** | **GRADE** |
| Governance Advisor and Support Officer | E |

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| **NOTE TO APPLICANTS**  Whilst all points on the specification are important, those listed in the essential column are the key requirements. You should pay particular attention to those points and provide evidence of meeting them. Failure to do so may mean that you will not be invited for interview. |

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| **CRITERIA** | **NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS** | | **\* M.O.A.** |
|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |  |
| **EXPERIENCE** | * Significant (2-3 years) experience of providing administrative support at a senior level. * Proven experience of managing complex issues with limited supervision and prioritising a workload to meet deadlines * Experience of producing written documentation, including recent experience of producing minutes of formal meetings in a professional context and on a regular basis | * Experience of clerking governing board meetings. * Experience of working in the education sector | A, I, T |
| **SKILLS AND ABILITIES** | * Excellent written communication skills. * Ability to produce high quality minutes of formal meetings. * Good listening skills /high level of concentration * Good ability to learn, interpret and apply complex information * Ability to work on own initiative and maintain a high standard of work and calm demeanour, even when under pressure * Ability to operate quality control of tasks * Excellent attention to detail * Excellent time management and organisational skills * Highly developed oral communication / presentation skills, with the ability to give provide clear direction and influence others to understand requirements * Ability to offer solutions to complex problems thinking through options, consequences and next steps * Confidence to challenge * Ability to deal effectively with sensitive/confidential issues and to manage conflict * Good IT skills – particularly in the use of MS Office applications, e-mail systems, use of cloud based applications and set up and host virtual meetings | * Able to produce complex Excel spreadsheets and write reports for Access databases | A, I, T |
| **EDUCATION/ QUALIFICATIONS/ KNOWLEDGE** | * Advanced level of education – at least entry level 3 with minimum 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE level (or equivalent) including English and Maths * Must undertake the National College for Teaching and Leadership Clerks’ Development Programme (or equivalent) within two years of appointment, if not already achieved | * Relevant administrative / business qualification (e.g. B/TEC HNC) * Knowledge of school governance procedures and regulations | A, C |
| **OTHER REQUIREMENTS** | * Flexible approach to work by responding to the needs of the service, including the requirement to regularly work beyond normal working hours for evening meetings at schools and to vary the pattern of work on a weekly basis to accommodate meeting commitments * Ability to work effectively in a complex, ambiguous, rapidly changing environments * Ability to attend meetings on an unplanned basis, possibly outside of normal working hours and at very short notice * Ability to take the majority of annual leave outside of key pressure points within the school term. * Mental and emotional resilience * Commitment to own continuous personal and professional development * Strong team player, committed to an ethos of continuous improvement * Ability to establish good professional relationships * Commitment to self-development through reading appropriate documentation and guidance and attendance at relevant events * Full driving licence and use of a vehicle | * Evidence of own continuous personal and professional development | A, I, C |
| **COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** | * Commitment to equal opportunities and the ability to recognise the needs of different service users | * Evidence of having completed training in equality and diversity awareness | A,I |
| **COMMITMENT TO SERVICE DELIVERY/ CUSTOMER CARE** | * Commitment to provide a customer-focussed service | * Evidence of surpassing customer expectations or service targets / goals | A,I |

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT: (\*M.O.A.)** A = APPLICATION FORM C = CERTIFICATE E = EXERCISE I = INTERVIEW P = PRESENTATION T = TEST AC = ASSESSMENT CENTRE R = REFERENCE