

Shaping Governance - Newsletter

Happy Summer Term from Shaping Governance! We hope you all had a relaxing Easter break.

Welcome to our regular newsletter, which brings you news, hints, and tips from across the sectors that we work with, as well as some of our own news. If you want these directly into your inbox, use the link below and sign up on our home page.

Warmest regards,

The Shaping Governance Team

Newsletter signup



Interesting Governance news from across the sectors

Ministers publish new guidance on attendance that will become statutory from September 2024

The new guidance on managing school attendance will become mandatory from September 2024, so it is essential that governors are aware of the key features and the implications for the school and its stakeholders.

Complaints to the SEND watchdog have nearly tripled in the last 5 years.

An investigation recently undertaken by Schools Week showed that complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman increased from 509 in 2018-19 to 1,435 so far this financial year. What is more concerning is that of these complaints, 94% were upheld. The delay in issuing EHCPs was the leading issue. It is important that as a governing board, and particularly the SEND Link, you understand the delays and issues schools are facing, which are outside of their control but have a direct impact on their community and what schools can and should be doing to mitigate the impact.

DfE releases two new Governance Guides (Maintained Schools / Academy Trusts) to replace the Governance Handbook.

The DfE has released the guides as an update to the October 2020 Governance Handbook. The guides, tailored to Maintained Schools and Academy Trusts, are streamlined and offer consolidation, not transformation. They will become staples of the governance library.
It is reassuring to note that there is little change, and so if your governance is already working well, apart from familiarising yourself with the new guides, there is little to do apart from carrying on the good work. However, if the continued emphasis on strategic oversight and increased focus on stakeholder engagement doesn't feel that familiar, then your board may well benefit from our two-hour development session with our CEO, Su Turner, delivering her Shaping Governance Programme, which is guaranteed to deliver powerful insight and immediate impact.

The Shaping Governance Programme: Delivering stronger governance in thousands of schools since 2017.

Su Turner, CEO of Shaping Governance and former DfE National Leader of Governance, has brought together her 25 years of senior governance experience, knowledge demonstrated through her vast library of publications, and her proven track record for improvement in schools, local and national

governments, and developed her powerful, award-winning Shaping Governance Programme.

The Programme, typically delivered over a two-year period, empowers every governor in each layer of governance to deliver robust and impactful oversight through highly effective two-hour sessions that combine training, mentoring, and teamwork. By the end of the session, Su has provided the team with the tools and insight required within a successful governing board, which is followed up with a bespoke action plan to drive further improvements.

Stakeholder engagement (a key element in the above revised Guides) is a vitally important part of a governing board's strategic leadership and holding the school to account. It is threaded through all of our work. Yet, of all of the schools that we work with every year, just over two-thirds struggle with this practically, that is, until Shaping Governance and Su provide the tools to do this. Simple but practical steps to improving engagement, being child-centred and better strategic leaders.



Summer Term Considerations

In addition to standard agenda items, it is important that consideration is given to the following in the Summer Term:

- Summer 2024 exam arrangements;
- Review and publication of PE and Sports premium funding;
- Approval of the 2024-2025 Budget and 3-year forecast;
- Staffing arrangements for 2024-2025, aligning to Numbers on Roll for September 2024;
- Review of transition arrangements for pupils leaving in the summer;
- Monitoring of School Improvement Plans and an end-of-year review of progress against objectives;
- Your Strategy for 2024-2025;
- For Trusts, plan and agree on a programme of work for internal scrutiny;
- Annual Governor self-appraisal & skills audit;
- Review of the Board's succession, recruitment, and training plans;
- Planning of Link Roles & responsibilities for 2024-2025 – make sure Cyber Security and Wellbeing feature in this!
- Planning and scheduling of Board meetings for 2024-2025;
- Consider producing a written impact statement of governance; whilst this is not required, it is good practice to look at the impact of your meetings:

Top tip: Add an additional item to your agenda within the approval of previous minutes/matters arising item to note the impact of that meeting. Using this method across the year will help build your annual picture, making the production of your Annual Governance Statement a simple task!

and finally:

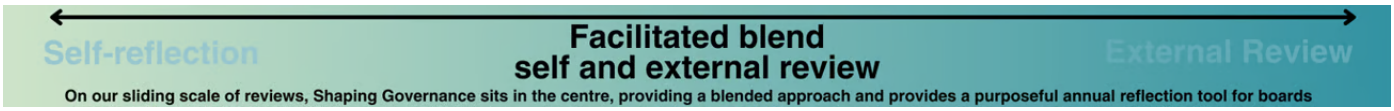
- Review of the Board's effectiveness – this can be done in several ways ranging from self-evaluation to a full External Review of Governance.



The benefits of regular reflection

Evaluation is at the heart of every successful organisation and governance board because reflection and evaluation promote learning, growth, and improvement. Regular reflection helps governors and boards become more self-aware, think more critically, and achieve their goals.

At Shaping Governance, we understand the benefits that regular reflection can bring.



The Shaping Governance Programme, sits in the middle of the sliding scale of types of review, why? There are three main types of review of governance:

- Self reflection: which offers tools for you to assess your own governance;
- External Review of Governance: which provides and external view from an expert, like by our team;
- and then there's the Shaping Governance Programme that sits in the middle, blending both self-reflection, external review and productive conversations - in one two-hour facilitated session. Plus it's a fraction of the cost of an external review, which is great for schools in these challenging financial times

Su states;

"When I first set up Shaping Governance, one of the key drivers for me was to be able to deliver a team session which included a review and evaluation of the current governance practices, but also resulted in productive discussions and training around identifying areas for improvement. With governing boards time being voluntary it was important to develop a session that gave maximum impact."

More information on Shaping Governance

" Shaping Governance was the driver to improve the effectiveness of governance - I am now challenged in a supportive way!"



Shaping Governance - here to help

Interested in finding out more about how we can help you improve your governance - get in touch using the button below

Contact us



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Shaping Governance