Without her help and support, we are in little doubt that we would not have seen the improvements in governance that we believe we are making.

...has been our clerk to the governing body for just a few months and in that short time has proved to be highly effective.
Introduction

The recognition of the role of the clerk by the Education Select Committee and Lord Nash at the NGA Summer 2013 conference has made governing bodies aware of the need for the professional support and advice of a good clerk.

The Kent Clerking Service can provide such a clerk to work with a governing body to enable them to

- fulfil their statutory duty to “conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school” (Education Act 2002).
- strengthen their role in raising standards and ensuring effective governance is recorded (Ofsted Inspection Framework 2009)
- assist in the strong focus on three strategic functions which are reflected in new regulations for maintained schools that came into force in September 2013 and in the criteria Ofsted inspectors use to judge the effectiveness of the Governing Body.
  - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
  - Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
  - overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

The Kent Clerking Service offer is a Standard service offered to Governing Bodies.

Aims of Service

The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 effective from September 2013 places a clearer focus on the expectation of the role of the Clerk. Regulation 6(3) places a new obligation on Governing Bodies ‘to have regard to advice from the Clerk to the Governing Body as to the nature of the Governing Body’s functions.’

The aim of the Kent Clerking Service (KCS) is to support effective governance by

- Providing a named professional clerk who is well briefed and engages in continual professional development (CPD)
- Providing a clear framework for well organised and recorded meetings
- Providing advice and guidance against governance legislation and regulations
Service Level Agreement

The Kent Clerking Service (KCS) will:

• Provide a named and experienced clerk
• Provide where possible a substitute if the appointed clerk is unable to attend scheduled meetings
• Ensure all clerks perform to a minimum professional standard by providing appropriate training and performance management (see role description on page 4)
• Provide termly professional briefings, workshops, and updates to maintain and develop clerking knowledge and expertise
• Provide access to a recognised professional qualification in Clerking (currently The Accredited Clerk [TAC])
• Undertake quality assurance activities such as minutes sampling, customer feedback, Ofsted feedback and reviews
• Manage the personnel and payroll function for the clerk (employed by Governor Services)

Expectation of the Governing body:

• provide access to governing body records and all relevant information on governing body data
• plan an annual timetable and provide reasonable notice of meetings in consultation with the clerk
• limit full governing body meetings to under three hours and committee meetings to under two hours
• provide clerk with timely documentation/information prior to the meeting in order to enable him/her to proactively manage the creation of agendas and paperwork to statutory time limits
• ensure that financial reports and returns are provided to the clerk for circulation to the agreed governing body meetings schedule
• encourage governors to read paperwork prior to meeting to ensure effective use of meeting time
• chair to return draft minutes to clerk within seven days of receipt
• maintain regular communications with the clerk to enable him/her to fulfil the role effectively
• a representative of the governing body meets annually with the clerk to discuss his/her performance and provides a copy of the feedback to the service manager
• raise any issues of performance or service with the service manager as soon as is practicable as matter can usually be resolved if addressed quickly
• be working towards electronic delivery of information between the clerk and Governors
• ensure the clerk has access to ‘secure’ filing for governing body records at the school
• agree mechanisms with your school for the production and delivery of hard copy documents required by governors (service clerks are not expected to produce photocopies)
Standard Service

- Minutes and agendas will normally be produced in the KCS Standard format and distributed electronically. There are two suggested formats which your clerk can provide, while there is some flexibility in how minutes are produced, there are certain standards that are expected of a Clerking Service Clerk.
- Minutes must be numbered in a way that is consistent with the agenda. It is useful to number changes of topic within a minute, but avoid over-complicating numbering.
- There must be a separate column for Actions to the right of the main minutes. This is intended for noting the initials of the responsible person.
- Minutes headings must include the name of school, title of meeting, date, location and time.

The Service clerk will:

- **Prepare for meetings**
  - Investigate and take account of developments, briefings and changes to regulations to proactively contribute to the preparation of the meeting agenda using KCS template in consultation with the chair and headteacher. Contribute to the development of supporting papers and distribute all paperwork electronically to governors at least seven days in advance of the meeting to facilitate effective discussion.

- **Attend governing body meetings**
  - Monitor the progress of the meeting, offer professional advice on procedural matters within the meeting. Take accurate notes ensuring that all challenges, actions and decisions are recorded. Produce minutes to the KCS standard which evidence the governing body’s strategic role and accountability to stakeholders and OfSTED. Distribute draft minutes electronically to Chair and Headteacher and final minutes electronically to governors, Diocesan Director of Education (if appropriate) within 14 days of the date of the meeting.

- **Between meetings**
  - Keep accurate records of governing body membership and membership/terms of reference for governing body committees, advise governing body/appointing bodies in advance of membership matters. Advise returning officers where appropriate on procedure for election and appointment of governors.
  - keep correctly updated register of business interests.
  - maintain minute book, ensure copy of minutes excluding any confidential items is available for inspection at the school.
  - agree a calendar of dates for meetings with the governing body and administrative arrangements between governors and the school.
  - attend training as appropriate, to develop a sound understanding of regulations and the governing body’s main powers and duties.
  - participate in an annual appraisal review.
Extra Services

Short term and specialised clerking, coaching and mentoring and reviews are available. These services are tailor-made to your needs and are charged at the additional hourly rate.

Starting the Contract

On receipt of the application form on Page 8 submitted to clerkingservice@kent.gov.uk we will
• endeavour to locate a clerk with capacity in your area.
• The proposed clerk together with the Clerking Service Manager, if appropriate, will visit the school for an introductory meeting with Chair and Headteacher.
• The contract is calculated on the number of meetings per annum.
• A contract will be forwarded to the Chair of Governors for signature, a copy being retained by the school and a copy held by the KCS.

Ending the contract

• Schools can terminate agreements by giving notice in writing to the services provider (Governor Services) or EduKent. Charges, unless otherwise agreed, will continue for four months after the receipt of notice. Please see EduKent Term & Conditions at www.edukent.co.uk/terms_and_conditions/

The Clerk is employed by the Clerking Service at all times. The Governing Body shall not directly or indirectly employ or engage any Clerking Service clerk to provide services similar to the Clerking Service. If a Governing Body breaches this provision it will incur a £500 compensation fee, which the parties agree is a genuine pre-estimate of the financial loss which the Clerking Service would incur in recruiting and training a replacement.

Payment methods

Payment will be collected monthly by direct debit via the EduKent schools billing facility. This is a service in which schools give their agreement to buy into traded services. The agreement period runs from April to March. Any payments due for any period signed up to less than a full year will be charged monthly at a pro-rata rate.

Duration
• The agreement for packaged services will be ‘open ended’ and will continue to run until such time as a school or service provider gives notice to amend or terminate.

Fees
• Schools will be charged the fee published on the Service Agreement. The service will be charged each month (unless otherwise agreed) by direct debit detailing the element relating to each individual package.

Extra Meetings
• Additional meetings will be charged on an ad hoc basis and included in the next direct debit from EduKent.

Cancelled Meetings
• Cancelled meetings will be adjusted at year end. It is the responsibility of the School Bursar to inform the Clerking Service of any refunds.
**Standard Service** | **Prices from 1 April 2014**
--- | ---
Full Governing Body meetings  
Management Committee meetings  
per meeting | £230
--- | ---
Committee meetings/per meeting | £150
--- | ---
New entrants to KCS will incur a one off setup fee – this will enable the clerk to audit and set up all the required files and governing body documentation. It will define their responsibility for OfSTED and other purposes | £100 (6 hours’ work to audit files)
--- | ---
Additional meetings can be arranged by mutual agreement between the clerk and the governing body and debited on an ad hoc basis. | £25 per hour (£30 for non-Service schools)
--- | ---
Short term and specialised clerking, coaching and mentoring or Panel meeting cover is available. | £25 per hour (£30 for non-Service schools)

N.B. Charges are based on full governing body meetings lasting no longer than three hours and committee meetings lasting no longer than two hours. See Allocation of Hours on Page 7. We reserve the right to charge for additional hours.
# Allocation of Hours

Please see below a breakdown of the hours allocated to the clerk for a FGB and Committee Meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agenda – Drafting, Approval and sending to Governors</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending Meeting</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing up Minutes and Approval</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Chair / Communication</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership / Record Keeping / Filing</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FULL GB MEETING TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>12 hours</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMITTEE MEETING TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 hours</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bold font is to show the proportion of the claim if shared.
Application to Clerking and Development Service

Governing Body of ____________________________________________________________

The governing body is interested in the service of the Clerking Service from ___/____/____ (date)

We would like the following to be clerked

______ (number of) governing body meetings annually

______ (total number of) committee meetings annually – please list which committees

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Governing body meetings are usually held on a _______________ at __________ (time)

Our next meeting of the Governing Body is ________________________________

Signed ______________________________________ Chair of Governors

Contact telephone number ______________________

Contact email ________________________________

Return to:

Governor Services
The Shepway Centre
Oxford Road
Maidstone
ME15 8AW

Tel: 01622 203800 ext. 290
Fax: 01622 670509

Email: clerkingservice@kent.gov.uk
Website: www.edukent.co.uk/our_services/service/governor_services_and_development/