

LANCASHIRE

GOVERNOR SERVICES

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

2025 ~ 2026



LANCASHIRE GOVERNOR SERVICES SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read our Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Governor Services 2025/26.

We are very proud of the quality and consistency we have provided over many years and, we are delighted that the SLA continues to develop in response to the changing needs of our schools.

Our primary goal is to ensure that our children and young people benefit from the best possible educational opportunities that schools can deliver, working under the umbrella of the Lancashire Education Strategy.



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Our Skilled and Experienced Team

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Our vision for Education and Children's Services

Children, young people and their families are safe, healthy and achieve their full potential.

Lancashire County Council has a duty to act as a champion of high standards of education and in doing so has a keen interest in supporting effective governance.

Our SLA contributes towards achieving our vision by supporting and challenging governing bodies to fulfil their statutory functions.

One of the key benefits of choosing Lancashire Governor Services is our collaborative way of working with other educational services and agencies within the authority. Our close working relationship with other LA services, such as HR, Inclusion, Safeguarding and Finance, ensures we are informed of the latest developments within these areas.

Lancashire County Council's Values:



Supportive



Innovative



Respectful



Collaborative



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Our Guarantee

Unparalleled Expertise

We offer an enhanced clerking service, which goes above and beyond the legal definition/requirement of a governing body clerk. Thus, to reflect this enhanced role, colleagues who carry out a clerking function for schools in Lancashire, are designated as 'Governing Body Advisers'.

Our team of advisers are highly skilled and have substantial experience in school governance. They will empower and enable governing bodies to support the delivery of the very best outcomes for all pupils.

Wide Ranging Support and Challenge

As a Service, we know our governing bodies well. We are skilled in identifying appropriate challenge, support and opportunities to enable all our schools to be self-managing in responding to local and national developments.

Bespoke to Your School

This brochure outlines a core offer, but all our support can be tailored to your governing body.

Our separate Training and Development SLA complements the work of the Governing Body Advisers, and our advisers are fully equipped to signpost and broker support from this service.



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Why Lancashire Governor Services?

The Offer

- confidence that all relevant issues are brought to the attention of the governing body at the appropriate time;
- advice on the appropriate actions to be taken by governors and governing bodies to comply with legislative requirements and best practice;
- access to governance professionals for support and guidance, via email or telephone. Access is available during office hours, and throughout the term;
- advice on the proper conduct of governing body proceedings and clear guidance on good practice;
- full compliance with regulations on the maintenance of records (membership, attendance, terms of office, business interests, DBS requirements, minutes etc);
- guidance on the election of staff and parent governors;
- guidance on the preparation and constitution of the governing body, and preparation / amendment of the Instrument of Government as required;
- timely and effective preparation and distribution of agendas and minutes to meet legislative requirements and the needs of individual governing bodies;
- provision of model policies, procedures and guidance documents;
- guidance on models of governance such as collaborations, federations and academy conversions;
- guidance on the publication of governance related matters, such as statutory policies and information required on the school's website;
- an established and dedicated interface between individual governing bodies and other local authority teams, including but not limited to Human Resources, Finance and Legal Services;
- guidance on governance structures post academy conversion;
- close working with any newly established or existing incoming trust, delivering a service that complements the Articles of Association / Scheme of Delegation in place.
- shared good practice by strong links to local and national governance organisations including:
 - The Lancashire Governance Association
 - Diocesan / Church Authorities
 - National Co-ordinators of Governor Services
 - The Department for Education
 - National Governance Association.



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GovernorHub

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhance the resources and tools available to our schools, GovernorHub is included within the Lancashire Governor Services Service Level Agreement. Traditionally, schools would incur a cost per license for access to GovernorHub. However, by integrating this tool into our SLA, we aim to provide added value and streamline the governance process, ensuring schools can access this essential platform without bearing the standalone cost. This inclusion is a testament to our dedication to offering comprehensive support and tools to the schools and governors we serve. You will also have access to the Knowledge as part of GovernorHub going forward.

Sustainability

The government has published its sustainability strategy to improve the education sector's response to climate change by 2030.

Schools play a vital role in promoting environmental sustainability by educating young people about the world and equipping them with the skills and attitudes needed to lead fulfilling lives as responsible citizens.

Governing boards can prioritise environmental sustainability by incorporating it into their school strategy. This ensures that environmental considerations are integrated into all decision-making processes and activities within the organisation.

To support this, as a service, we intend to move to a fully paperless service from April 2026. You will notice that this year's offer still includes one option for paper, but we strongly recommend you consider a paperless service if you are not already choosing this option.

Furthermore, we are also offering a virtual service. We recognise that some governing bodies will prefer to meet face to face, however, we felt it important to offer this service as part of the sustainability agenda, but also to support some boards with their recruitment endeavours, where a virtual option may be more attractive for prospective governors.



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Continue or Start your Relationship with Lancashire

The agreement runs from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, and it will be assumed that the contract will continue unless notification of change is received from the governing body by 31 January 2025. Charges are reviewed annually.

Amendment or termination of the SLA can be initiated by contacting your Area Team Leader, who will be happy to discuss your experiences and requirements. See details on page 3.

Our Service to you

Option 1 The governing body appoints its own clerk outside of Lancashire County Council who receives the core agenda and supporting information from Governor Services each term. This option is only available to schools already signed up to this option. It is not available to new subscribers.

Option 2 The governing body appoints Governor Services to arrange the clerking of its governing body meetings (one per term), including advice and guidance for governors. This service includes:

- a competent Governing Body Adviser to be present at all governing body meetings, be it virtually or physically, as agreed locally;
- a personalised agenda for each governing body meeting to be prepared in consultation with the chair of governors and the headteacher;
- the notice of, and agenda for, each governing body meeting to be sent out as required and in accordance with the legal framework, either via GovernorHub or by post;
- draft minutes of each governing body meeting to be forwarded to the chair and headteacher for approval within a maximum of 20 school days;
- access to GovernorHub and the Knowledge;
- a new governor pack for each newly-appointed governor.



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Option 3 In addition to Option 2 above, Governor Services provides a clerking service for an agreed number of working committees. Guidance will be provided on committee terms of reference, and regulations appertaining specifically to committees of the governing body.

Ad hoc

This refers to committee meetings arranged to deal with the following:

- pupil exclusion;
- staff grievance, attendance, discipline, dismissal, appeals;
- complaint appeals.

This service includes:

- a competent Governing Body Adviser to be present at all relevant committee meetings;
- the notice of, and supporting papers for, each committee meeting to be sent out as required by the appropriate procedure and in accordance with the legal framework for the particular committee;
- draft minutes of each committee meeting to be forwarded to the chair for approval within 20 school days, unless otherwise arranged with the committee.

Note: On occasion, Ad Hoc meetings can be particularly complex and involve extensive preparatory work and protracted meetings, sometimes over a number of days. In these circumstances we will negotiate a separate charge.



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The Agreement - Governing Body and School Responsibilities

- the headteacher's written reports and other documentation generated by the school to be provided in accordance with agreed timescales to enable them to be issued with the agenda within the statutory deadlines;
- negotiation and confirmation of agenda and documents with the chair and headteacher to be completed within agreed timescales to enable these to be issued within the statutory deadlines;
- draft minutes to be approved by the chair and headteacher within agreed timescales;
- governing body advisers to be provided with reasonable working conditions including an adult size chair and a table at an appropriate height for writing/typing and a room layout conducive to an effective meeting;
- for virtual meetings, the school will agree with the governing body adviser, how meetings will be scheduled;
- effective chairing of meetings that provides clarification and a clear understanding for the governing body adviser on decisions and actions.

The Agreement - Governing Body and School Responsibilities

- 1) The costs for the options detailed includes the circulation to all members of the governing body or relevant committee, all appropriate documents and supporting papers, associated with the operation of an effective governing body meeting. Governor Services, as part of its clerking role, will also retain a public inspection copy of all meeting documents.
- 2) Where the governing body requires paper documents, to allow Governor Services to send out agenda and supporting documents by second-class post and meet the statutory requirements, it is necessary for all papers generated by the school, including the headteacher's report, to be received by Governor Services in an appropriate timescale prior to the date of the meeting.



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- 3) From time to time, we are also asked to circulate substantial numbers of documents in excess of what would normally be expected for a governing body or committee meeting. Any additional costs associated with the distribution of these papers will be met by the governing body/school.
- 4) In the case of ad hoc meetings where settlements with the parties concerned have been reached just before the scheduled meeting and the meeting has been cancelled, or for any other meeting that is cancelled, where preparation work has been undertaken, a cancellation fee of 50% will be charged.



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Option	Description	Fee
1	<p>Governing body appoints its own clerk.</p> <p>The fee covers providing the termly agenda and supporting information to the clerk</p>	£640 pa/per school governing body
2	<p>Governor Services provides a GB Adviser for the governing body meetings (3 per year).</p> <p>The fee includes providing advice, guidance and support for governors and the headteacher during and outside of board meeting.</p>	
	a) Documents in electronic format and virtual meetings only	£1790 (Extra meetings at £284)
	b) Documents in electronic format and face to face	£1822 (Extra meetings at £305)
	c) All meeting documents in paper format and face to face	£2140 (Extra meetings at £350)



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3	Governor Services provides a GB Adviser for the governing body's working committee meetings. The fee includes providing advice, guidance and support for governors and the headteacher during and outside of the meeting.	
	a) Documents in electronic format and virtual meetings only.	£236
	b) Documents in electronic format and face to face meetings.	£256
	c) All meeting documents in paper format (and face to face).	£297
<p>Additional charge for board meetings or committees that surpass 2 hours -£50 per half an hour virtual meeting, £70 for face to face meetings per half hour.</p> <p>In addition to Options 2 and 3 the governing body may appoint Governor Services to clerk ad hoc committees for an additional fee (per meeting):</p>		
Pupil Discipline/Exclusion Committee Meetings		£284 per meeting (plus £144 for each additional case to be heard in the same meeting). All documents supplied in paper format.
Staff Attendance, Discipline, Dismissal, Grievance Committee meetings		£608 per meeting (particularly complex or protracted meetings may be subject to an additional charge, by agreement). All documents supplied in paper format.
Complaints Appeals Committee meetings		£608 per meeting. All documents supplied in paper format.



