



LADY JOANNA THORNHILL (ENDOWED) PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL / CLERK TO THE GOVERNING BOARD – ROLE DESCRIPTION

Introduction

The Lady Joanna Thornhill school Governing Board operates on a circle model of governance. We have Full Governing Board 7 times per year, usually at 6.30pm on a Thursday evening, although occasionally there may be additional meetings or different dates / times.

There are 11 governor roles, 4 co-opted, 3 parent governors, 2 foundation governors, 1 local authority governor, 1 staff governor and the Headteacher.

We are now seeking a governance professional / clerk to the governing board to support our work. The clerk would ideally be able to join meetings in person although virtual attendance may be possible.

The governance professional will be paid an hourly rate of pay dependent on experience.

Ideal competencies and experience

Knowledge and understanding

The governance professional (clerk) will:

- Know the features of effective school governance, and the board's governance structure and core functions
- Understand their role as set out in legislation, guidance and the Terms of reference
- Understand key national education policies and the local education context in which the board is operating
- Know the board's duties under legislation and statutory guidance
- Understand the importance of the board adhering to and promoting the school's internal procedures
- Understand the school's governance structure, including legal structure and constitution and scheme of delegation
- Understand the principles of records management and have working knowledge of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act
- Understand the board's accountability to and relationship with other bodies (e.g. the DfE, Education and Skills Funding Agency and Ofsted)
- Know the board's code of conduct and strategic priorities
- Understand the school's culture, values and ethos
- Know which information about pupil performance and financial management will be used by the board to hold leaders to account
- Know the instrument of government for schools / Trust Deeds



Administration

They will:

- Check that meetings are quorate, and if not, provide appropriate advice on how to proceed
- Establish and maintain efficient procedures for meetings, sharing documents in a timely manner
- Promote the use of project management tools (including risk registers) to support the co-chairs
- Make sure that board papers are clear and accurate, and that minutes capture discussion points and actions
- Challenge the board if meetings are not conducted in a proper or orderly manner
- Support the co-chairs in identifying priorities and upcoming issues when planning meetings
- Evaluate administrative procedures to ensure effectiveness, and adapting these where necessary
- Prepare thoroughly for meetings and ensure that outstanding action points are acted on
- Maintain or help maintain accurate registers (e.g. register of interests)
- Establish and administer procedures for filling vacancies on the board
- Keep a record of governors' attendance
- Understand the principles of confidentiality and apply this to their own work and that of the board
- Have an eye for detail and excellent proofreading skills
- Use technology effectively to streamline the board's processes
- Communicate information clearly, logically and impartially by using a range of presentation methods as appropriate
- Have a systematic approach to managing documentation and other records that meets legal requirements for records management
- Have excellent time management skills
- Remain calm and maintain a high standard of work under pressure

Advice and guidance

They will:

- Provide appropriate information for the board and check the credibility of sources
- Update the board on changes to legal or statutory requirements
- Access third-party guidance on behalf of the board where necessary
- Inform the board about training and development opportunities
- Provide clear, logical and impartial advice to the board
- Clearly explain difficult concepts, including information on the board's legal duties
- Understand the principles of conflicts of interest, and is able to advise the board on managing and avoiding these
- Understand how and when to escalate concerns where there is non-compliance or suspected misconduct
- Speak out where the board is overstepping its strategic role or is not following the code of conduct



People and relationships

They will:

- Build effective professional relationships with the board, external contacts and others
- Use appropriate influencing skills to gain the board's confidence
- Establish effective channels of communication with the board, the wider school and any external contacts and partners
- Contribute to discussions about the design of governance committees and structures
- Advise the board when governors' terms of office end, and assess the effect this will have on the board's skills mix
- Establish and facilitate transparent procedures to fill vacancies
- Help the board to create a culture in which challenge is welcomed
- Support the board when carrying out self-evaluation exercises
- Remain committed to improving own performance and that of others involved in governance, taking advantage of opportunities to attend training and development



Further information - our school

Lady Joanna is a two-form entry endowed primary school, in the centre of the idyllic village of Wye.

At Lady Joanna, we aim to provide a stable, caring, learning environment in which children are happy to attend, are stimulated, keen to learn and flourish. We provide for a wide range of ability and are committed to providing equal opportunities and extra support to those who are vulnerable or have special needs. Our curriculum is for the Head, Heart and Hand and this means we want to provide an expansive education.

Lady Joanna is a member of CARE Foundation Trust which is a group of local primary schools. This provides support and shared learning opportunities across the trust.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our students. You are advised that this post is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020 and therefore posts are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Lady Joanna Thornhill will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on any shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with an applicant at interview. This information will be kept on file for 6 months, in line with data protection procedures. The panel will ensure we meet our duty under the Equality Act, 2010.

We particularly welcome applications from applicants from ethnic minority groups, as they are under-represented within our school workforce.

The School reserves the right to close applications, should we find a suitable applicant prior to the closing date being met, it is therefore advised that applications are submitted as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. We will also consider part time applications. Please indicate as part of your written application whether you would like to work part time.

We do not use Agencies for our recruitment process - please do not contact us regarding this advertisement.