

ECA CLERKS CONFERENCE 2018

THE BASICS OF CLERKING

Essential Elements for Complete Minutes of Governing Board and Committee Meetings.

1. Minutes provide essential details about governing board activities
2. Minutes provide evidence about what the governing board is doing to promote improvement in pupils' education and raising standards.
3. They will show what information governors have been given by the school on its' performance - eg results of public examinations - and how these relate to the targets set and also compare with previous years.
4. Minutes will record what questions governors have asked the headteacher and leadership team on main issues of school development.
5. Minutes will record challenges the governing board have set for the school - eg targets for pupils sitting public examinations.
6. The support the governing body has given to the school in developing the vision for the future and setting challenges for pupils.
7. Minutes will need to evidence that the governors have been involved in the setting and reviewing of policies. It is not sufficient to say that this has been done but what has been done.
8. Minutes where setting and monitoring the school's budget have been part of the business must include sufficient detail to show why decisions have been taken and the links to the School Improvement Plan. A minute simply stating that the budget has been approved will not indicate a sufficient level of detail evidencing the governors' reasons for approval.
9. School Financial Value Standards (SFVS) will require far greater detail on budgetary matters to be recorded in governing board (or committee) minutes than has perhaps been included previously. More detail will allow the school to demonstrate that it is meeting the standards required. Statements will need to be studied and agreed by the governing body or committee and signed by the Chair.
10. Minutes need to show that the governing board is regularly monitoring the progress of the school development plan and also to provide evidence that the governors are not only doing this but also how they are doing it.

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11. Governor visits to the school when it is in session are an essential part of monitoring. Minutes will need to show that this is happening on an organised basis and that written reports of visits are being produced and presented at meetings. Agreed report proformas are a useful aid to fulfilling this requirement
12. Performance Management of Teaching Staff is a statutory requirement. Minutes need to record annually that this has been undertaken and that governors have fulfilled their duty to undertake the performance management of the headteacher. Governors need to be aware of the quality of teaching within the school and to agree pay increases for teachers.
13. Governors need to record in their minutes information about pupils with special needs but without names or other means of identifying individual pupils. Data about pupils on stages of assessment, how pupils with special needs are identified and arrangements for meeting those needs need to be recorded annually. Each governing board should have a governor designated with responsibility for SEN.
14. Minutes must accurately record functions that have been delegated to individuals and committees. Decisions that have been taken under delegated powers must be reported to the governing board and recorded in minutes. Committee terms of reference must be reviewed at least annually and any changes recorded in minutes as well as in the terms of reference themselves. Only the full governing board can delegate functions to a committee or individual governor.
15. Minutes need to record changes in governing board membership ensuring that those governors appointed by the governing body have a current term of appointment. Those external organisations which appoint other members must be alerted to vacancies and end terms of office.
16. Key issues from an Ofsted inspection must be noted in minutes and progress in addressing these must be included along with evidence to support any claims made.
17. Where statutory requirements are being met these must be recorded in minutes - eg:
 - Health and Safety Monitoring;
 - Reports on Child Protection/Safeguarding;
 - Reports on Incidents of a Racial Nature;
 - Monitoring of Website Content;
 - School Budget and SFVS Requirements
 - Target Setting for Key Stages and Pupil Absences
 - Reports on Complaints Regarding Bullying;
 - Election of Chair and Vice Chair.

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18. Minutes need to include details of the staffing structure for each year
19. Where educational journeys of more than one days duration, those involving travel to another country and those where hazardous activities are to be undertaken by pupils are being planned by the school, governors need to record their approval in principle at an early stage. Governors will also need to record that they have been satisfied that risk assessments on the activities associated with the visit have been carried out and that the school will comply with any regulations regarding such visits.
20. It can be useful for a governing board to regularly review its own activity and record what it has done to contribute towards raising standards and pupil achievement.

Remember that the above applies to committees as well as the full governing board and minutes of committee meetings should be just as detailed as those for the full meetings of the governors.