

Church School Governance Online Training Programme (CSGTP) Improving Church School Governance

Duration: 6 months | Delivery: Online | Start date: January 2024



The Hope Church School Governance Online Training Programme (CSGTP) is aimed at Governors and Trustees (Directors) in both church schools and schools with a distinctively Christian ethos, providing support for Governors and Trustees (Directors) committed to improving provision and outcomes for children and young people. The programme has been developed by experts and professionals with a background in church school leadership, governance and inspection.

Course Aims

- Raise your awareness of the changing expectations of Governing Boards and meeting today's challenges in the education sector, whilst holding on to the mission and vision of a church school.
- Engage professionally with others in a collaborative and interactive module.
- Study online in your own time, whilst benefitting from access to personal tutors and group reflections.
- Key themes include the changing context, mission, vision and values, collaborative learning, decisionmaking and accountability.
- Access support with using the online Virtual Learning Environment and Zoom, developing skills which extend to everyday life.



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Participant Feedback

Quotes from previous participants include:

"I have been a headteacher for many years and am now governor for a local primary school. This is the best educational course I have ever been on!"

"It has made me more confident in that I am happy to speak up at governor meetings more readily, especially when I see the opportunity to highlight Church school matters and this is making more governors aware of our status and its' importance to our work as governors."

"Understanding the unique Christian ethos of church schools has given me a different perspective on the governor role and how putting Christ at the centre of the school and teachings also applies to the governing board too."

"It was very inclusive regardless of background."

"I loved the interaction on the discussion forums with other candidates and my tutor. It was very useful to hear different perspectives from other faiths and schools on the material that I may not have picked up on or made me understand some aspects more fully by their comments and experiences."

"It has enabled me to understand my role better and given me the confidence to be more of a 'critical friend' to the HT and to ask appropriate questions."

"It has been the best online programme I have ever taken part in."

"An amazing course, it surpassed my highest expectations. Thank you."

Module Overview

This course aims to:

- Support the development of governors own understanding of the distinctive purpose of Christian education; equipping them to support and hold accountable senior leaders in the development of whole school mission and ethos.
- Develop the knowledge and understanding of how a school operates, their legal obligations and the way in which these should be delegated, all within the mission, values and vision of a faith based school.
- Provide an opportunity for those involved in governance in faith based schools to explore aspects of their personal development alongside their professional development.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of collaborative governance.
- Develop a Christian understanding of wisdom and discernment.
- Develop a Christian understanding of accountability in Church School governance.
- Support governors in the appropriate use of data to evaluate spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC), prepare for new inspection frameworks (e.g. the statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools, SIAMS) and Ofsted.

- Promote the concept of succession planning and the recruitment of new governors, with a particular focus on the impact Christians can make in this role.

Delivery

The course is delivered via 6 online topics, each taken over a 3 week period and allows for school holidays. Each topic contains reading materials, videos, workbooks and interactive discussion forums as well as opportunities for a session on Zoom for the whole cohort during for each topic. A Tutor provides personal support throughout the course. There is plenty of help available for accessing and navigating the online Virtual Learning Environment and Zoom meetings. A networking event is also arranged for past and present students.

Assessment

It is expected that you will undertake a minimum of 2 hours per module, contribute to discussion forums and participate in Zoom meetings to complete the course. You will also submit a 500-1000 word Learning Summary to receive your Certificate of Completion.

Dates and Duration

Starts January 2024 and takes 6 months to complete.

Entry requirements

Primarily designed for experienced, new and aspiring governors and trustees (directors) working within church schools. Governors of faith working within non-church schools may find the programme personally enriching.

Cost

Full Fee: £350

Early Bird Fee*: £300

**Early Bird Fee – Apply by 1st November 2023 to be eligible.*

How to apply

To apply or for more information please contact:

Tel: 0151 291 3834/3061

Email: pld@hope.ac.uk

www.hope.ac.uk/pld/educationpld

The PLD Team

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Case Studies

CASE STUDY 1

Christina Mabin – Education Adviser, Exeter Diocese.

Did you have any reservations about taking this course and were these overcome?

I was concerned about the course being fully online but the regular zoom meetings, discussion forums and ease of accessing all the resources made the course much more accessible and enjoyable than I had anticipated.

To what extent do you feel your knowledge of Church School Governance has been enhanced?

My knowledge has been greatly enhanced by listening to others, sharing experiences and the very interesting discussions. The resources provided were also extremely helpful and the tutors very supportive.

What did you personally enjoy the most about this course?

I enjoyed everything about the course.

In what ways will your school/Diocese benefit from you having taken this course?

I have a much wider understanding of different practices and a greater understanding of why I am a governor. I will use the experience to both help my work and my role as a governor.

What are the next steps for you/your school/Diocese - do you intend to take further training or implement any new plans at your school/Diocese?

I am always seeking new ways for improvement in my own practice and within my role and this course has definitely helped. The resources are very useful and have given me new ways to approach improvement, especially in my own training. Attending training is so important for improvement and I will seek further opportunities.

CASE STUDY 2

M Hartnett - Chair at St John Bosco Catholic Primary School.

Did you have any reservations about taking this course and were these overcome?

I had a couple of reservations including:

- i. the course being delivered remotely via zoom and
- ii. the amount of course content and study required to pass the course. The zoom sessions were managed effectively and professionally, and plenty of time was given to read and review the supporting documentation. I did spend a lot more time on reading than the minimum recommendation.

To what extent do you feel your knowledge of Church School Governance has been enhanced?

My knowledge has significantly increased as the course covered a wide breadth of information. This was supported by detailed case studies and opportunities to collaborate with my tutor group via on line comments plus zoom. It has provided an excellent baseline for understanding why church school governance has common themes with all schools but is also unique due to the church influence in canon laws curriculum and funding.

What did you personally enjoy the most about this course?

Each part of the course was enjoyable but I particularly enjoyed the 'Who are you called to be element' which explored motives for bring a governor and how it can be seen as a 'calling'. The course took me on a journey of continuous learning and self-reflection. I had opportunities to learn about new topics and aspects of governance that I may not have otherwise had exposure to. Each topic provided the chance to explore something new and see different perspectives of governance which on reflection has developed a new and refreshed flexibility in my thinking.

In what ways will your school/Diocese benefit from you having taken this course?

My depth of knowledge and confidence has improved and I am more aware as a governor to understand and discuss the changing landscape of school governance, particularly in a church school.

What are the next steps for you/your school/Diocese - do you intend to take further training or implement any new plans at your school/Diocese?

I intend to continue with my role as chair and build up more experience in a leadership and mentoring role.

CASE STUDY 3

Helen Gibson, Executive Assistant, Coventry Diocesan Board of Education.

Did you have any reservations about taking this course and were these overcome?

I didn't have reservations about taking the course but also didn't really know what to expect.

To what extent do you feel your knowledge of Church School Governance has been enhanced?

As a non-practising Christian I found the course really helped me understand my own Christian commitment. The course material was excellent and very thought provoking.

What did you personally enjoy the most about this course?

The course material was very interesting and I enjoyed working through it. I really looked forward to the group discussions. These were interesting and very informative and listening to the views of others was most beneficial. The course tutors were really helpful in facilitating discussions.

In what ways will your school/Diocese benefit from you having taken this course?

Whilst working through the course material I was constantly comparing what I was reading to my own practice. The section on collaborative governance was particularly useful and had a big impact on me and the way I work.

What are the next steps for you/your school/Diocese - do you intend to take further training or implement any new plans at your school/Diocese?

I hope to create an extended induction programme for governors that supports them as they progress further into their role.

CASE STUDY 4

Bob Millington, North West CE Primary School.

Did you have any reservation about taking this course and were these overcome?

Before starting I had two reservations about the course. First, I was bothered that I might, as a somewhat confused Christian, be regarded as unsuitable for it. It was with great relief to find the course had recruited students with a wide mix of faith positions, ranging from those actually in religious orders to those with much more agnostic views. Second, I was wondering whether the course might prove to be rather boring, being confined simply to online study. Once again my concerns proved groundless, as study materials were liberally sprinkled with lively video clips and our active participation was readily secured through the discussion forums and Zoom sessions.

To what extent do you feel your knowledge of Church School Governance has been enhanced?

The course helped me enormously to work through all the necessary material for effective governance in a church school. Above all though, it has helped me to see the big picture, rather than get bogged down in all the detail of our responsibilities. In short, it has helped me to think more strategically.

What did you personally enjoy the most about this course?

I greatly liked the teaching on the course. Our tutors were not only subject experts with UpToDate knowledge at their fingertips, but the skills to draw on and make use of the experiences of their students. As a result, I got a very full picture of the current issues impacting governance in church schools, academies and MATs all over the country. All told, it was a most rewarding and enjoyable experience. So much so that I find it hard to believe that I never actually met any of the tutors and students who were on it.

In what ways will you school/Diocese benefit from you having taken this course?

Throughout the course the emphasis was not simply on understanding the material, but on actively seeing ways of using it practically in our own situation. This has set me in a good position to help enhance my own board's way of working in the course of the coming months, when the situation has normalized and settled down.