

Supporting headteachers, governors and governance professionals to deliver excellent outcomes for children and young people

SCHOOL & GOVERNOR SUPPORT SERVICE OFFER 2025-26

FOR MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

Professional, bespoke

• Advice • Guidance • Consultancy • Training



School & Governor Support

Children and Families Directorate

Birmingham City Council

Our team members:

Levain Preston

(Interim Head of Service)
07881 617 187

levain.preston@birmingham.gov.uk

Alison Hicks

(Governor Services Manager)
07736 454 460

alison.hicks@birmingham.gov.uk

Adrian Axinte

(Asst. School Support Manager)
0121 303 4692

adrian.g.axinte@birmingham.gov.uk

Victoria Leigh

(Asst. Governor Services Manager)
0121 303 1975

victoria.leigh@birmingham.gov.uk

Aman

(Business Support Officer)
0121 464 2215

gbso@birmingham.gov.uk

Our service email addresses:

School Support

school.support@birmingham.gov.uk

Governor Support

governors@birmingham.gov.uk

Governor Recruitment

governorrecruitment@birmingham.gov.uk

Governor Training

governortraining@birmingham.gov.uk

Governance Oversight

governanceoversight@birmingham.gov.uk

Our websites:

**birmingham.gov.uk/sgs and
birminghameducationsupportservices.co.uk/sgs**

CONTENTS

Welcome and Customer Reviews

A warm welcome from our Head of Service and a few examples of what some of you think about us.

Advice

On-call phone and email service providing advice on day-to-day school management issues as well as on all matters relating to governance.

Guidance

Resources including fortnightly governance update, termly agendas, SLT briefings and other guidance with a Birmingham perspective.

Consultancy

Board- and SLT-level support in the resolution of complex, challenging or longer-term issues that require sustainable outcomes.

4 Governor Training and Events 7

Building Governing Board-level expertise and confidence through professional training and termly briefings.

3 Bespoke Consultancy and Whole GB Training 8

Tailor our available support to your needs with these additional services we can provide on request and which are not covered by your service offer subscription.

6 Service Guarantees 9

The level of customer service you can expect from us.

6 Terms and Conditions 10

The 'small print' of our service offer to you.



WELCOME



Levain Preston
Interim Head of Service
School and Governor Support –
Birmingham City Council

Welcome to our **2025-26 Service Offer for Maintained Schools**. This brochure, which provides an overview of our services for subscribing maintained schools, can also be downloaded from **birmingham.gov.uk/SGS** and **birminghameducationsupportservices.co.uk/sgs**, alongside our current **Governor Training Programme** brochure.

Our support continues to focus on all aspects of school leadership and management, excluding those related to the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning. Each year, we review our offer to subscribing schools, ensuring it aligns with your evolving needs. The valuable feedback from headteachers, governors, and governance professionals plays a key role in shaping our services and ensuring they provide excellent value for money. As an income generating

service, S&GS must recover the majority of its operating costs. Last year, nearly all maintained schools in Birmingham chose to continue their subscription, demonstrating their trust in our support. Your ongoing commitment is greatly appreciated and strengthens our ability to assist with the diverse challenges you encounter daily.

Our **subscription year for maintained schools runs as usual from 1 April to the following 31 March**. We appreciate the continuing pressure on school budgets and remain committed to maintaining our costs at as low a level as possible. The **cost of your annual subscription charge for 2025-26 will be £2,546** which – you will undoubtedly be pleased to hear – represents an increase of only 5% on last year's fees. Schools who have already committed to continue subscribing to us for 3 years – or would

like to do this starting from 2025-26 – remain eligible for the 5% year-on-year discount on our service subscription charge that we offer in return for your commitment. Subscribing maintained schools will be invoiced early in the new financial year.

We are grateful for the overwhelmingly positive feedback we have received regarding our advice and support. Please continue to share your experiences – both the aspects that have worked well and any suggestions for improvement. Your input is invaluable in helping us enhance our service and better meet your needs. We encourage you to explore our updated service offer detailed in this brochure. We hope you will continue subscribing to S&GS, a service that school leaders and governing boards (GBs) have consistently told us they highly value.

CUSTOMER REVIEWS

- *Every time I contact School and Governor support I am met with very practical advice and knowledgeable support. I always get the support I need - can't ask for more than that :) Having the support of knowledgeable professionals to assist and guide across a range of issues, makes leading easier when sound options are provided to resolve concerns. Warm, supportive and constructive advice.*
- *Proactive, swift and sensitive response - signposted to specific professionals to support the school.*
- *That there is always someone I can contact for advice from governing board advice, to complaints, to closing the school for snow days! Nothing is too much trouble and I am always reassured having spoken to someone.*



ADVICE

Our subscribers benefit from access to our expert **advice on day-to-day school management issues and governance-related matters**, by telephone, email or in virtual meetings, from 8.15am to 5.15pm Mondays to Thursdays and 8.15am to 4.15pm on Fridays during term-time.

Our experienced professionals provide expert advice, applying their extensive knowledge to support your school's specific needs. Our strong partnerships with other BCC colleagues and services further enhance our effectiveness. Whenever possible, we ensure continuity by assigning the same advisor to assist you until your query is fully resolved.

GUIDANCE

We provide practical, timely guidance tailored to the needs of Birmingham settings, supporting senior leaders, governors, and clerks/governance professionals in subscribing schools. This guidance is regularly updated in consultation with subscribers and in response to statutory and regulatory changes. Our guidance includes:

- Fortnightly **'Spotlight on Governance'** round-up;
- Termly **'5 to Thrive'** briefings for senior leaders;
- Termly **Agenda Briefings** for governing boards (GBs);
- Annual compliance self-evaluation **Audit Tool** for GBs;
- Other best practice guides and templates.

CONSULTANCY

Our goal is to strengthen the resilience of your school's leadership and governance, equipping you to effectively manage any challenges that arise. We offer expert guidance on complex, long-term, or sensitive issues that require solution-focused strategies and sustainable outcomes, including:

- Complaints
- Parental behaviour
- Reputational risks
- Issues affecting the effective operation of the governing board
- Current events and local concerns

With extensive experience supporting schools in diverse and challenging situations, we approach each case with sensitivity and maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality.

GOVERNOR TRAINING SESSIONS AND EVENTS

We offer a comprehensive programme of high-quality training designed to enhance the skills and knowledge essential for effective school governance. Most sessions are delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams and are available throughout the year.

Schools can choose to book governor training on a per-delegate basis or take advantage of our governor training package [a revised version will be available from the next academic year]. Schools subscribed to our core service offer are also eligible for a discounted rate on per-delegate bookings for governor training sessions.

Our **training programme** includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- induction training;
- effective challenge;
- introduction to finance and managing financial resources;
- complaints management;
- training for specific governor roles: safeguarding, SEND, Headteacher appraisal.

In addition, the following events are **free of charge for subscribers to our service offer**:

- Introduction to Chairing;
- Introduction to Clerking;
- Termly Chairs' Briefing;
- Termly Clerks' Briefing.

For **details of our governor training sessions and events** please see our **Governor Training Programme** brochure or visit **birminghameducationsupportservices.co.uk/Training**, where you can also book your governors to attend our training (select **School and Governor Support** under **Provider** and click **Search**).



ADDITIONAL SERVICES NOT COVERED BY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

The additional 'on request' services outlined here are not included in your service offer subscription and will be charged on a flexible, negotiated scale based on session length and the number of participants. We are dedicated to staying competitive and ensuring excellent value for money.

Bespoke Whole Governing Board Training

In addition to our programme of published courses, we can provide bespoke training to GBs on request. It is designed to meet the current needs of your governors, and popular areas include Effective Challenge and Complaints Management. It can be delivered in person or virtually and at a time to suit your GB. If interested, please email us at **governortraining@birmingham.gov.uk** to arrange bespoke training and explore your options.

Bespoke Consultancy

We can also provide bespoke consultancy tailored to your individual needs and delivered in your chosen setting, such as External Reviews of Governance or providing an independent advisor for Headteacher appraisals. If interested, please email us at **governors@birmingham.gov.uk** to arrange bespoke consultancy and explore your options.



OUR SERVICE OFFER GUARANTEE

- Our advice, guidance and consultancy provided to our subscribers will be factual, impartial and consistent with BCC's commitment to equality and diversity.
- We collaborate with other services and partners to ensure that, as far as is reasonably possible, the advice, guidance and consultancy given to our subscribers are both definitive and consistent.
- Our service complies with and works within BCC's procedures for the handling of comments, compliments and complaints.
- Our team is contactable by phone during the core service period of 08:15-17:15 (Monday to Thursday) and 08:15-16:15 (Friday) during school term time.
- Subscribers emailing enquiries to any of our shared email inboxes will receive a response within three working days during school term-time.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Any references to 'school(s)' are intended to cover all educational establishments that subscribe to our traded service.

1. In order to access the services referred to throughout the service offer document the school must be a subscriber to S&GS. The school must have paid the subscription charge for the current subscription period within 30 days of being invoiced for it.
2. The S&GS (School & Governor Support) subscription year for maintained schools starts on 1 April and runs until 31 March the following year.
3. Where a new school subscribes part-way through the year, the subscription fee may be negotiated. Any such negotiation as to the potential discount will be entirely at the discretion of S&GS.
4. New or in-year subscribers to S&GS may cancel their subscription within 30 days of notifying us in writing of their intention to subscribe, otherwise they will incur the full year subscription charge. Any courses and/or services procured during these 30 days by the prospective subscriber from S&GS will be charged at the non-subscriber rate if the subscription request is cancelled. Cancellation notification must be sent by email to **school.support@birmingham.gov.uk**.
5. All existing subscribers will have their subscription automatically renewed and will be deemed as re-subscribed on 1 April each year, unless the subscription is cancelled by email to **school.support@birmingham.gov.uk** within 30 days of the applicable renewal date. In the event that the subscription is not cancelled in accordance with this paragraph, the school will incur the full annual subscription without a further right to cancel.
6. The subscription services and options are only available and valid during the current subscription year and may be subject to change. Subscribers will be given 30 days' notice of any changes to services that may be necessary within the current subscription year.
7. Training course booking cancellations must be confirmed by email to **governortraining@birmingham.gov.uk**. S&GS is liable for cost of venue hire as well as facilitators and will therefore charge the full cost for booked places even if delegates do not attend on the day, unless S&GS receive at least 7 working days' notice by email of cancellation to the email address stated in this paragraph.
8. Any bookings received and confirmed within 7 working days of a course will be charged the appropriate course fee and will be non-refundable.
9. S&GS reserves the right to amend or cancel should it, for whatever reason, be unable to deliver an advertised governor training course. In these circumstances S&GS will endeavour to provide adequate notice. A full refund will be given to the delegate's school in the event of cancellation. S&GS will also endeavour to provide adequate notice and to reschedule the course as soon as is feasible.
10. Your annual subscription enables S&GS to obtain initial specialist Education legal advice, usually up to 60 minutes, in order to support the school. Schools requiring legal advice which is more detailed or from a different legal specialism (for example civil/commercial litigation or employment law) will be given details for Legal Services, who will be able to provide details of their separate costs. Please note that legal costs or disbursements incurred by the school, whether arising from advice provided by S&GS or otherwise, cannot be funded from the S&GS budget. Advice will be facilitated through S&GS in the first instance and then managed directly with school.
11. From time-to-time S&GS may facilitate services on a paid-for consultancy basis using third-party providers. Such provision will be delivered in line with S&GS service guarantees and S&GS retains responsibility for the quality of the service provided.
12. Concerns about the quality of service provided should, in the first instance, be directed to the Head of Service, School and Governor Support, who will investigate and respond to the concerns within agreed timescales. If you remain dissatisfied, you will be given details of the Council's complaints procedure.
13. Consultancy support does not extend to attendance at meetings convened under adopted procedures or relevant regulations, unless there is a clearly prescribed role for S&GS. Requests will be considered on a needs-basis and with an assessment of risk.



🔌 RESET

🔄 RESHAPE

▶ RESTART

 Birmingham
City Council