



BENENDEN
A COMPLETE
EDUCATION

Inspiring future thinkers and leaders for 100 years



CLERK TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

Job Description: CLERK TO GOVERNING COUNCIL

Working Within the School

Benenden School is one of the leading providers of boarding education to girls in the world. The school's focus on 'a complete education' encapsulates our vision to nurture future generations of inspiring and visionary female leaders. We achieve this by enriching our girls' development academically, socially, and through excellence in co-curricular disciplines such as sport, dance, art and music, all in the context of a uniquely supportive community, set in 250 acres of stunning and historic parkland.

"A Complete Education" – a phrase within which the expert, enriching and truly holistic education of Benenden's 550 girls aged 11-18 is captured. Academic excellence goes hand in hand with social development, global awareness and independence of thought and opinion, as well as musical and dramatic expression with sporting achievement. A Complete Education balances the breadth of academic and co-curricular opportunities with strong emotional and personal wellbeing and fulfilment

Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer and responsible directly to the Chair of the Governing Council, the successful applicant will play a critical role in the running of the school, providing expert advice to governors to support the effective running of the Governing Council and its sub-committees.

We are seeking applications from candidates who are excellent communicators, proactive and approachable; who have a talent for collaboration with our outstanding executive and non-executive leadership teams; who are experienced in overseeing best-in-class governance in a comparable (but not necessarily identical) environment; and who will relish playing an active role in our brilliant and supportive school community.

The post-holder will promote and safeguard the welfare of children with whom they come into contact. They must ensure compliance with the School's Child Protection Policy Statement at all times. This appointment will be subject to enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Benenden School is committed to equal opportunities and equal pay for all.

Job Description

This job description sets out the current principal duties of the post. It does not detail every individual task and the successful postholder will be required to undertake such tasks and duties as are allocated to them from time to time in accordance with the role. This job description will be reviewed annually as part of the School's annual performance review process.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Clerk to the Governing Council plays a pivotal role in ensuring the effective governance of Benenden School. Drawing on best practices from leading independent schools, the Clerk will support the Chair of Governors, Council and Senior Leadership Team members in fulfilling their strategic, compliance, and fiduciary responsibilities. Key responsibilities include:

Governance Oversight and Compliance

- Ensure governance aligns with the School's Articles, statutory compliance, and best practice.
- Manage recruitment, onboarding, and vetting of new Governors; maintain skills matrix and succession planning.
- Maintain registers (interests, safeguarding, risk, audit), oversee policy reviews, and liaise with Companies House and the Charity Commission.
- Liaise with relevant SLT members to ensure policy review and compliance.
- Manage Charity and Company Law compliance and filing requirements.
- Submit annual returns and financial statements.
- Provide legal/governance advice and report serious incidents to appropriate regulatory bodies in consultation with council sub-committee chairs.

Meeting Management and Documentation

- Plan and attend all Council and Committee meetings, including Strategy Days and Working Groups.
- Coordinate and schedule meetings as per the annual schedule.
- Prepare and distribute agendas and supporting papers for Governing Council and Committee meetings.
- Book meeting rooms at the School or external venues.
- Minute all meetings, circulate drafts, and secure approval.
- Ensure annual review of Committee Terms of Reference.
- Use secure digital systems for archiving minutes, policies, and governor documentation.
- Ensure GDPR compliance in governance processes, especially around confidential pupil/staff data.
- Administer online platforms for document sharing and meeting scheduling.
- Ensure the Council and Sub-Committees review relevant policies, as required.

Training, induction and Communication

- Organise Governor induction and ongoing training; assess training needs and arrange seminars/webinars.
- Act as liaison between Governors and school leadership; manage the Governors' portal and communications.
- Coordinate the appointment, induction, and retirement of Governing Council and Committee members.
- Ensure induction training for new governors and co-opted Committee members.
- Organise membership of relevant bodies and provide regular updates.
- Coordinate governor visits and annual reviews.
- Manage correspondence and ensure timely responses to external bodies.
- Draft governance reports for stakeholders.
- Help governors prepare for public-facing roles.
- Maintain oversight of the Governors pages of the School's website to ensure they are up to date.

Strategic and Inspection Support

- Coordinate governance reviews, risk oversight, and benchmarking activities.
- Support governors in reviewing the School's risk register and compliance frameworks.
- Ensure governors are aware of emerging risks.
- Prepare governance documentation for inspections and brief Governors accordingly.
- Prepare governance documentation for ISI Inspections, including minutes, policy logs and evidence of strategic oversight.
- Ensure governors understand their role in inspection interviews.
- Ensure compliance with Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures.

Panel Support and Appeals

- Organise and clerk appeals, complaints, and disciplinary panels; liaise with legal advisers as needed.
- Identify independent members to join appeals, complaints, and disciplinary panels where appropriate.
- Support the Chair in convening panels for appeals or complaints.
- Organise meetings/hearings and ensure relevant procedures are followed.
- Liaise with SLT to manage complaints and keep a close record of any Level 3 complaint.

The successful candidate should meet the following criteria:

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and knowledge	Legal or governance qualification (e.g., Company Secretary, legal professional) or commensurate experience.	Familiarity with ISI inspection frameworks. Knowledge of Safeguarding and data protection regulations.
Skills, aptitudes and experience	Experience in school governance, preferably in independent schools. Excellent written and oral communication skills; diplomacy and discretion. Strong IT proficiency, including familiarity with digital governance platforms. Meticulous attention to detail and organisational skills. Understanding of charity law, educational regulations, safeguarding, and data protection.	Experience in independent education or charity governance.
Personal attributes	Commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Integrity, confidentiality, and a collaborative approach to working with stakeholders.	

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Contract

This is an on-site role, full time, Term time only plus 4 weeks.

Hours

Monday to Friday, 37.5 hours per week.

Salary

Salary will be between £49,460 - £59,061 pro rata

Place of Work and Travel

Your principle place of work will be at Benenden School but the School may request you to undertake travel within the UK as may be necessary to fulfil your responsibilities. You will be reimbursed for any travel and accommodation as required when travelling on Benenden School business.

Pension

As per government legislation, you will be automatically enrolled into the School pension if you meet the eligibility criteria.

Fee Remission

Members of staff receive a discount on the fees if their daughters are accepted into the School.

Holiday

Holiday entitlement is 5 weeks plus statutory Bank Holidays pro rata for part time work .The holiday year runs from September-August, in line with the academic year. Any Bank Holiday will normally be worked when the School is in full session. Holidays should be taken during the School holidays. The School closes between Christmas and New Year.

Fitness Centre Membership

All staff are eligible for free membership of the Fitness Centre, including the swimming pool.

Learning and Development

The School aims to support individuals in their employment by the provision of appropriate opportunities for learning and development.

Pre-Employment Checks

Any offer of employment will be subject to a minimum of two references satisfactory to the School, then a successful outcome of a medical questionnaire, checks of qualifications, right to work and identification. An offer of employment will also be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.

Confidentiality

This position requires a high level of discretion. The School's business is confidential.

Benenden School

Benenden has been one of the leading boarding schools in Britain for more than 100 years. We were founded in 1923 and are situated in 250 acres of attractive parkland in Kent. There are around 550 students in the school, aged 11-18, with approximately 190 of those in the Sixth Form. Benenden is at the forefront of girls' education in the UK, with recent innovations including; an Elective programme, Professional Skills Programme, and exciting new Creative Technology initiatives. This is a full-time all-year position.

Meals are provided for staff whilst on duty. The School's leisure facilities, including a fitness gym and swimming pool, are available for staff to use.

Working in Kent

Our location offers the opportunity to experience the beautiful Kent countryside, whilst being only an hour from London by train. Working for Benenden School means you can be assured of being close to rich medieval heritage, nestled alongside a thriving local community of creative and inspiring individuals.

Person Specification

Offers of jobs at Benenden will usually depend on the applicant's application form, references and performance over the interview process. For some posts, particular qualifications or skills are required. However, all those who are offered a post at Benenden are expected to be:

- Responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom they are responsible or come into contact with.
- Supportive of and committed to the School's policies on Child Protection.
- Supportive of the School's policies on Equal Opportunities.
- Mindful of their personal responsibilities relating to Safety, Health and the Environment.
- Mindful of the need to treat all sensitive information relating to pupils, fellow employees, and the business of the School as confidential.
- Mindful of the need to behave appropriately and professionally at all times with pupils, their parents, peers and other staff.
- Accepting of the need to follow all other school policies and procedures as appropriate and relevant to their post.



Benenden School is committed to a policy of inclusion that sees the diverse population of its staff, students and governors as one of its greatest strengths. To ensure that everyone can thrive and meet their full potential, it is essential that inclusion and equality of opportunity be at the heart of our ethos. We value diversity and are intentionally inclusive in our behaviours and culture.