

Clerking Handbook

September 2025



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to your role as a Clerk/Governance Professional in Lincolnshire. The purpose of this handbook is to provide information and guidance for Clerks to Governing Bodies and Governance Professionals in Lincolnshire Schools and Academies. A Clerk/Governance Professional to the governing board is the governance professional, required to provide advice, guidance, and effective administrative support.

High quality professional Clerk/Governance Professional is crucial to the effective functioning of the board. Clerking is not only about good organisation and administration, but also and more importantly, about helping the board understand its role, functions, and legal duties. This is crucial in helping the board exercise its duties confidently in a timely manner to stay focused on its core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

All maintained schools and academy trusts must appoint a Clerk/Governance Professional to their governing board. Boards governing different types and sizes of organisation will have different clerking needs but should set demanding standards for the service they expect from their Clerk/Governance Professional and assure themselves that they are employing a Clerk/Governance Professional with suitable skills and training. Consequently, they should expect to pay an appropriate amount commensurate to the professional service they expect their Clerk/Governance Professional to deliver.

Clerks in Maintained Schools will usually clerk all board, committee and panel meetings as outlined in the job description and as agreed with their line manager (Chair of Governors).

Governance Professionals in academy schools may be asked to clerk just the trust board meetings, the trust board and its trust level committees or the trust board, trust level committees and LGBs. Some MATS have their own governance officer or company secretary who will ensure that the trust board complies with relevant legislation and regulations, the Governance Professional's role being to provide administrative assistance. As the role can vary in the responsibilities required of the clerk, Clerk/Governance Professionals should ensure that they have a comprehensive job description and appropriate support to fulfil all legal duties of the role.

Clerks and governance professionals are expected to demonstrate a commitment to developing and improving their own knowledge and skills; learning from others to improve their own practice; sharing their skills with others, including board members; and undertaking relevant training and development opportunities.

Professional clerking is recognised as one of the key steps to effective governance. An effective Clerk/Governance Professional builds and maintains professional working relationships within the board as the foundation for providing impartial advice and support. Good relationships are also

essential to establishing open communication and ensuring smooth information flow between the board, the executive leaders and where required, staff, parents, and the local community.

The voluntary nature of governance makes it essential that boards conduct their business efficiently to make the best possible use of everyone's time. Professional Clerking has a vital role to play in meeting the administrative and procedural requirements of boards and enabling efficient and effective discussion and decision making.

There are many sources of help and information available to a Clerk/Governance Professional and their board, some of which are listed within the following pages. This clerking handbook aims to lead a Clerk/Governance Professional through many procedures they will be dealing with within their board and committee meetings.

The handbook is updated at least annually, and we hope that you find this latest version useful. This version of the handbook has been revised utilising varying sources, including the NAGAS Clerking handbook. Every effort has been made to ensure that all relevant topics have been included. However, we would welcome any comments that you may have regarding either the format or the content.

We look forward to working with you in your new role, and hope that you find it fulfilling.

Governor Services Team

SECTION 1:

The Role of the Clerk/Governance Professional

1. THE ROLE OF THE CLERK/GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL

All maintained schools and academy trusts must appoint a Clerk to their governing board as set out in The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 for maintained schools and The Academy Trust Handbook. In overall terms the duties include:

- **Providing advice to the board on governance, constitutional and procedural matters**
- **Providing effective administrative and organisational support to the board and its committees**
- **Ensuring the board is properly constituted**
- **Managing information effectively in accordance with legal requirements.**

A brief explanation of these duties follows with information on where further detail will be found within this handbook.

Providing advice to the board on governance, constitutional and procedural matters

This handbook explains the procedures a Clerk/Governance Professional will encounter in the day-to-day organisation of board meetings, elections, appointment of governors and trustees and the structure of the board. If a Clerk/Governance Professional/ is aware that procedure is not being followed s/he should alert the meeting. The Clerk/Governance Professional provides guidance to ensure the board works in compliance with the appropriate legal and regulatory framework and understands the potential consequences of non-compliance.

Providing effective administrative and organisational support to the board and its committees

An effective Clerk/Governance Professional has a huge impact on the smooth running of board meetings and committee meetings. It is also important to build relationships with the administrative support team within school, as Clerk/Governance Professionals may need to enlist their help for situations such as parent elections. Details of preparing agendas and writing minutes are given in the sections on meetings later in this handbook.

Ensuring the board is properly constituted

It is well worth spending time to become familiar with the Instrument of Government (in a maintained school) or Articles of Association (in an academy school) for the setting. This document details the number and categories of governors or trustees which make up the board. Associate members are not mentioned on the Instrument of Government, as they are not governors or trustees. Further detail on the governance structure of Local Authority maintained schools and academies will be found in the sections 'Governance Structures'.

Managing information effectively in accordance with legal requirements

This will include the need to:

- Maintain an up-to-date record of names, addresses, email addresses and category of board members and their term of office
- Ensure that relevant information regarding the board and its members is published on the

school website (see Clerks Resource Pack for template website reporting for maintained schools), and notified to Get Information About Schools (GIAS) and, for academy school trust board members, that Companies House is notified

- Advise the local authority, Diocese or Trust as appropriate when there are changes of membership to the board
- Maintain copies of current terms of reference and membership of committees and working parties and nominated governors or trustees with specific responsibilities e.g. safeguarding
- Advise governors and trustees and appointing bodies of expiry of the term of office before the term expires so elections or appointments can be organised in a timely manner; inform the board of any changes to its membership
- Maintain meeting attendance records and advise the board of non-attendance of governors or trustees
- Ensure that a register of board pecuniary interests is maintained, reviewed annually, and lodged within the school
- Check with the school that a DBS disclosure has been successfully carried out, together with Declaration of Eligibility for every governor and trustee.

This is where the bulk of the 'in between meetings' work is contained. Keeping up to date with the movement of all the governors and trustees can be difficult. It is essential to have a list of the composition of the board with names, addresses, post codes, telephone numbers and the date of the term of office for each governor, from this list it will be easier to be aware of what is happening.

The key is to look ahead.

The Department for Education [Maintained schools Maintained School Governance Guide](#) gives guidance on the Clerking (or governance professional) role. The exact nature of the duties the Clerk/Governance Professional is expected to perform will be within the Job Description for the role. Governing boards are many and varied and each will have different expectations of the Clerk/Governance Professional role, so it is important to have a conversation with the chair early on to establish how the board operates. It is expected that an annual appraisal will be undertaken by the Chair of Governors with regular conversations in between to ensure that everything is on track.

Most Clerk to Governors in Lincolnshire maintained schools are paid on grade G4, spinal column points 9 to 12 of the Lincolnshire County Council pay spine. The salary is based on a 37-hour, 52-week year. This grade cannot be altered but Governing Bodies can, if necessary, change the number of hours the Clerk is paid to work. If you find that you are exceeding the number of hours you are contracted, it is suggested that you log your hours for a term and talk to your line manager, who is the Chair of Governors.

Should you Clerk for an Academy or Academy Trust, please refer to your Governance Lead / Company Secretary to query your contract details, salary scale or appraisal process.

You can also review [The Competency Framework](#) – Enabling Good Governance which outlines the 12 competencies and divides these into three areas within the framework.

Information required by the Local Authority

The Lincolnshire County Council Governor Services team request the following information from **ALL MAINTAINED SCHOOLS**, included Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled:

- Full governing body minutes and resources/finance committee minutes per term
- Any changes to membership (using the Governance Information Form):
 - i. Appointments/Resignations
 - ii. Change of Title or Name / Contact Details
 - iii. Death of a governor
- Appointment/resignation of Chairs or Vice-Chairs immediately after appointment/resignation
- Requests for amendments to Instruments
- Governing body agenda and minutes where decisions to consider change to school status is to be decided upon.

Information available from the Local Authority

Clerk/Governance Professionals should be aware that the Local Authority communicates with schools via [Perspective Lite](#) which contains information required for the day-to-day management of the school. This information and any LCC policies can be accessed online – if you have not been issued with access to this site, you should ask your Headteacher for details.

Also published on **Perspective Lite** are **School News** and **Safeguarding News** which will highlight any policy changes, training opportunities through LCC or our partners across the County plus areas of interest for schools/governing bodies.

Clerk/Governance Professionals should also be aware of the agreed procedures and processes in place for information and records management. Schools/governing bodies create, use, and access a wide variety of information and, as such, the areas in which that information is used has very strict criteria and processes. There is more information available in the [Maintained schools Maintained School Governance Guide](#) and [Academy trust governance guide](#).

Training and Support for Clerk/Governance Professionals

The Governance Training Offer contains training sessions available to Governors/Trustees and Clerk/Governance Professionals in Lincolnshire. In addition, Lincolnshire County Council also provides access for all maintained school clerks and governors to access the e-learning available through [NGA Learning Link](#).

Clerk/Governance Professionals should also be aware that schools/academies may procure services from a variety of professional services such as HR, finance and legal which are available within one single point of access through the [EduLincs](#) website. Where possible, the LA has focused funding on several services, which help us to achieve our joint priority outcomes, and these are identified as being available free of charge.

Clerk/Governance Professionals are also strongly encouraged to attend the Clerk/Governance Professionals' briefing sessions which are facilitated virtually by the Governor Services team termly. These sessions are an opportunity to receive updates on statutory/regulatory policies and procedures and sharing good practice.

The **Clerks Resource** webpage contains several exemplar documents for maintained schools which you may also find useful in your role.

Finally, the Governor Services team offer comprehensive support to Clerks to Maintained Schools via email and phone (please request a phone call via the email address):

- E-mail - GovernorSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk

CLERK TO GOVERNORS JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION



JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

Director Area: Children's Services	Job Ref Number: 02597
Service Area: Schools	Grade: G4

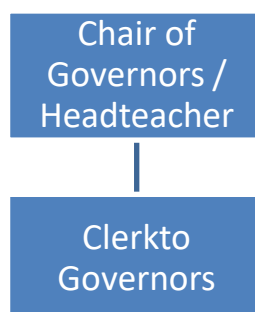
Job Title: Clerk to Governors

PURPOSE OF JOB:

Provide advice to the governing body on governance, constitutional and procedural matters to help them meet their statutory duties and attain / retain outstanding outcomes for the school's children and young people. The new regulations require governing bodies to have regard to advice from the Clerk/Governance Professional with regard to them exercising a wide range of responsibilities and administrative duties to ensure governing bodies are able to function efficiently and effectively at all times and to assist governors achieve their strategic priorities. This will be achieved by providing the following functions:

- Effective administrative support to the governing body and its committees
- Ensuring the governing body is properly constituted
- Managing information effectively in accordance with legal requirements

TEAM STRUCTURE:



MAIN DUTIES:

	Advisory Capacity:
1	Provide advice to the governing body and act as the first point of contact for governors with queries on procedural matters;
2	Advise the governing body on governance legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after meetings
3	Have access to appropriate legal advice, support and guidance, and where necessary seek advice and guidance from third parties on behalf of the governing body
4	Inform the governing body of any changes to its responsibilities as a result of a change in school status or changes in the relevant legislation
5	Offer advice on best practice in governance, including on committee structures and self-evaluation

6	Ensure that statutory policies are approved in line with the school policy file, and are revised when advised by the Headteacher
7	Advise on the annual calendar of governing body meetings and tasks
8	Send new governors induction materials and ensure they have access to appropriate documents, including any agreed Code of Practice
9	Contribute to the induction of governors taking on new roles, in particular chair or chair of a committee
	Administrative Capacity:
10	With the chair and headteacher prepare a focused agenda for the governing body meeting and committee meeting
11	Liaise with those preparing papers to make sure they are available on time, and distribute the agenda and papers as required by legislation or other regulations
12	Ensure meetings are quorate
13	Record the attendance of governors at meetings (and any apologies – whether they have been accepted or not), and take appropriate action in relation to absences, including advising absent governors of the date of the next meeting
14	Draft minutes of governing body meetings, indicating who is responsible for any agreed action with timescales, and send drafts to the chair and (if agreed by the governing body), the headteacher
15	Circulate the reviewed draft to all governors (members of the committee), the headteacher (if not a governor) and other relevant body, such as the local authority / diocese / foundation / trust as agreed by the governing body and within the timescale agreed with the governing body
16	Follow-up any agreed action points with those responsible and inform the chair of progress
	Membership Capacity:
17	Advise governors and appointing bodies in advance of the expiry of a governor's term of office, so elections or appointments can be organised in a timely manner
18	Chair that part of the meeting at which the chair is elected, giving procedural advice concerning conduct of this and other elections
19	Maintain a register of governor pecuniary interests and ensure the record of governors' business interests is reviewed regularly and lodged within the school
20	Liaise with the school to ensure Disclosure and Barring (DBS) has been carried out on any governor when it is appropriate to do so
21	Maintain governor meeting attendance records and advise the chair of potential disqualification through lack of attendance
22	Advise the governing body on succession planning (of all roles, not just the chair)
	Managing Information:
23	Maintain up to date records of the names, addresses and category of governing body members and their term of office, and inform the governing body and any relevant authorities of any changes to its membership
24	Ensure up-to-date records of governors and the governing body are forwarded to Governor Services (LCC) and that any changes are reported at the earliest opportunity
25	Maintain copies of current terms of reference and membership of any committees and working parties and any nominated governors e.g. Child-protection, SEND
26	Maintain a record of signed minutes of meetings in school, and ensure copies are sent to relevant bodies on request and are published as agreed at meetings

27	Maintain records of governing body correspondence
28	Liaise with the school to ensure copies of statutory policies and other school documents approved by the governing body are kept in the school and published as agreed, for example, on the website
	Personal Development:
29	Undertake appropriate and regular training and development to maintain his/her knowledge and improve practice within the school environment
30	Keep up-to-date with current educational developments and legislation affecting school governance
31	Participate in regular performance management
	Additional Services (as required by Governing Board):
32	Clerk any statutory appeal committees/panels the governing body is required to convene (this includes all complaints and permanent exclusion panels in line with LCC policy): if the Clerk is not contracted to set up and clerk these panels, the governing body will have to make an alternative arrangement
33	Assist the Chair of Governors in conducting skills audits and advise on training requirements and the criteria for appointing new governors relevant to vacancies
	Communications:
34	Develop and maintain appropriate arrangements and mechanisms for effective two-way communication between Head Teachers, Chair, Clerk to Governor, and the school Governing Body
35	Promote communication between governing bodies as a means of disseminating and sharing good practice
	Safeguarding:
36	To be committed to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, raising concerns as appropriate
	Systems and Information:
37	Maintain the records of the governing body and store these on a secure system in line with the school's and / or LCC Information Governance policies
38	Maintain a file of relevant and up-to-date Department for Education (DfE), Local Authority and Church Authorities (if appropriate) guidance documents
39	Maintain archive materials

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Requirements	Where identified*	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge:			
The role and responsibilities of school governing bodies and governors	A / I		x
Current legislation and regulatory frameworks in respect of schools and local authority children's services	A / I		x
Experience:			
Ability to interpret relevant regulations and legislation	A / I / T	x	
Servicing Committees	A / I		x

Occupational Skills:			
Attention to detail and organisational skills	A	x	
Neatness and accuracy	A / I	x	
Communication skills	A / I / T	x	
Dependability and reliability	A / I	x	
Computer literate	A / I / T	x	
Self-motivating	A / I	x	
Able to work on own initiative	A / I / T	x	
Understanding of role of governing bodies	A / I	x	
Legislation & good practice in respect of school governance	A / I / T		x
Qualifications:			
Must be willing to complete the National Clerk training programme	I	x	
Any relevant training appropriate to the role of the Clerk to Governor	A / I		x
Other Requirements:			
Willingness to work flexibly in terms of hours (which may include weekend and evening work) and locations (which may include home if suitable), in keeping with the dynamic nature of the work and the development of more efficient ways of working	I	x	

*A = Application form T = Test/Assessment I = Interview P = Presentation

GENERAL

The postholder is required to take personal responsibility for contributing to organisational transformation and changes in ways of working, maximising the benefits and efficiencies for both internal and external customers, including the promotion and use of self-service to achieve maximum cost effectiveness.

The postholder is expected to work to the [Lincolnshire County Council Core Values and Behaviours](#) and to carry out the duties in accordance with Lincolnshire County Council policies.

Other Duties - The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not exhaustive. The post holder may be required to undertake other duties within the general scope of the post. Any such duties should not substantially change the general character of the post. Duties and responsibilities outside of the general scope of this grade of post will be with the consent of the post holder.

Safeguarding -. All employees need to be aware of the possible abuse of children and vulnerable adults and if you are concerned you need to follow the Lincolnshire County Council Safeguarding Policy. In addition employees working with children and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults during the course of their work.

SECTION 2:

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES:

MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

2. **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES - MAINTAINED SCHOOLS**

All maintained school governing bodies must be constituted under the 2012 Constitution Regulations. The statutory guidance "The constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools" provides information about the constitution of bodies, their size, membership, and skills.

Instrument of Government

Each school **must** have an Instrument of Government that sets out the following:

- The name of the school and category of school to which it belongs.
- The name of the Governing Body of the school and total membership
- The number of Governors in each category of Governor.
- If the term of office for any category of Governor is to be less than four years, the category and length of term of office is stated.
- If the school has foundation Governors, the bodies entitled to appoint such Governors, ex officio Governors and any substitute Governors, and the bodies entitled to request the removal of such Governors.
- Details of any trust deed relating to the school.
- The date on which the Instrument of Government takes effect.

The Instrument **must** comply with any trust deed relating to the school.

All Governors **must** be given a copy of the Instrument and copies of any subsequent Variation Orders. You will have received a copy of the Instrument on appointment.

The Governing Body cannot change its size or composition from that set out in the Instrument, unless it is legally changed through applying for a Variation Order. If the Governing Body wishes to change its size or composition, it **must** have a new Instrument of Government; in Lincolnshire this is produced by the LA and sealed by the LA's Legal Services team. It is good practice for governing bodies to review the Instrument of Government annually to ensure effective governance.

Please note, if your school is a Foundation school, you must apply to the appropriate body in the first instance if you wish to make any changes or amendments.

If the Governing Body does wish to apply for a Variation Order to make a change to either the size of the Governing Body or the name of the school, please email: GovernorSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk, for further guidance.

Governing Board Constitution

The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 and the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by the School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016, state that Governing Bodies should be no bigger than necessary to secure the range of skills they need to be effective. The composition of a Governing Body should reflect a wide range of groups from the community. Governing Bodies should use a skills audit to identify any gaps that need to be filled in the skills, knowledge, and experience of existing Governors.

Maintained school governing bodies must not be smaller than 7 members (with no upper limit) and **must** include:

- At least 2 elected parent Governors;
- The Headteacher (*unless the Headteacher resigns as a Governor*)
- 1 elected staff Governor (*from across the teaching & non-teaching staff*)
- 1 Local Authority Governor
- Co-opted Governors (*see instrument for number*)
(*The total number of co-opted governors who are also eligible to be elected or appointed as staff governors (when counted with the staff governor and the HT(s) must not exceed one third of the total membership of the board of the federation*)

Foundation, Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided schools are also required to have **partnership or foundation** Governors.

Federations with two or more maintained schools must not be smaller than 7 members (with no upper limit) and **must** include:

- 2 (and only 2) elected parent Governors from across the schools.
(*Additional parents could be co-opted onto the board, based on the skills they bring*)
- The Headteacher of each federated school (or the executive Headteacher of the federation, if there is one) unless the Headteacher resigns as a Governor
- 1 elected staff Governor (*from across the teaching & non-teaching staff*)
- 1 Local Authority Governor
- Co-opted Governors (*see instrument for number*)
(*The total number of co-opted governors who are also eligible to be elected or appointed as staff governors (when counted with the staff governor and the HT(s) must not exceed one third of the total membership of the board of the federation*)

Foundation, Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided schools are also required to have **partnership or foundation** Governors dependent on each school's individual status prior to federation.

Governing Body Membership

The Regulations create a requirement that all **appointed** Governors have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. Governing Bodies **must** therefore determine the skills required when appointing new Governors and should carry out a skills audit to determine those skills.

Parent Governors

Categorised as individuals who have a child of legal school age (5 – 16) and are elected by the parent body to serve as a governor. They are usually parents of a registered pupil at the school, which includes a person with parental responsibility, or carer, at the time of election and are eligible to stand for election as a parent governor. Parent governors may continue to hold office until the end of their term of office even if their child leaves the school.

Where a Parent Governor wishes to serve a further term of office, an election must still be held to give other parents the opportunity to stand if they so wish.

Staff Governors

Categorised as teaching and support staff who, at the time of election, are employed by either the governing body or the local authority to work at the school under a contract of employment. Staff governors are elected by this same category of school staff. They cease to hold office when they cease to be employed at the school.

NB: A Staff governor cannot be elected as Chair or Vice Chair of Governors.

Where a Staff Governor wishes to serve a further term of office, an election must still be held to give other staff the opportunity to stand if they so wish.

The Local Authority (LA) is responsible for the **elections** of all **Parent and Staff governors** within **Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools**. Lincolnshire County Council has delegated this duty to Headteachers. **There is a full guidance document for maintained schools, which is available from LCC Governor Services.**

NB: It is not the Clerk's role to organise these elections except in cases where the Clerk is also employed in school as part of the school's administrative staff.

In terms of **Foundation and Aided Schools**, the Governing Body is responsible for all Parent Governor elections. It can delegate some of the work to the Headteacher, one of the Governors, or one of the Governing Body's committees.

Local Authority (LA) Governors

Nominated by the Local Authority but appointed by the Governing Body. The Local Authority can nominate any person who is eligible to be a Local Authority governor, but it is for the governing body to decide whether their nominee has the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and meets any other eligibility criteria they have set.

Should the Local Authority be unable to nominate a candidate, the school or Governing Body may put forward a prospective candidate to the Local Authority for consideration. *There are no LA governors in academies.*

Where a Local Authority Governor wishes to serve a further term of office, the appointment process must still be followed.

The details on the process to appoint/reappoint a Local Authority Governor is at the end of this section.

Foundation Governors

Appointed to voluntary controlled, aided and in some foundation schools by the Church authority or voluntary organisation which provides the school. These appointments are the responsibility of the Diocesan Board of Education (Lincoln tel: 01522 504015) in the case of Church of England Controlled Schools and the Diocese of Nottingham in the case of Roman Catholic schools (tel: 01332 293833). Some schools also have foundation Governors appointed by trustees or charities. Please contact the appropriate organisation if you require any further help or advice with these appointments.

Co-Opted Governors

Appointed by the governing body and may be an individual who lives or works in the community served by the school or is employed directly by the school and has the skills and experience required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

NB:

- i. A Co-opted governor who is a member of staff **cannot** be elected Chair or Vice Chair of Governors.
- ii. The total number of co-opted governors who are also eligible to be elected or appointed as staff governors (when counted with the staff governor and the HT(s) must not exceed one third of the total membership of the board of the federation)

Partnership Governors

Appointed by the governing body. Individuals are only eligible to be nominated as a partnership governor if the person nominating them believes that they have the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. Nominations are sought from the “appropriate diocesan authority”, the “appropriate religious body” or the parents of registered pupils at the school and the local community, as the Governing Body considers appropriate.

Associate Members

Appointed by the governing body to serve on one or more governing body committee. They may also attend full governing body meeting. They may be a pupil, school staff member, or any other person that is able to contribute their specific expertise in order to address specific gaps identified in the skills of governing body members, and/or help the governing body respond to particular challenges that they may be facing.

They are not governors and therefore do not have a vote in governing body decisions or count in the quorum (in full governing body meetings), but may be given a vote on decisions made by committees to which they are appointed. They cannot be appointed if governing bodies operate the circular model.

Other Useful Information

- i. Ex-officio Governor - This is not a type of governor but indicates that the person is a governor “by virtue of office”, i.e. the governorship relates to the post not the person. This usually applies to headteachers and local incumbents who are governors as long as they are in post.
- ii. Multiple Governor Roles - There is no limit to the number of governorships at different schools an individual may hold but if more than one is held, this must be declared on the pecuniary interest form and the Register of Interest details on the school website.

Restrictions On Appointment As A Governor

Restrictions on appointment fall into three broad categories:

- general grounds;
- grounds that apply to particular categories of governor; and
- grounds that arise because of particular failings/actions by the governor.

All the grounds for disqualification apply also to associate members with the exception that they can be registered pupils at the school and can be aged under 18.

Duties of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools

The duties and responsibilities of Governing Boards are set out in the [School Governance Regulations 2013](#) and [School Governance Constitution Regulations 2012](#)), and are further clarified in the DfE Governance Guides.

Delegation of Powers

It should be remembered that it is the Governing Body as a whole that has powers to establish policy and take action and no single Governor has any authority as an individual. Governing bodies are, however, permitted formally to delegate authority to committees, to any member of the Governing Body or the Headteacher.

Governing bodies **cannot** delegate any functions relating to:

- The constitution of the Governing Body;
- Functions relating to the approval of the first formal budget plan of the financial year (Lincolnshire only);
- The appointment or removal of the Chair and Vice-Chair;
- The appointment of the Clerk;
- The suspension of a Governor;
- The delegation of functions;
- The establishment of committees.

The following functions can be delegated to a **committee**, but not an individual:

- Functions relating to the alteration, discontinuance, closure or change of category of the school.
- Functions relating to school discipline policies.
- Functions relating to the exclusion of pupils (except in an emergency).
- Functions relating to admissions.

Governing bodies **must** review the delegation of functions annually and remain accountable for any delegated decisions.

The Chair of Governors is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Governing Body in cases of urgency where a delay would be seriously detrimental to the interests of any registered pupil at the school, a parent, or person employed at the school.

NOTE: Any delegated powers agreed **must** be clearly identified in the minutes of the meeting and recorded under the Terms of Reference for either the relevant committee or full governing body.

The Governing Body should agree annually the terms of reference and delegation planner to be followed for its governance model.

NB: Contact LCC Governor Services for advice and support with these documents if necessary.

Documents for Maintained Schools Clerk/Governance Professionals:

[Maintained schools Maintained School Governance Guide](#)

[The School Governance \(Constitution\) \(England\) Regulations 2012,](#)

[The School Governance \(Roles, Procedures and Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

[The Constitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools](#)

[Maintained schools governance guide - Statutory policies for maintained schools](#)

[What Maintained Schools must publish online](#)

[School Governance: Guidance and Regulations](#)

SECTION 3:

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES:

ACADEMY TRUSTS

3. **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES - ACADEMY TRUSTS**

An Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee. All Academy Trusts have at least **two** layers of governance:

- i. **The Members of the Trust**, who are akin to shareholders, are the subscribers to its memorandum of association and any other individuals permitted under its charitable articles of association. Members have a limited financial liability to the trust in the event it is wound up and have the power to appoint and remove trustees.
- ii. **The trustees**, who are responsible for the three core strategic governance functions. They are appointed by the members of the trust. The trustees are also the directors of the charitable company. They are responsible for ensuring the charitable company achieves its objectives, as well as compliance with charity and company law and the academy trust's funding agreement.

Single academy trusts, multi academy trusts and free schools are all set up as limited liability companies and are therefore registered with Companies House. They cannot register with the Charity Commission as they are exempt charities (they automatically have charitable status and must therefore comply with charity law).

A standalone academy or single academy trust (SAT) is a single legal entity responsible for one academy that has its own articles of association and funding agreement with Secretary of State.

Multi academy trusts (MATs) are also a single legal entity, but the board of trustees is accountable for a number of academies in the MAT. This means that an **additional** layer of governance is possible through the delegation of governance functions to local governing bodies, made up of local governors.

Each academy may have a local governing body to which the MAT trustees may delegate some governance functions. A local governing body may themselves govern more than one academy. Local governors who sit on local governing bodies are not trustees of the academy trust unless they also sit on the trust's board.

The DfE recommends that trusts should ideally have at least 5 members, though it should be noted that trusts could have more should they choose to. Five members ensures that the trust has enough members to take decisions via special resolution (75% members agree) without requiring unanimity, while minimising circumstances in which a split membership prevents decisions being taken by ordinary resolution (at least 51% of members are in favour).

All individuals involved in the governance of a MAT, at every level should know who the trustees are and understand what functions have been delegated by the trust to the local governing bodies and which remain with the trust board.

A lead sponsor will have majority control of the academy trust by having the right to appoint the majority of its Members. Likewise, the minority or majority control of the church in a voluntary controlled or voluntary aided school is retained on conversion to academy status through minority or majority control over the appointment of Members of the trust – who in turn appoint the majority of the trustees. Employees of the Trust should not be appointed as members.

Academy trusts have almost complete flexibility to shape their governance arrangements and design the constitution of their boards and local governing bodies as they see fit. There are very few requirements relating to the constitution of the board of trustees in the model articles of association. The board of an academy trust must include at least two elected parent governors – in a MAT the parents can be represented at local governing body level or on the trust's board.

Converting to academy status is a good opportunity to review the constitution of the existing governing body and make changes as necessary to ensure that governance arrangements will be fit for purpose. Academy trusts of newly converted schools are required to set out in the governance statement, submitted with their first audited accounts, what they have done to review and develop their governance structure and composition of the board of trustees.

It is essential for the Governance Professional to have an understanding of the legal structure of SATs and MATs and of the specific constitution and procedures of the setting which they are clerking. This includes the scheme of delegation which dictates how and where decisions are made and communicated.

Information on the categories of trustee and how they are elected or appointed will be found in the Articles.

The Funding Agreement

The funding agreement provides the framework for the academy or free school to operate in. A specific academy's funding agreement can be found on the [School and college performance tables](#) website. Church Schools have an additional legal document, CSA – Church Supplemental Agreement.

Articles of Association

Articles of Association can be found on [Companies House](#) under the name of the Trust and the "filing history" tab. The Articles describe an academy trust's charitable object(s) and how trustees are appointed and the quorum for meetings. The articles of association must also appear on the academy website.

Scheme of Delegation

The [Academy Trust Handbook](#) identifies the trust's duty to publish its governance structure on the trust website, including: "the structure and remit" of the trust's members, board of trustees, committees and local governing bodies (the trust's scheme of delegation for governance functions), and the full names of the each of each.

The scheme of delegation is the document that Governance Professionals will probably refer to most as it will help determine the content of agendas for the trust board and its committees including local governing bodies (LGBs). It is important to note that the scheme of delegation may be different for each academy in the trust.

The articles will specify if Chair's action has been delegated – this is not an automatic right within the academy sector.

NOTE: Any powers agreed **must** be clearly identified in the minutes of the meeting.

Documents for Academy Clerk/Governance Professionals:

[Academy trust governance guide](#)

[Academy Trust Handbook](#)

NB: the Academy Trust Handbook is updated annually - please refer to the latest edition.

[Academy trust governance guide - Statutory policies for trusts](#)

[What Academies, Free Schools and Colleges should publish online](#)

SECTION 4: CLERK/GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL'S

GUIDANCE NOTES:

- **ROLES – ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE CHAIR**
- **COMMITTEES**
- **INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY HOLDERS ON THE GOVERNING BODY/BOARD**
- **GOVERNOR VISITS**
- **COMPLAINTS**
- **EXCLUSIONS**
- **POLICIES RECRUITMENT**
- **APPOINTMENT GUIDANCE**
- **RECRUITMENT OF GOVERNORS**
- **INDUCTION FOR GOVERNORS/TRUSTEES**

4. ROLES – ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

The governing body **must** elect a chair and a vice chair in accordance with the [Roles, Procedures and Allowances Regulations](#). A governor who is employed at the school as a teacher or as any other member of staff is not eligible for election as Chair or Vice Chair.

The Vice-Chair **must** fill in for the Chair wherever there is a vacancy for the position of Chair, or the Chair is absent. The Governing Body also has the authority to vote to remove a Chair or a Vice Chair, and the Regulations set out the procedure for doing this under *Regulation 9*.

The Department for Education's (DfE) Maintained Schools Governance Guide outlines the role of the Chair in Section 4 – PEOPLE under section 4.5 (The chair of the governing body).

ACADEMIES

The Articles of Association state that a Chair and Vice-Chair of Trustees is **elected each school year**. A trustee who is employed by the academy trust is not eligible for election as Chair or Vice Chair.

The Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair wherever there is a vacancy for the position of Chair, or the Chair is absent. The Governing Body also has the authority to vote to remove a Chair or a Vice Chair in accordance with the articles of association.

The Department for Education's (DfE) Academy Trust Governance Guide outlines the role of the Chair in Section 4 –under section 4.4.1 (The chair of the board) and provides further information on the appointment of the Chair and the role of the Vice Chair.

Clerk/Governance Professional's Role during The Election

- The current Chair will welcome Governors to the meeting and take apologies (to ensure the meeting is quorate).
- The Chair hands over to you as Clerk/Governance Professional. You announce the names of those wishing to stand as Chair and/or ask for nominations from the floor and ask those Governors to leave the room.
- If there is only one nominee, the Governors vote to accept that person.
- If there is more than one nominee, you **must** hold a ballot. Before the ballot is held, Governors should decide what would happen in the event of a tie (tossing a coin, drawing straws etc).
- Give each Governor a piece of paper on which to make his or her vote. Have these prepared in advance.
- Count the votes and invite the nominees back into the meeting.
- Announce the new Chair.
- Hand the meeting over to the Chair who will carry out the same process for the election of the Vice-Chair.

You should record the Chair and Vice-Chair's terms of office and the procedure used for the election in the minutes.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Although there is no legal constraint on the length of time a Chair of Governors can serve, the opinion of National Governance professionals such as the NGA, is that an element of regular re-appraisal and renewal is beneficial to all schools, and that all chairs should normally expect to step down after a maximum of six years in post. It is also suggested that where stability is required, appointment of the chair for a two-year period provides consistency for a maintained school.

COMMITTEES

Maintained Schools

There are no statutory committees for maintained schools, however many boards choose to set up a committee structure for effective management of workload. The governing body procedure regulations determine that where the board does set up committees, they must determine the membership and delegated responsibilities and review these annually. The delegated responsibilities are set out in the terms of reference for the committee.

In line with the LCC Pay policy, all maintained schools must hold a separate Pay committee annually.

***NOTE:** Throughout an academic year, there may be the requirement for additional panel committees such as complaints, disciplinary hearings, pupil exclusions or appeals. Should this occur, please contact Governor Support or your schools HR advisor for guidance and support in the process.*

Every committee **must** have a Chair who is either appointed by the Governing Body or elected by that committee. The Governing Body may remove the Chair of a committee from office at any time.

Any such individual or committee **must** report back to the Governing Body on any action taken or decisions made.

The Governing Body **must** appoint a Clerk to each committee with delegated powers. It is recommended that this is the Clerk to the full Governing Body. The Governing Body may remove from post a Clerk to a committee at any time.

If the Clerk does not attend a committee meeting (emergency absence), the members present may appoint a member of the committee, but not the Headteacher or the Chair, to clerk the meeting.

The Clerk of the committee must:

- Convene meetings of the committee and give each member the agenda and papers to be considered at least **seven** days before the date of the meeting;
- Attend meetings of the committee and record minutes;
- Perform such related functions as determined by the Governing Body.

Minutes **must** be drawn up by the Clerk and signed by the Chair after approval at the next meeting of the committee. Minutes and supporting papers (except those deemed confidential) **must** be made available for inspection by any interested person as soon as possible.

Persons entitled to attend meetings of committees:

- Members of the committee.
- Headteacher.
- Clerk/ to the committee.
- Associate members of that committee (but may be excluded if an item of business refers to an individual member of staff or pupil).
- Any other person may be invited to attend their meeting with the approval of the governing body.

Quorum: For any committee meeting and vote the quorum should be stated in the terms of reference – **must** be a minimum of three Governors who are members of the committee or more, as determined by that committee.

Voting: Every decision **must** be determined by a majority of votes of those members present and voting. If there are an equal number of votes, the Chair (providing that he or she is a Governor) has a casting (second) vote. The committee can only vote if the majority of the members present are Governors.

Associate members may not vote on any decision relating to admissions, pupil discipline, election or appointment of Governors, the budget or financial commitments of the Governing Body.

If a committee is given delegated powers to make decisions, it **must** report any such decisions back to the full Governing Body by way of minutes. A working party may only make recommendations with the final decision resting with the full Governing body.

Academies

The Academies Trust Handbook determines that the academy trust must establish an audit and risk committee, appointed by the board. The audit and risk committee should meet at least three times a year.

- Trusts with an annual income over £50 million must have a dedicated audit and risk committee
- Other trusts must either have a dedicated audit and risk committee or can combine it with another committee such as finance

Multi academy trusts (MATs) may also choose to set up local governing bodies for their academies which are committees of the MAT board. The chair of a local governing body (LGB) therefore fulfils the same function as a committee chair.

Quorum & Voting:- The terms of reference which have been set by the academy trust will contain relevant information pertaining to quorum and voting.

We would strongly recommend that the Governing Board records in the minutes the procedure it decides upon for election, what it will do in the event of a tie, the term of office, and these decisions could be added to the Terms of Reference for the full Governing Body.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY HOLDERS ON THE GOVERNING BODY/BOARD

It is recommended that Boards have a number of Governors with specific responsibilities. For further information, refer to the relevant Maintained Schools/Academy Trust governance guide.

GOVERNOR VISITS

Governors should be encouraged to visit the school to see, understand and learning about the life and work of the school. This will bring effectiveness to decisions based on working knowledge of the school and its community. Visits should be programmed and agreed by the Board in consultation with the Headteacher. Any visit should be arranged with the Headteacher prior. Visit reports should be compiled and reviewed by the Board.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The Local Authority does not have any role in managing complaints about schools. If a parent is unhappy about something at their child's school, then they should contact the school to discuss the concerns or to make a complaint to the school.

Every school in England is required by law to have its own complaints procedure. Maintained schools **must** publish complaints procedures on their website, and best practice guidance advises academies to do the same. Parents can also ask the school or academy for a paper copy of their complaints procedure. Most schools should expect complainants to make reasonable attempts to resolve issues at an informal stage before taking the complaint to the formal stages in their procedure.

It is very important for a complainant to obtain a copy of the school's published procedure to ensure that they are following the correct process for their child's school.

Exceptions

There are certain complaints which fall outside of the general complaints procedure because there are established statutory or other prescribed procedures available. These are listed on the current DfE model policies which Lincolnshire County Council has recommended maintained schools to adopt.

Please note that school complaints procedures also do not cover complaints about other parents but **must** relate to alleged actions/inactions of the school. In addition, unless there are exceptional circumstances, anonymous complaints are also not usually considered under general school complaints procedures.

Advice for those wishing to make a complaint

Please note that the Local Authority does not have powers to intervene in individual complaints about schools – a complainant will need to follow the school complaints procedure and contact the school directly.

If a child has **special educational needs** and the concerns are about the school's management of those needs, parents can seek advice from **Liaise**. Liaise is the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) for Lincolnshire. Liaise can be contacted:

- through the Family Information Service (FIS) Freephone number: **0800 195 1635** (available 8am-6pm)
- Or by filing in this web-based form: [Liaise contact form](#)

Further Appeal about Matters handled under School Complaints Procedures

If a complainant has completed all the stages in a school's or an academy's formal complaints procedure and is not satisfied with the outcome, they may refer the complaint to either the Department for Education (maintained) or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (academies).

For more information please refer to the following sites:

Maintained: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures>

Academies: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy>

Maintained Schools

In the event of a complaint against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors should contact the LCC Children's Service Manager – Head of Education Strategy as a priority before taking any further action.

Reference Points:

[Education Act 1996](#) (Sections 496 & 497)

[Education Act 2002](#) (Section 29)

[The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)

[Education Act 2011](#) (Section 45)

HANDLING EXCLUSIONS

Exclusion is a disciplinary measure which headteachers can use to deal with serious or persistent misbehaviours that breach the school's behaviour policy.

The Governing Body **must** review certain exclusions and **must** consider any representations about an exclusion made by the parents of the excluded pupil. The Governing Body can delegate some or all of its functions in respect of exclusions to a committee consisting of at least three governors and such a committee may be called the Pupil Discipline Committee. Where the Governing Body establishes a Pupil Discipline Committee it should appoint a Clerk/Governance Professional to the committee.

NOTE: The school's behaviour policy **must** be available on the school's website.

In the event of an exclusion Clerk/Governance Professionals should immediately contact the Pupil Re-integration Team at Lincolnshire County Council who will issue an up-to-date pack of information to Clerk/Governance Professionals for use to organise Pupil Discipline Committee Meeting.

The Pupil Re-integration Team at Lincolnshire County Council also provide FREE Governance Training to all schools which is available in the Governor Support, Training and Development Guide.

For further advice, contact:

- email PRT@lincolnshire.gov.uk

POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS THAT GOVERNING BODIES AND PROPRIETORS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE BY LAW

The drafting of school policies can be delegated to any member of school staff. Model policies are available from a variety of sources and schools are free to adopt these as they see fit.

There is no requirement for **all** policies to be reviewed annually although there are **statutory policies which must reviewed annually and some must be published on the school website**.

You may find that a policy review document is available from the school outlining pertinent information. An exemplar template is available from the Governor Services Team.

RECRUITMENT OF GOVERNORS/TRUSTEES

- Clerk/Governance Professionals can aid the Board in setting a professional tone for recruitment and ensure that any potential volunteers get a good impression of the school and governing board. This may require Clerk/Governance Professionals to work with the board to review their current processes and procedures.

Appointment Guidance

- Clerk/Governance Professionals should ensure that a formal record is made of appointments through the minutes. A formal letter of appointment should be sent to the new governor.
- Each new governor should complete the relevant pre-appointment checks:

It is mandatory that all new and reappointed Governors have in place a current DBS certificate. Schools are responsible for ensuring Governors have a **DBS certificate within 21 days of their appointment and for obtaining a Section 128 check**. Instantly the activities or actions of a Governor give cause for concern, then these should be immediately and formally reported to the Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Please refer to the following documents for further clarification:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- The DfE [Maintained schools governance guide](#)
- The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 (Maintained)
- Articles of Association (Academy)
- The DfE [Academy trust governance guide](#)

In addition to obtaining a current DBS, the following checks should be made on all those who seek appointment as school Governors:

Identity – The Governing Body (or its representative) should ask to see proof of identity, for example a birth certificate, driving licence or passport.

Declaration of Personal AND Pecuniary Interest – All new Governors **must** complete Interest forms (*See Clerk/Governance Professionals Resources Pack for template forms*).

The Chair of Trustees must complete the application form for the suitability check as soon as they are appointed – see DfE guidance - [Identity Verification for New Chairs of Trustees](#)

- Clerk/Governance Professionals should inform relevant authorities of new appointments and arrange for Getting Information about Schools (GIAS) to be updated and the school website to be updated.
- Clerk/Governance Professionals should contact newly appointed Governors in advance of the first meeting to make introductions and explain your role, function and availability.
- On appointment, new Governors should be given the following forms:
 - Declaration of eligibility to serve form.
 - Copy of the Governing Body's Code of Conduct (We recommend the NGA Code of Conduct)
 - Personal & Pecuniary interest form.
 - DBS application information

- On notification from the Clerk/Governance Professional - all new Governors in maintained schools will receive a Welcome Pack from Governor Services. **Please utilise the Governance Information Form when informing Governor Services.**

INDUCTION OF GOVERNORS/TRUSTEES

Governing bodies should have an induction plan in place for new Governors. Some suggestions as to what this should include are given below. These should be sent either by yourself as Clerk/Governance Professional, or the Chair of Governors.

- Send a letter to new Governors welcoming them to the governing body.
- Provide an experienced governor to act as a mentor.
- Provide details of the best method of contacting:
 - The school office/Headteacher.
 - Yourself as Clerk/Governance Professional.
 - The Chair of Governors.
- Supply dates of forthcoming full Governors' meetings and minutes of most recent meetings.
- Provide an induction pack which could include:
 - A link to relevant DfE Governance Guide,
 - Duties of a Governor
 - A list of members of the current Governing Body.
 - A list of Governors with particular responsibilities eg. SEND, Safeguarding and information about those responsibilities.
 - List of staff, and staff with additional responsibilities ie SENCo.
 - Terms of reference and Delegation Planner
 - Membership of committees
 - Dates of Safeguarding Training and other training course information.
 - School improvement/development plan.
 - Ofsted report.
 - School Prospectus (if appropriate).
 - Schools Policies (including governance related policies)
 - Privacy Notices
- The Headteacher could take the new Governor on a tour of the school in session and introduce him or her to members of staff. It is also helpful if the mentor could go through some of the information listed above with the Governor.
- The new Governor could be invited to sit in on committee meetings to avoid being allocated to a committee that may not be particularly relevant to that person's skills or interests.
- New Governors should also be made aware of the Governance Training Offer and e-learning opportunities, particularly those aimed specifically at new Governors.

SECTION 5:

GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS OVERVIEW

THE PLANNING AND PREPARATION OF GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

Maintained School Governing Boards must hold at least 3 Full Governing Board meetings per academic year. Any three Governors may request a special meeting.

The Meeting Cycle

It is the Clerk/Governance Professional's duty to convene meetings and circulate agendas and papers. The cycle of Governors' meetings is related to the working year of the school and is usually recorded on the Governors' Annual Planner. Notice needs to be taken of school holiday periods when planning a schedule of meetings, and any pre or post meeting action required. It is necessary for certain items to be considered by Governors at particular times of the year e.g. approval of the budget and Headteacher's Performance Management.

You should check the [DfE](#) (Department of Education) website for updates and guidance on a regular basis; in the case of maintained schools, any LCC guidance will be reviewed and updated via **Perspective Lite**.

The following structure is an example of good practice to assist you in providing effective Clerk/Governance Professional support:

Six weeks before the meeting: prepare a draft agenda based on the annual planner and contact the Chair and Headteacher to ask whether they have items for the agenda. Working closely with the Chair and Headteacher is a necessity in creating an agenda and ensures all statutory requirements are addressed and that agenda items are in line with the school's calendar of actions.

Three weeks before the meeting: check the minutes of the last meeting and follow up any outstanding business. You should also request the Headteacher's report and reports of any committees, working groups etc.

Two weeks before the meeting: after agreeing the items to be included on the agenda with the Chair, arrange for the production and distribution of the agenda, Headteacher's report and any other papers.

NB:

Maintained Schools, Legal minimum for receiving agendas and supporting papers is at least seven days for maintained schools,

Academies: Dependent on stipulations in articles of association.

As soon as possible after the meeting: produce an action list and minutes while the proceedings of the meeting are still clear in your mind, as this should aid the production of an accurate record of the proceedings and avoid possible issues at the next meeting. It is advisable that a copy be sent to the Chair and Headteacher, clearly marked 'draft' or 'unapproved'.

The Agenda

A carefully prepared agenda not only ensures that no item of importance is omitted, and members know what is to be discussed at the meeting, but also ensures that the business is conducted in a meaningful way and the meeting proceeds smoothly and expeditiously. Items for the next meeting's agenda are often flagged up at the current meeting, so a note **must** be kept of these items. The Chair, Headteacher, other Governors and, where appropriate the Local Authority, may also suggest items for discussion. The Clerk/Governance Professional will also review the Annual Planner for further items.

NB, unless agreed by the Chair prior to the meeting, any matters for discussion should be clearly marked on the agenda; if not, then the matter **must** be deferred to the next meeting for discussion.

The following should appear on the agenda of Full Governing Body meetings:

- Welcome and Apologies: Governors **must** inform the Clerk/Governance Professional if they are unable to attend a meeting. (See register of attendance/authorised absence).
- Election of Chair / Vice Chair: Unless otherwise agreed in the Terms of Reference for the governing body, (Articles of Association in Academies), elections should be held annually.
- Declarations of Interest: a detailed Pecuniary/Personal Interest form should be completed annually and recorded clearly in the minutes with regard to the full governing body. At subsequent meetings, declarations of interest should be recorded with regard to any items on that particular Agenda.
- Membership: This refers to any Constitutional items, e.g. resignations, appointments, committee structure reviews, appointments of special responsibilities or changes to terms of reference
- Minutes of The Previous Meeting: (previously circulated), should not be read aloud, but **must** be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- Matters Arising From The Minutes: (i.e. any items not included on this agenda). If there are likely to be major items they should be listed as a separate item on the agenda.
- Headteacher's Report: a written report **must** be circulated with the agenda at least once in the academic year; all other reports may be verbal with the agreement of the governing body. This is an opportunity for the Headteacher to draw attention to relevant points and discussion/decisions required.

- Financial Position: where financial responsibility has been delegated to the Finance/ Resource Committee, governors should be given any updates as required on any issues arising, to ensure that they are aware of possible implications, in particular:
 - any references to the three / five-year plan
 - budget approval
 - Schools Financial Value Statement (SFVS) / benchmarking
- Governors' Monitoring: to receive reports from committees, working groups or individual visits which **must** be distributed with the agenda.
- Reports from the Local Authority (Maintained Schools Only): to receive/approve any updates/reviews of policies managed by the Local Authority (information will be provided via **Perspective Lite**)
- Church School Distinctiveness (for use in schools subject to SIAM Inspection)
- Policies: to review policies as per the policy schedule
- Dates for Future Meetings: it is useful to include this on every agenda as it ensures governors are aware of dates set. Good practice is to set all dates for the full academic year in either the summer or autumn term.
- Any Other Business: where possible, this section should only be used with the Chair's prior approval and **no information should be discussed if a resolution or approval is required.**
- Items for the Next Agenda: items can be put forward for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting. It is the Chair's responsibility to ensure that any matter which is not of an urgent nature requiring a decision, is not raised in this part of the meeting, but is deferred to the next meeting of the Governors, where it is placed on the main agenda.
- Date of Next Meeting: it is advisable to arrange meetings a year in advance.

An exemplar agenda template can be found under Clerks Resources on the Governor Services Professional webpage, which includes references to how to agenda confidential items.

MEETING PAPERS

The following documents should be taken to a Governing Body meeting:

- Agenda (essential)
- Minutes of the previous meeting for signature (essential)
- Any documents referred to on the agenda (e.g. Headteacher's report)
- Any written apologies for absence
- Minute file (including attendance register)
- Instrument of Government (Articles of Association for Academies)
- The Clerking Handbook
- Any current constitutional or procedural Regulations and/or Guidance

VISITORS TO THE MEETING

If any visitors have been invited to give a presentation on a particular topic, it is a good idea to note apologies first, and then invite the person to speak as the next item on the agenda. The Chair can then thank the speaker for his or her contribution. This avoids visitors being kept waiting whilst the normal business is conducted.

CLERK/GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL'S DUTIES DURING MEETINGS

As Clerk/Governance Professional you are the main link between the school, the Governors and, dependent of school setting, the Local Authority or Academy Trust; as such, you are responsible to the Governing Body. As Clerk/Governance Professional you should be familiar with all the working documents (School Governance Constitution Regulations, School Governance Guide, Instrument of Government or Articles of Association/Scheme of Delegation) so that you can advise Governors on matters of policy and procedure during the meeting.

One of the most important tasks is to present the minutes of the previous meeting and take accurate minutes of the current meeting. Those Governors present at the previous meeting **must** be asked if they agree that the minutes are a true record. If they are in agreement the Chair **must** sign them. If the minutes are in loose-leaf form they **must** be initialled on each page. If the Governors do not agree that the minutes are a true record, any amendments agreed by the Governing Body **must** be made before the Chair signs them. *Any minute that includes a formal resolution of the Governing Body cannot be changed if it was properly recorded.* Governors may make a subsequent resolution at the next meeting rescinding or amending their decision, but it **must** be a separate agenda item. Only Governors present at a meeting can give approval or vote on amendments to the minutes of that meeting.

After the minutes have been signed any reports on progress or action could be dealt with under 'matters arising'.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Apologies for absence may be received in writing or verbally and **must** be recorded in the minutes as to whether or not the Governing Body consents to the apologies, i.e. approves the absence.

It is essential to record apologies in this way because Governors are disqualified if they fail to attend full Governors' meetings for six months from the date of the first meeting missed; approved absences are not counted for this purpose. It also provides a record of Governors who did not give their apologies and enables accurate records for updating the Register of Interests.

NOTE: This regulation does not apply to the Headteacher or Ex officio Foundation Governors.

QUORUM

The "quorum" is the minimum number of Governors that **must** be present to constitute a valid meeting. The quorum for any Governing Body meeting and vote is one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the current membership of the Governing Body. For example, if the full membership is 17 and there are two vacancies making the membership 15, the quorum will be eight.

In an academy this is usually three or one third, whichever is the greatest – please refer to the Articles of Association for clarification.

If it becomes apparent before a meeting that a quorum is not going to be present then the meeting should be cancelled and re-arranged in consultation with the Chair. If, however, it only becomes apparent at the start of the meeting, or at any time during the meeting that a quorum is not present, then the Clerk/Governance Professional should inform the Chair, and no further business should be taken. If it is necessary to cancel a meeting because it is inquorate, the Clerk/Governance Professional, in consultation with the Chair, should arrange a new meeting as quickly as is practicable. Any urgent business that cannot be delayed until the new meeting should be dealt with by the Chair or Vice-Chair in accordance with their legislative powers.

GOVERNORS AND PERSONAL/PECUNIARY INTEREST - (withdrawal from meetings)

Governors **must** withdraw from meetings if there is a potential conflict between the interests of that person, and the interests of the Governing Body, or where a fair hearing **must** be given; and there is reasonable doubt about the individual's ability to act impartially on any matter.

Examples of cases where a fair hearing **must** be given include decisions relating to staff or pupil discipline or admission of pupils. This requirement does not stop a Governing Body or committee allowing someone who can offer relevant evidence to a case in question from giving that evidence, nor does it stop Governors expressing interests and views in relation to general administrative matters, as opposed to cases where they are determining the rights of individuals.

Specific provision is made in the Regulations in relation to certain issues, namely:

- Governors should withdraw from any meeting in which they have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest. Under Fair Funding Regulations all Governing Bodies are required to establish a register of interests which should be reviewed annually and published on the School/Academy website (see *'The Constitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools'* (page 11, item 32));
- a teacher is not regarded as having a pecuniary interest if his or her interest is no greater than that of other teachers at the school. A person employed to work at the school other than as a teacher, is not regarded as having a pecuniary interest if his or her interest is no greater than that of the other persons working at the school, other than as teachers;
- a Foundation Governor shall not be prevented from speaking or voting on any issue affecting the trustees or foundation;
- a person **must** withdraw and not vote on his own appointment or removal as a Governor or member of a committee, or as Clerk/Governance Professional, Chair or Vice-Chair;
- a person employed to work at the school, other than the Headteacher, **must** withdraw and cannot vote in relation to the pay or performance appraisal of any particular person working at the school. This does not affect general discussions about policy;
- the Headteacher **must** withdraw and cannot vote in relation to his own pay or performance appraisal;
- a person employed to work at the school **must** withdraw from any meeting at which the consideration or discussion of his or her successor is taking place.

If there is a disagreement about whether a person is required to withdraw, it will be for the other members of the Governing Body or committee to make the decision.

All governing bodies **must** set up and maintain a register of business interests (See Clerk/Governance Professionals Resources Pack for template document).

Regulation 26 and Schedule 5 (15) of The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2013 require that all Local Authority Schemes for financing schools include details about the setting up of a register of any business interests of the governors and the headteacher. Since September 2015, according to the statutory guidance [The Constitution Of Governing Bodies Of Maintained Schools, August 2017](#), it is a statutory requirement that governing bodies of maintained schools publish their register of interests on the school's website.

Academies **must** have regard to the [Academy Trust Handbook](#) which requires that all members of the governing body complete a declaration of their business interests.

RESOLUTIONS/VOTING

Clerk/Governance Professionals should not attempt to minute the discussion at meetings verbatim: **any Resolutions or Actions agreed must be clearly identified and recorded accurately – if unsure, the Clerk/Governance Professional should stop the meeting and clarify with the Chair.**

Every question to be decided at a Governing Body meeting **must** be determined by a majority of votes of those governors present and eligible to vote. If there are an equal number of votes, the Chair (or acting Chair) has a second (or casting) vote. Decisions can be reconsidered, amended or rescinded at subsequent meetings of the Governing Body, however this **must** be a specific item on the agenda.

THE HEADTEACHER'S ROLE

The Headteacher is a member of the Governing Body by virtue of office (ex officio). If the Headteacher decides not to be a Governor they **must** inform the Clerk/Governance Professional in writing. The Headteacher has the same voting rights as other members of the Governing Body. If the Headteacher chooses not to be a Governor he or she can still attend all meetings of the Governing Body but is not allowed to vote.

The Headteacher is responsible to the Governing Body for the “general direction and conduct of the school”, i.e. all internal organisation, management and control of the school. The role of the governing body is to be strategic **not** operational.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Although there is a legal requirement that an agenda, a signed copy of the minutes for each meeting, and any reports, documents or other papers considered at the meeting should be available in school to persons wishing to inspect them, details of **discussion** during Governors’ meetings should always be considered **confidential**.

Occasionally, a problem may arise when a Governor may discuss the content of a Governors’ meeting with someone who was not entitled to attend that meeting. In this case, the Chair should, at the next available opportunity, remind **all** Governors that the meetings are confidential and remind them of the terms of the Code of Conduct. It is strongly recommended that governing bodies have a Code of Conduct which all governors sign, to act as a reminder of Governors’ responsibilities.

MINUTES

During the meeting you should take notes and record accurately the wording of any resolutions, but it is not necessary to take verbatim minutes. Ofsted Inspectors will review both full Governing Body and committee minutes for evidence to show how effectively Governors have challenged the Headteacher and senior leaders, to account for all aspects of the school’s performance. The minutes are a formal record of the Governing Body’s decisions but are not intended to be a transcript of the discussion.

Minutes are normally written impersonally and examples of phrasing are:

- “Governors were informed that . . .”
- “consideration was given to . . .”

- “it was **RESOLVED** that . . .”

The Clerk/Governance Professional should aim to complete the minutes as quickly as possible after the meeting, and these remain in the **ownership of the Clerk/Governance Professional** until they are approved at the next meeting of the Governing Body. Action will be taken on resolutions before the next meeting, and you may wish to discuss the minutes with the Chair in order to produce an accurate record of the meeting. A clearly defined action table should be circulated shortly after the meeting (and in some cases the draft minutes with the Chair’s agreement). This acts as a clear reminder to those Governors who are required to take action before the next meeting. The minutes can be amended by resolution of the Governing Body when brought forward for approval at the next full meeting.

The minutes should be signed by the Chair at the next meeting and then become the formal record of the Governors’ deliberations. A secure storage area should be allocated within the school office for all minutes and be accessible to the appropriate school staff and members of the Governing Body.

An exemplar minute template can be found in the Clerk/Governance Professionals Resources Pack.

CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

In the case of sensitive items, particularly those relating to, or which may identify named staff or pupils, you should preserve confidentiality by excluding the relevant sections from the published minutes (commonly known as Part A). Sometimes the Governors may wish to discuss a matter confidentially. This can be done by the Governors resolving that the matter should be a confidential item. This means that the decision is not recorded as part of the minutes which are available for public inspection but is recorded on a separate sheet (commonly known as Part B), the circulation of which is restricted to members of the Governing Body. **Generally, anything about a named individual, or which identifies an individual, should be treated as a confidential item.**

If it is apparent when the agenda is being prepared, that when a particular matter should be completely confidential to the Governing Body, the agenda should be divided into two sections designated as Part A and Part B. The confidential item should be listed as a very general heading (e.g. Staff Matter) under the Part B heading. The minute relating to this confidential item should be produced as above on a separate sheet, which is available only to the members of the Governing Body. This sheet should have a complete heading giving the time, date and place of the meeting, members present and should be marked “Part B – Confidential”. Minutes in this category should be numbered separately from Part A minutes. If a Part B item has been included, the main minute will be labelled Part A. The confidential minutes may be printed on pink paper to indicate confidentiality.

Confidential minutes of committee meetings should only be sent to the members of that committee who were present.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

Although minutes have no legal status as a true record of the meeting until formally confirmed by the Governing Body and signed by the Chair, in practice matters that come within the responsibility of the Governors and require further action should be dealt with by the Clerk/Governance Professional immediately after the meeting. If you are writing to the Local Authority, it is always better to write to a named officer who is dealing with the matter, or who is likely to be dealing with it. It is helpful if a separate letter is sent for each item of business the Governors wish to raise. In particular. Any formal decisions taken by the Governors in connection with the level of remuneration of all members of staff, **must** be reported in writing in line with the Pay Policy as ratified by the School/Academy.

ACCESS TO MINUTES AND MEETING PAPERS

It is a legal requirement that agendas, minutes and reports etc considered at meetings should be made available for inspection at the school for anyone wishing to do so. However, confidential material should be excluded. Since the minutes will not become a formal record until they are signed at the next meeting, each Governing Body should be clear about its practice concerning access to the unsigned minutes. Bearing in mind the need for good communication between the Governors, school and community, it is good practice to allow access to the unsigned minutes once these have been agreed with the Chair. Such minutes should be clearly marked “draft” or “unapproved”. School office staff should know where the papers are stored, and have access to the agendas, minutes and meeting papers to enable them to deal with any request – there should be a school process in place for this if you are unclear.

SECTION 6:

USEFUL WEBSITES
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

USEFUL WEBSITES

Department for Education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk>

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

<https://ico.org.uk>

Fischer Family Trust (FFT)

<https://fft.org.uk>

Governors for Schools (Governor Recruitment)

[Governors for Schools - Effective Governors, Excellent Schools](#)

Lincoln Diocesan Education Centre

www.lincoln.anglican.org

Lincolnshire County Council

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk

National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales (NFER)

www.nfer.ac.uk

National Governors' Association

www.nga.org.uk

Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service

<http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/education>

OFSTED

[Ofsted - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://Ofsted-GOV.UK)

Academy Academies are publicly funded independent schools. Academies have different governance arrangements from other schools

Academy committee A committee of the trust board in a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The role and responsibility of any committee is defined in the MAT's scheme of delegation

Academy converter A school which converted to academy status voluntarily (usually high performing at the time of conversion), having previously been a local authority maintained school

Academy sponsor led A school which converted to academy status with the support of a sponsor (usually lower performing at the time of conversion)

Admissions Code A document providing statutory guidance on schools admission with which all schools must comply

Advisory board formerly known as Headteacher Boards, they are responsible for advising and challenging Regional Directors on academy-related decisions.

Articles of Association The Articles of Association is the formal governing document for an academy, and sets out its rules for operating, including the composition of the governing board

ASCL Association of School and College Leaders – a headteacher union

Associate members Individuals appointed by the governing body of a maintained school. They are not part of the governing body, but are allowed to attend meetings and sit on committees and can be given voting powers. They are appointed for 1-4 years, with the opportunity for re-appointment. An associate member could be a pupil, member of staff or someone with expertise in a particular area. Academies' Articles of Association allow them to

appoint non-governors to committees and give them voting rights

A level General Certificate of Education Advanced level – usually completed by some 16–18-year-olds after GCSE

ASP Analyse school performance – a new service, providing schools and other existing user groups with detailed performance analysis to support local school improvement as a replacement to RAISEonline

Assessment without levels A common phrase to describe changes to the primary curriculum. Grade descriptions and levels have now been removed from the national curriculum and it is up to primary schools to decide how they track pupil progress and attainment. Children will still sit SATs exams in KS1 and KS2 as a national benchmark, however they will no longer be given a grade. Instead, they will be given a scaled score, with a score of 100 or above showing that a pupil has met national expectations

ATL Association of Teachers and Lecturers – a union for education professionals

Attainment 8 A headline measure of school performance at GCSE introduced from 2016. Measures the achievement of a pupil across English, maths and six further qualifications (three of which must count in the EBacc measure)

Attainment targets These establish what children of different abilities should be expected to know, and be able to do, by the end of each key stage of the national curriculum

AWPU Age-Weighted Pupil Unit – the sum of money allocated to the school for each pupil according to age. This is the basic unit of funding for the school

Baseline assessment Assessment of pupils' attainment on entry to year 1 – it is not statutory, but many local authorities encourage schools to

carry it out. Schools may now decide to conduct baseline assessments in reception, but again this is not a statutory requirement

Capital funding Spending on projects, improvements, and extensions to the school's land and buildings

Chair's action In maintained schools the chair is allowed to take decisions without asking the governing body if a delay will be detrimental to the school, a member of staff, a pupil or a parent. In academies, this power is not automatic and must be delegated to the chair

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) The lead professional and head of the executive branch for a group of academies known as a multi-academy trust (MAT). Although not being a headteacher in any school, they are accountable to the governing board for all aspects of the MAT as a whole.

Clerk/Governance Professional The Clerk/Governance Professional is the 'constitutional conscience' of the governing board. They provide advice on governance, constitutional and procedural matters. They also offer administrative support to the governing board and relay information on legal requirements

Collaboration An agreement between two or more schools to work together on one particular issue. They keep their individual governing boards, but may set up a joint committee to which they can delegate powers

Community schools Maintained schools at which the Local Authority (LA) is the employer, owns the land and buildings and sets the admission criteria. The LA takes a proportion of income known as 'top slice' for the provision of central services such as HR, legal etc.

Community special schools Maintained schools which make special educational provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or education, health and care plans (EHCs), whose needs cannot be fully met from within mainstream provision. The LA is the employer, owns the land and buildings and sets the admission criteria

Competency framework for governance A document developed by the DfE, setting out the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for effective governance

Competitive tendering Obtaining quotes or tenders from alternative suppliers before awarding contracts

Co-opted governor/trustee Appointed by the governing board, generally on the basis of their skills

CPD Continuing Professional Development for school staff or the governing board

Delegated budget Money provided to schools, which governors can manage at their discretion

Delegated powers Authority given to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher to take action on behalf of the governing board. In multi academy trusts this also refers to powers delegated to academy committees

Designated person Liaises with other services on behalf of young people in care, and has a responsibility for promoting their educational achievement

DfE Department for Education – the government department responsible for schools and children (formerly DCSF)

Directed time Time when a teacher must be available to carry out duties, including attending staff and parent meetings, under the direction of the headteacher – a maximum of 1265 hours in a school year

Disapplication A term used where national curriculum requirements may not apply to a pupil

DSG Dedicated School Grant – funding from central government to the LA, the majority of which is then delegated directly to individual schools through the LA's funding formula

ECT Early Career Teacher (previously NQT)

EEF Education Endowment Foundation

EAL English as an Additional Language

EBacc A school performance measure based on achievement of GCSEs in 'core academic subjects' of English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language

EBD Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Education Forum Established by the government as a consultative group including the National Governors' Association (NGA), the Local Government Association (LGA) and all the teaching and headteacher unions

ESFA Education and Skills Funding Agency – a single funding agency accountable for funding education and training for children, young people and adults (formerly the EFA and SFA)

EHC plans Education, health and care plans – the document which replaces statements of SEN and Learning Difficulties Assessments for children and young people with special educational needs

ESO Education Supervision Order, which LAs may apply for to deal with cases of poor attendance at school

Ethos The morals, values and beliefs that do, or at least should, underpin the school culture

EWO Education Welfare Officer – a professional worker who visits pupils' homes and deals with attendance problems and other welfare matters in co-operation with the school

Ex officio Able to attend meetings by virtue of holding a particular office

Exclusion The temporary or permanent removal of a pupil from school for serious breaches of the school's behaviour and discipline policy

Executive headteacher Unlike a traditional headteacher who leads one school only, an executive headteacher is the lead professional of more than one school; or a lead professional who manages a school with multiple phases; or who has management responsibility significantly beyond that of a single school site

Executive leaders Those held to account by the board for the performance of the organisation. This may be the CEO, executive headteacher, headteacher or principal, as well as other senior employees/staff, depending on the structure of the organisation

Extended schools/ Enrichment services Schools that provide a range of services and activities often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of the pupils, their families and the wider community

Federation Two or more local authority maintained (or community) schools governed by one governing body

FFT Fischer Family Trust – a non-profit company that provides data and analyses to LAs and schools in England and Wales

Form of entry The number of classes of 30 children that a school admits each year

Foundation governor/trustee Appointed by the foundation board

Foundation schools Maintained schools in which the governing body is the employer, owns the land and buildings and sets the admission criteria

Foundation special schools Maintained special schools, which have the same freedoms as foundation schools (see above)

Foundation stage Curriculum followed by children below statutory school age, in schools and nursery/pre-school provision

Free school A type of academy, either a new school set up in response to parental demand or a fee-paying school joining the state education system

FSM Free school meals – pupils are eligible for FSM if their parents receive certain benefits

Funding agreement The document which sets out the relationship between an academy/MAT and the Education Funding Agency (EFA)/Department for Education (DfE)

GCSE General Certificate of Secondary Education

Governor Services May be 'in-house' in larger MATs but often externally commissioned, governor services provide essential support to the governing board which may be in the form of training, advice or Clerk/Governance Professional services. Academies and maintained schools are free to utilise Lincolnshire County Council's free Governor Services Department, utilise the sector-led model

for training purposes or seek alternative arrangements.

Governing board Refers to the board of maintained schools (governing body) and academies/MATs (board of trustees)

Governing body Refers to the governing body of a maintained school only

HLTA Higher Level Teaching Assistant

HMCI His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools

HMI His Majesty's Inspector

HSE Health and Safety Executive

IEP Individual Education Plan for pupils with special educational needs

IGCSE International GCSE

INSET In-Service Education and Training – courses for practising teachers and other school staff

Instrument of Government A legal document setting out the composition of maintained school governing bodies

KS 1–4 Key stages 1-4. The four stages of the national curriculum: KS1 for pupils aged 5-7; KS2 for 7-11; KS3 for 11-14; KS4 for 14-16. KS5 applies to 16-19 year-olds but is not part of the national curriculum

Learning link - NGA Learning Link is a comprehensive online training platform for governors and trustees on the full range of their responsibilities

LA Local authority – the LA has certain responsibilities regarding education, for example the educational achievement of looked-after children and for school places planning. It will also provide other services to schools, which may be provided via a service level agreement to maintained schools, and in many cases academies

LA Governor Nominated by the LA but appointed by the governing body

LAC Looked After Children – Children who are in care provision. May also refer to children who have been in care at any time in the last six years

LGA Local Government Association – national organisation supporting and representing local government

LGB Local governing body – a term often used to describe a committee of a trust board for an individual school within a MAT. See LGC, academy committee

LGC Local governing committee – a term used to describe a committee of a trust board for an individual school within a MAT. See LGB, academy committee

LACSEG Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant – the funding academies receive to meet their additional responsibilities

Maintained schools Publicly funded schools overseen by the local authority. These schools must follow the national curriculum and national pay and conditions guidelines.

MAT Multi academy trust – where two or more academies are governed by one trust (the members) and a board of trustees (the trustees)

MAT board Common term for the board of trustees overseeing a multi academy trust

Mixed ability A teaching group in which children of all abilities are taught together

NAHT National Association of Headteachers – a headteacher union

NASBM National Association of School Business Managers

NASUWT National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers – a teaching union

National curriculum This was established by the 1988 Education Reform Act to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced education, which is relevant to their needs.

National Schools Commissioner (NSC) A civil servant responsible for co-ordinating the work of the eight RSCs

NFER National Foundation for Educational Research

NGA National Governors' Association. The national membership organisation for school governors

Non-teaching (support) staff Members of the school staff employed to provide services in a school, such as teaching assistants, cleaners and office staff

NOR Number on roll

NPQH National Professional Qualification for Headship – training for new or aspiring headteachers

NUT National Union of Teachers – a teaching union

Ofqual Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Register – the regulator of examinations and qualifications

Ofsted Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills – the body which inspects education and training for learners of all ages and inspects and regulates care for children and young people

PAN Published Admissions Number – the number of children the LA (or governing board of a foundation or voluntary aided school or academy trust) determines must be admitted to any one year group in the school

Parent governor/trustee Member of the governing board elected by the parents of the school's pupils

Partnership governor In schools with a religious character these governors must be appointed with the purpose of preserving and promoting the religious ethos

Peripatetic teacher One who teaches in a number of schools, to give specialist instruction, e.g. in music

PE and sports premium Funding for years 1 to 6 to provide additional PE and sport beyond that already provided in the curriculum

PFI Private Finance Initiative – enables local authorities to enter into contracts with the private sector for the provision of new and/or improved capital assets (infrastructure for example) and related services

PGCE Post-Graduate Certificate of Education

PGR Parent Governor Representative – elected to serve on a local authority committee discharging the education functions of the LA

PI Performance Indicators (sometimes called key performance indicators). Used to evaluate the success of a school or of a particular activity in which it engages

PPA Planning, Preparation and Assessment – 10% guaranteed non-contact time for teachers

Progress 8 A headline measure of school performance at GCSE introduced from 2016. It aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of KS2 to the end of KS4

PRP Performance Related Pay – schools following the STCPD must now ensure teachers' pay is linked to their performance

PRU Pupil Referral Unit – alternative education provision for pupils unable to attend a mainstream school or special school

PSP Pastoral Support Programme for pupils at serious risk of permanent exclusion

PTA Parent Teacher Association – or PSA (Parent Staff Association)

PTA UK National membership organisation for parent teacher associations – formerly NCPTA

PTR Pupil/Teacher Ratio – this is calculated by dividing the number of pupils in a school by the number of full-time equivalent teachers

Public Sector Equality Duty decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010

Pupil premium Funding allocated to schools to support pupils eligible for FSM, in care, or who have parents in the armed forces

Pupil profile Broad evaluation of a pupil's personality, interests and capabilities – this forms part of the pupil's Record of Achievement

QTS Qualified Teacher Status

Quorate A meeting is quorate if a sufficient number of members are present. Decisions can only be ratified if a meeting is quorate

Quorum The minimum number of members present at a meeting before decisions can be made

Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) Civil servants that act on behalf of the Secretary of State. Their responsibilities include intervening in underperforming academies and free schools, making decisions on conversion to academy status, and encouraging and deciding on applications for academy sponsors. There are eight RSCs serving different regions, reporting to the Schools Commissioner.

Resolution A formal decision which has been proposed, seconded and agreed – not necessarily by a vote – at a meeting

Revenue funding Revenue funding can be spent to provide services and buy items that will be used within a year. Examples include salaries, heating, lighting, services and small items of equipment

RISE Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence Teams.

ROA Record of Achievement

SACRE Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – local statutory board which advises on religious education and collective worship

SATs Standard Assessment Tasks – used for national curriculum assessment

Scheme of delegation A document defining the lines of responsibility and accountability in a MAT, sometimes referred to as a Roles and Responsibilities document

School business manager A professional employed by a school with responsibility for financial management and often other areas such as human resources and health and safety management. Usually, part of the senior leadership team

School census A statutory return which takes place during the autumn, spring, and summer terms. Maintained schools and academies should take part in the census

School development plan The operational document describing how the school will work towards the strategic priorities set by the governing board

Schools Forum A Schools Forum has been established in each LA area to advise on the allocation of the funding for schools – the majority of places on this board should be filled by governors and headteachers, preferably in equal numbers

Secondment The release of staff on a temporary basis for work elsewhere

Section 5 Inspection – Full Inspection.

Section 8 Inspection - Formerly known as a "short inspection" - Ofsted inspection carried out at 'good' schools (or special schools, nurseries, and PRUs judged 'outstanding')

Section 48 Inspection – Applicable to schools with a designated religious character

SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities – learning difficulties for which special educational provision has to be made

SENCO SEN Co-ordinator – the teacher responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision in the school

SENDIST Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal

Senior Executive Leader (SEL) – academy trusts must appoint a senior executive leader (who may be known as the principal in a single academy trust, or CEO in a MAT, or equivalent) as the accounting officer (AO) for the trust

Service level agreement A contract between a service provider (the local authority or another private sector provider) and a school that defines the level of service expected from the service provider

Service premium Funding allocated to schools to support pupils whose parents are serving in HM armed forces, or have at any time since 2011, or who are in recipient of a child's pension from the ministry of defence

Secretary of State for Education The senior government minister with responsibility for education. Leads the Department for Education

Setting A system of organising pupils into ability groups for particular subjects

SFVS Schools Financial Value Standard – a means for the governing board to assess its financial processes, capabilities and skills

SIAMS - The Church of England inspects its schools using the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools framework

SIMS Schools Information and Management System – a computer package to assist schools in managing information on pupils, staff, and resources, provided by Capita

Special school Pupils with a statement of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or an education, health and care plan, whose needs cannot be fully met from within mainstream provision

Special Unit (or Resourced Provision) A unit attached to a mainstream school to cater for children with specific special needs

Sponsor An organisation or person who has received approval from the DfE to support an underperforming academy or group of academies. Examples of sponsors include academies, businesses, and charities.

SSAT Specialist Schools and Academies Trust

Staff governor/trustee Elected by those who are paid to work at the school

Stateminting Officially assessing a child as having special educational needs. In 2014 this procedure was replaced by education, health and care plans

STPCD School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document – an annually published document which forms a part of the contract of all teachers and headteachers in maintained schools in England and Wales. Many academies will also follow the STPCD

Strategic plan The school's strategic document which sets out a small number of key priorities for the school over the next 3-5 years. The governing board should take the lead on developing the strategic plan

STRB School Teachers' Review Body – makes recommendations to the Secretary of State on teachers' pay

Streaming Placing pupils in classes according to their ability across a range of subjects

TA Teaching Assistant

Teaching schools Schools that work with others to provide CPD for school staff

Teaching school alliances Led by teaching schools and include schools that are benefiting from support as well as strategic partners

Terms of reference The scope and limitations of a committee's activity or area of knowledge

TLR Teaching and Learning Responsibility – payments made to teachers for an additional responsibility

Trust Deed The deed by which a voluntary aided or a voluntary controlled school has been established

Trustee board The governing board of a single academy trust or MAT

UNISON Union of Public Employees. Many school support staff will be members of its union

Virtual school headteacher Looked after children are on a virtual school roll, and each local authority will employ an experienced teacher to oversee the educational progress of all children under the care of that particular LA. The virtual school headteacher will have the specialist knowledge to provide extra support to designated teachers. They will also work with professionals in the Children's Services department of the LA and with all schools in the area, to promote the education of children in care

VA Voluntary Aided - A school set up and owned by a voluntary board, usually a church board, largely financed by the LA. The governing board employs the staff and controls pupil admissions and religious education. The school's buildings and land (apart from playing fields) will normally be owned by a charitable foundation. VA schools set their own admissions criteria in line with the admissions code.

Value Added (VA) The progress schools help pupils make relative to their individual starting points – rather than looking at raw results VA also takes into account the prior attainment, thus enabling a judgment to be made about the effect of the school on pupils' current attainment

VC Voluntary Controlled: usually a denominational school wholly maintained but with certain residual rights regarding religious worship

Vertical grouping Classes formed (in primary schools) with children of different age groups

Virement The agreed transfer of money from the budget heading to which it has been allocated to another budget heading

Vision The school's vision should, in a few sentences, describe what the school will look like in three to five years' time

Vocational A subject that would not be considered academic in the traditional sense. Students in key stage 4 and key stage 5 may undertake a vocational apprenticeship or qualification as a viable alternative to GCSEs or A levels