

Clerk/Governance Professional Handbook

September 2026

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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 Clerk/Governance Professionals to Governing Bodies in Lincolnshire Maintained 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 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:

- that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined
- that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school
- the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

The Clerk/Governance Professional should operate as an independent and impartial adviser to the governing board. Whilst working closely with the Chair, Headteacher and other school leaders, the primary responsibility is to support effective governance and ensure that boards are aware of their legal and procedural obligations.

Where necessary, the Clerk/Governance Professional should bring procedural concerns to the attention of the board and provide honest, objective advice to support lawful and effective decision-making.

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/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 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 role and hope that you find it rewarding.

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.**

The Role of a Clerk/Governance Professional is about helping the board to understand its role, functions and legal duties and to provide clear impartial advice to the governing board. The Clerking/Governance Professional role should be a discrete and independent function but remain accountable to the chair. The governing board must have regard to advice from the clerk/governance professional as to the nature of their functions.

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 various governance matters such as administering the parent and staff election processes. 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 Resources 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 School Governance Guide](#) gives guidance on the Clerk/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.

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.

The DfE have also produced an [Effective governance resources](#) web page which has several resources for Clerks/Governance Professionals and Governing Boards to review.

Information required by the Local Authority

The Lincolnshire County Council Governor Services team request the following information from **ALL MAINTAINED SCHOOLS**:

- Full Governing Board 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 Board 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 school governance guide](#) and [Academy trust governance guide](#).

Training and Support for Clerk/Governance Professionals

The Governance Training Offer provides a range of training sessions for Governors, Trustees, Clerks, and Governance Professionals in Lincolnshire. In addition, Lincolnshire County Council offers **free access** for all maintained school governors and clerks to the e-learning resources 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 [Clerk Resources – Professional resources](#) 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

DfE Documents which advise on the role of the Clerk and Governance Professional Maintained Schools:

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

Academies:

- [Academy trusts: governance guide - GOV.UK](#)
- [Academy Trust Handbook](#)

All Schools:

- [Effective governance resources](#)

Local Authority Resources for Clerks and Governance Professionals

- [Local Authority Governor Services Webpage](#)
- Governor Service - [Governance Training Offer – Professional resources](#)
- Governor Services Clerk Specific webpage - [Clerk Resources – Professional resources](#)
- Governor Services Advice and Support E-mail - GovernorSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk
- Local Authority Schools Services webpage - [EduLincs](#)

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: <pre>graph TD; A[Chair of Governors / Headteacher] --- B[Clerk to Governors]</pre>	
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 Board 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 Board 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 Board 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. Guidance can be found on the [Governor Services webpage](#).

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 Board does wish to apply for a Variation Order to make a change to either the size of the Governing Board 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 Board 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 Governors (*see instrument for number and appointing body information*)
Foundation, Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided schools are also required to have foundation Governors.
- Partnership Governors
(*A specific category of governors for Foundation schools without a Foundation*)

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 Governors
(*Foundation, Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided schools are also required to have foundation Governors. The minimum number of these governors in a federation will be determined by the constitution regulations, and the maximum number by the appointing bodies and are dependent on each school's individual status prior to federation*)
- Partnership Governors
(*The minimum number of these governors in a federation will be determined by the constitution regulations, and the maximum number by the appointing bodies and are dependent on each school's individual status prior to federation*)

Governing Board 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 Board 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. [Full guidance documents](#) are available for maintained schools on the Governor Services webpage.

NB: It is not the Maintained School 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 or it is delegated to them by the Headteacher.

In terms of ***Foundation and Aided Schools***, the Governing Board 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 Board's committees.

Local Authority (LA) Governors

A Local Authority (LA) Governor is nominated by the Local Authority and appointed by the Governing Board at a Full Governing Board meeting following receipt of a formal nomination letter from the Local Authority Governor Services Team.

The Local Authority may nominate any person who is eligible to serve as a Local Authority Governor, has the skills and experience required to support the effective governance and success of the school, and meets any additional criteria determined by the Governing Board. The Governing Board is responsible for deciding whether to appoint the nominated individual and should provide the information required by the Local Authority in accordance with its nomination process.

Note: There are no Local Authority Governors in academies.

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

There is a [process guide](#) for Maintained School Clerks available on the Governor Services webpage under the Clerks resources section.

Foundation Governors

Foundation Governors are appointed in voluntary aided, voluntary controlled, and some foundation schools by the relevant appointing body as specified in the school's Instrument of Government.

The appointing body may be a religious authority, trust, charitable foundation, or other organisation with a formal role in the governance of the school. Appointments are made in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Instrument of Government.

Schools requiring advice or support regarding Foundation Governor vacancies or appointments should contact the relevant appointing body directly.

Co-Opted Governors

Appointed by the Governing Board at a full Governing Board meeting, **following any agreed** co-option procedure, to fill identified skills or experience gaps on the board. A co-opted governor may be an individual who lives or works in the community served by the school. The Governing Board can co-opt a member of staff subject to compliance with the constitution regulations regarding staff governor representation (see NBii below).

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 Board. 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 Board considers appropriate.

Associate Members

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

They are not governors and therefore do not have a vote in Governing Board decisions or count in the quorum (in full Governing Board meetings) but may be given a vote on decisions made by committees to which they are appointed. They cannot be appointed if governing boards 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 Board as a whole that has powers to establish policy and take action, and no single Governor has any authority as an individual (exempting Chairs Action). Governing bodies are, however, permitted formally to delegate authority to committees, to any member of the Governing Board or the Headteacher. Please see “Chairs Action” section for exemption.

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

- The constitution of the Governing Board;
- 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.

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

The Governing Board 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.

“Chairs Action”

The Chair of Governors is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Governing Board 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.

Documents for Maintained Schools Clerk/Governance Professionals:

[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 Board to which the MAT trustees may delegate some governance functions. A local Governing Board 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 required 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 Board level or on the trust's board.

Converting to academy status is a good opportunity to review the constitution of the existing Governing Board 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 understand 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.

Academy Trust Compliance and Assurance

Academy trusts are subject to additional requirements relating to company law, charity law, funding agreements and the Academy Trust Handbook. Trustees are responsible for ensuring that these obligations are met and that appropriate assurance arrangements are in place.

Governance Professionals supporting academy trusts should be familiar with the trust's Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation and compliance requirements, including governance disclosures, internal scrutiny arrangements and statutory reporting obligations.

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 GUIDANCE NOTES:

• 4.1 GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP AND BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

- The Role of the Chair and Vice Chair
- Election Procedure for Chair and Vice Chair
- Board Culture and Conduct
- The Role of Committee Chair
- Individual Responsibility Holders on the Governing Board

• 4.2 GOVERNING BOARD RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

- Governing Board Recruitment, Appointment, Induction, Training and Succession Planning
- Recruitment of Governors/Trustees
- Appointment Guidance
- Induction of Governors/Trustees
- Training and Development
- Succession Planning
- Managing Conflicts of Interest

• 4.3 GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT AND STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT

- Governing Board Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement
- Governor Visits
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Workforce Wellbeing

• 4.4 STATUTORY GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complaints
- Exclusions
- Policies
- Information Governance and Data Protection

• 4.5 ASSURANCE, FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Financial Sustainability and Value for Money
- Risk Management

• 4.6 COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- Committee Information

4.1 – GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP AND BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

THE ROLE OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Role of Chair

As with the role of the clerk or governance professional encompassing far more than taking minutes, so the role of chair includes much more than chairing meetings. The Department for Education's (DfE) guidance documents on roles in maintained schools and academy trusts provide the following information:

Maintained Schools: The Chair is responsible for:

- Leading the Governing Board and ensuring its effectiveness, with support from the vice chair and the governance professional championing high standards of governance and continuous improvement setting and agreeing the Governing Board meeting agenda with support from the senior executive leader and the governance professional having honest conversations with governors, associate members and committee members who are not committed to or are ineffective in their role

Academies: The Chair is responsible for:

- Leading the board and ensuring its effectiveness, with support from the vice chair and the governance professional championing high standards of governance and continuous improvement setting and agreeing the board meeting agenda with support from the senior executive leader and the governance professional the line management of the senior executive the performance review of the governance professional in their governance role within the trust setting expectations for professional standards of governance, creating the right conditions to support the board's discussions and decision-making having honest conversations with trustees and committee members who are not committed or are ineffective in their role.

It is possible to appoint more than one person to share the role of chair or similarly the role of vice chair, if the governing board believes this is necessary and in the best interests of the school.

It is possible to appoint more than one person to share the role of chair, or similarly the role of vice chair, if the board believes this is necessary and in the best interests of the school. The board would need to ensure that any role-sharing arrangement does not lead to a loss of clarity in its leadership.

The clerk/governance professional has an important function to play to support the chair through:

- Ensuring the board meets its statutory responsibilities through agenda planning with the chair and headteacher
- Advising the chair on regulations and procedures
- Supporting the chair to ensure meetings are conducted appropriately
- Ensuring time is built into meetings for evidencing monitoring and accountability
- Supporting the chair in planning ahead and preparing for future meetings
- Working with the chair to ensure the governing board is functioning effectively and that the workload is distributed

- Advising governors on suitable training and development opportunities
- Supporting and challenging the chair to ensure the board focuses on its strategic priorities rather than the operational
- Advising the chair when the board is deviating from the three core functions of governance.

To achieve these functions, it is key that the Clerk/Governance Professional builds an effective professional working relationship with the chair based on mutual respect and trust. This can be facilitated this by:

- Agreeing with the chair the frequency and methods of communication
- Meeting with the chair and headteacher to consider the meeting dates and agenda items for the year for full board and committee meetings
- Meeting with the chair prior to board meetings to go over the agenda items and timings
- Ensuring that a comprehensive job description is available for the role of clerk/governance professional which is understood by the chair and shared with the board
- Agreeing an appraisal cycle or regular review of the performance of the clerk/governance professional.

THE ROLE OF CO-CHAIRS

There is an opportunity to share the load, by appointing co-chairs. We need to acknowledge that taking on the role of the chair can be daunting and it can be difficult to find an individual who has not only the will and the skill, but also the time to commit to the role.

The prospect of sharing the position, playing to the strengths of each of the co-chairs and knowing that there is someone else to share the load and the responsibility can make the job much more achievable for a greater range of people, including busy ‘professionals’.

The DfE regulations allow maintained schools to operate with co-chairs, academy schools will need to check their articles, but there is nothing in the model articles which would preclude academies from having co-chairs. In any co-chair model communication is the key to making it work, with a clear definition of which co-chair is responsible for which area.

Governing Boards will firstly need to agree that they are happy to adopt a co-chair model and be satisfied that it would not lead to any lack of clarity in leadership. The headteacher/principal, governors or trustees and clerk/governance professional will need to know which individual is leading on each area and who they should contact.

How does the election process work?

The board will first need to agree that they are happy to adopt a co-chair model and be satisfied that it would not lead to any lack of clarity in leadership. If you have co-chairs, you still require a vice-chair.

What happens if one of the co-chairs leaves?

If one of the co-chairs resigns, either from the role of the co-chair, or from the board as a

whole, the other co-chair does not continue in post. A new election will need to be held. The same would apply if one of the co-chairs comes to the end of their term of office.

The remaining co-chair can stand again as a solo chair or join forces with another member of the board to put forward a joint nomination with the new individual.

Do the co-chairs each have a casting vote?

The position of chair only has one casting vote, which is shared by the two co-chairs.

The two individuals have one vote each as governors, but only one vote between them when using the chairs' casting vote.

The role of the Vice Chair

Both the maintained school procedure regulations and the model articles of association for academies, determine that boards must elect a vice chair.

The vice chair role is not as clearly defined as the role of the chair; other than the expectation that the vice chair will step in to run meetings in the absence of the chair. Clerks/Governance Professionals need to consider what the role entails in their own setting and when the board holds the election for the office of the chair and the vice chair whether there are clear parameters in place for what people are being asked to do if they take on one of those positions. If a board operates with co-chairs the vice chair role may become even more nebulous. Boards should consider whether they are making the most of their vice chairs and utilising their time, commitment and skills to lighten the load for the chair and contribute to the efficient working of the board.

Boards should review the chairs' responsibilities and workload to consider if there are any aspects which the vice chair could take on. Within full board meetings perhaps the vice chair could lead on some of the agenda items on a regular basis, giving the chair an opportunity to contribute fully to the discussions for those items as a member of the board, or chair the whole meeting once a term.

The vice chair could also contribute to the agenda setting process, working collaboratively with the chair, headteacher and Clerk/Governance Professional/ governance professional, to help ensure that nothing is missed, and the purpose of the agenda items is clear (and strategic). In some boards the vice chair is considered to be a natural step on the route to potentially becoming the chair of the board at some point in the future. If this is the expectation the board needs to ensure that the vice chair is aware of it and offer opportunities for them to develop, perhaps by attending appropriate training alongside the current chair. They could perhaps shadow the chair, joining conversations, briefings and meetings that the chair participates in, helping to build their knowledge and professional relationships with key stakeholders.

The vice chair could be responsible for board development, working with you to conduct a regular skills audit and using the findings from this audit both to help develop a training programme for the board and to inform the recruitment process. The vice chair may be the person who has conversations with individual board members about governance in the

setting, identifying what has gone well and what could be improved, or they may work with the chair as a sounding board for the chair's own self-evaluation.

The Vice Chair might lead on the induction process for new governors or trustees, ensuring that they have a friendly contact within the board and touching base with them regularly to make sure all is going well and new recruits are not feeling either overwhelmed or underused. In addition to supporting new members of the board the vice-chair could be a mentor for individuals who are taking on additional responsibility for the first time.

The board may have an expectation that the Vice Chair will take on a lead role reporting to the board, such as safeguarding, or pupil premium champion. Further, they may be expected to chair a committee, be part of the headteacher's appraisal panel or sit on the pay committee.

The Vice Chair could lead on parental and staff engagement, analysing the results of the boards' annual questionnaire to their stakeholders and suggesting strategies for the board to consider addressing any issues identified. Succession planning is another area that the Vice Chair could be asked to consider; much is said about the importance of succession planning, but unless someone takes responsibility for this area it is unlikely to happen.

Boards will need to consider where the next governors or trustees will come from; who will chair the resources committee when the current committee chair retires; who will have the knowledge and skills to interrogate data or finance if the current individual leaves the board? The vice chair could have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the board by considering if the governance structure currently in place is fit for purpose, working with you to suggest other ways the board could work to be more strategic or avoid duplication.

If no chair is elected the vice chair should continue to act as chair until the next meeting. If there is no vice chair, the board should elect an individual from the board to chair the meeting.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

The Governing Board **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 Board 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 Board).

After the election of Chair and Vice Chair, the Clerk should complete and return a [Chair/Vice Chair form](#) to Governor Services.

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 Board 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 whether 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.

BOARD CULTURE AND CONDUCT

The effectiveness of governance is influenced not only by the skills and knowledge of board members, but also by the culture of the board. All governors and trustees should demonstrate integrity, objectivity, openness, accountability and respect in all aspects of their role.

Chairs and Vice Chairs and members of the governing board should encourage constructive challenge, professional behaviour and collective responsibility. Once decisions have been formally made, all members should support those decisions publicly, even where they may have expressed a different view during discussions.

THE ROLE OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

The role of the Committee Chair

Each committee established by the board must have a chair. Chairing a committee can help to develop leadership skills to address successful succession planning. As with the chair of the board, the committee chair's role extends beyond effective chairing of the meetings.

The committee chair's role includes:

- Setting the dates of meetings for the committee for the year taking into account any dates when statutory responsibilities need to be fulfilled and milestones in the school improvement plan
 - Setting the committee agendas with the Clerk/Governance Professional/governance professional and appropriate school leader being mindful of matters that will be covered at full board meetings and on other committees
 - Ensuring the committee members have the skills and experience required to carry out the delegated functions and arrange training and develop opportunities as appropriate
 - Building positive relationships with other partners such as key school staff and external advisers
- Ensuring that minutes from committee meetings are shared with all governors or trustees especially with respect to decisions made under delegated powers.

The role of the chair of a committee is vital to the effective contribution of the committee to the strategic operation of the board. Much of the work undertaken between board meetings may be delegated to committees, the board appoints committees and agrees their terms of delegation.

As with all delegated responsibilities the accountability still lies with the board, so the activity of the committee must be reported. This is often achieved by circulating the minutes from the committee to the full board and the chair of the committee responding to questions at full board meetings. It is important that something has been delegated to a committee to undertake the work is not duplicated at board level, or by another committee. In a MAT the local governing bodies are, in effect, committees of the trust board, delegated responsibility to oversee particular aspects within individual schools in the trust.

The chair needs to ensure that governors, trustees or associate members who sit on the committee are familiar with and understand the terms of reference they are operating under, so they are clear on what has been delegated to them by the board. The chair will coordinate the work of the committee, to fulfil any relevant statutory obligations on behalf of the board and ensure that the committee contributes effectively to the annual cycle of business. The committee chair will need to work with the chairs of other committees, the chair of the board, the headteacher/principal and the Clerk/Governance Professional/governance professional to make sure there is no duplication across the committees and the board.

Working with the Clerk/Governance Professional/governance professional, the committee chair will set strategic agendas and ensure that the committee has the information it needs to operate effectively. They will promote good working relationships within the committee, ensuring that members' strengths, skills and interests are recognised and utilised to help achieve the committee's objectives.

The chair of the committee may be responsible for having an 'annual conversation' with committee members, discussing how individuals feel the operation or effectiveness of the committee could be improved and how they could contribute. The chair of the committee may also encourage the continued personal development of the members' knowledge and understanding, including through recommending relevant training.

The chair may formulate a committee development plan at the beginning of the academic year, consistent with the priorities of the board and the school. The committee chair will ensure that meetings are effectively planned and chaired, stay strategic and focus on the identified areas of responsibility; ensuring that individuals carry through on actions they have been assigned. The chair should agree the draft minutes promptly, so these can be circulated to the board. The chair should ensure that any potential conflicts of interest are appropriately handled and that members of the committee are clear where confidentiality needs to be maintained. Some boards have a chairs meeting, where the chair of the board and the committee chairs, or local Governing Board chairs, can meet to exchange information, fine-tune agendas and plan the next round of meetings.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY HOLDERS ON THE GOVERNING 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.

4.2 GOVERNING BOARD RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

GOVERNING BOARD RECRUITMENT, APPOINTMENT, INDUCTION AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

The clerk or governance professional has an important role to play in the recruitment, appointment, induction and succession planning for members of the board.

Taking stock – self evaluation

A vacancy on the board is a good opportunity to look at governance in general:

- Does the current composition work?
- Are there sufficient people to deal with the workload, or does the board need to grow?

Conversely there may be duplication between the committees and the full board, or insufficient opportunity for individuals to contribute their skills, knowledge and expertise, meaning that they do not feel valued. Perhaps the board is too big, or the way that the board and committees or lead governors and trustees work needs to be reconsidered.

- Are the meeting times accessible to all, or does it make it difficult for people to attend, which may restrict the search for new recruits?
- Does the board reflect the diversity of the school and local community?

This is an important consideration in ensuring a balanced board.

- Has the board been carrying vacancies for some time, but the work is being appropriately and effectively dealt with?

Perhaps rather than filling ‘paper’ vacancies the board should consider whether the size of the board needs to reduce (within statutory and constitutional limits). A board skills audit becomes essential to the recruitment process and enables a real understanding of what the board needs. The National Governance Association (NGA) has published documents to help with the process of conducting a skills audit, one for stand-alone schools and one for federations and multi-academy trusts.

Governing boards should recognise the value that a diverse range of perspectives, backgrounds, skills and experiences brings to effective governance. Boards should actively consider diversity when recruiting new governors or trustees and work to create an inclusive culture in which all members feel able to contribute confidently and constructively.

Governors and trustees should also understand their responsibilities under equality legislation and ensure that decisions support fair and equitable opportunities for all pupils, staff and members of the school community.

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.

The board needs to be professional in their approach to governor and trustee recruitment. The tone set through this process and contact with potential volunteers will generate their first impression of the setting and board.

Once individuals have decided they are interested in joining the board the Clerk /Governance Professional and Governing Board should follow the agreed procedure for appointments.

Governing Boards should ensure that they recruit new governors in line with advice from the DfE Governance Guides to ensure that they have governors from a diverse range skills, experiences and backgrounds, who actively contribute to discussions, who work closely with school leaders and the Clerk/Governance Professional within the agreed culture, which aligns with the values of the school, promotes ethical conduct, diversity, and inclusivity and contributes to effective governance and good decision making.

A procedure may include asking candidates to provide a pen portrait outlining their skills, why they would like to join the board and what they feel they would be able to contribute. If there are several candidates it may be more appropriate to use a common format for this statement, or an application form, so all the candidates are treated equally.

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 statutory that all new Governors have in place a DBS certificate. Governing Bodies are responsible for ensuring Governors have a **DBS certificate within 21 days of their appointment and for obtaining a Section 128 check**. In Lincolnshire, the undertaking of the checks are usually delegated to the school office staff.

Headteachers can instigate a risk assessment for new governors until the DBS certificate and S128 checks have been completed, to allow new governors to attend the school to conduct any duties.

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 and S128 check, the following checks should be made on all those who seek appointment as school Governors:

- **Identity** – The Governing Board (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*).
- **Eligibility Check** – New governors must sign an eligibility form (this may be provided within the Induction Pack)

ACADEMIES: 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 Board'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, please note that these are not exhaustive. 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 Board, which outlines requirements for statutory checks – please see appointment section above for information.
- 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 copy of the Instrument of Government (Maintained)/Articles of Association (Academies)
 - A list of members of the current Governing Board
 - 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)
 - Training Information particularly the Governance Training Offer and e-learning opportunities, particularly those aimed specifically at new Governors
 - Details of Governance portal and registration information
 - 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.

GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Effective governance relies on governors, trustees and Clerk/Governance Professionals maintaining up-to-date knowledge and skills. Governing boards should actively promote continuous professional development and ensure that all members receive appropriate induction, training and ongoing learning opportunities relevant to their roles and responsibilities.

The Local Authority has a training offer for Governors and Clerks and this is available via the Governor Services webpage under the [Governance Training Offer](#) section. The Local Authority also pays for every MAINTAINED SCHOOL Governing Board and Clerk to access the NGA Learning Link training platform free of charge. [Instructions on how to register](#) can be found on the Governor Services webpage under the Governance Training Offer section.

The Clerk/Governance Professionals play a key role in supporting board development by signposting training opportunities, identifying development needs and encouraging engagement with governance resources. Boards should regularly review their collective skills, knowledge and experience to ensure they have the capacity to provide strategic leadership, effective challenge and support, and fulfil their statutory duties.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

As a Clerk/Governance Professional or governance professional you should support the board to ensure that effective succession planning is in place. There are a number of examples in the [NAGAS document Succession Breeds Success](#) on how governors and trustees can be encouraged to take an active part on the board and develop leadership skills to increase the availability of experienced and capable governors and trustees that are prepared to assume leadership roles such as chair and vice chair.

Suggestions to share with the board include:

- Review structures and ways of working to create opportunities for governors and trustees to take on additional responsibilities (e.g., committees, specific monitoring roles and working parties)
- Identify governors or trustees with the potential to become team leaders
- Enable shadowing of more experienced team leaders either on own board or other board
- Offer mentoring
- Encourage attendance at effective chairing or other relevant training
- Encourage governors or trustees with a moderate amount of experience to mentor new governors or trustees
- Facilitate meetings with relevant members of staff
- Provide opportunities to network with governors or trustees from other boards with similar responsibilities

MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Governors, trustees and associate members should be vigilant in identifying actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. The existence of a conflict does not necessarily prevent participation in governance, provided that the conflict is properly declared and managed in accordance with the board's agreed procedures.

The Clerk/Governance Professional should ensure that declarations are appropriately recorded and that any withdrawals from discussions or voting are clearly documented within the minutes.

4.3 GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT AND STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT

GOVERNING BOARD SELF-EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Effective governing boards regularly review their own performance to ensure that governance arrangements remain fit for purpose and contribute positively to school improvement. Self-evaluation considers effectiveness of meetings, decision-making processes, committee structures, culture, use of data, strategic oversight and stakeholder engagement.

The Clerk/Governance Professional can support the board by coordinating self-evaluation activities, maintaining records of progress against identified actions and signposting governors and trustees to appropriate training and development opportunities. Boards should use the outcomes of self-evaluation to inform governance improvement plans and future recruitment priorities. Information is available in the DfE Governance Guides on self-evaluation.

GOVERNOR VISITS

Governors should be encouraged to visit the school to see, understand and learn 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. The Governing Body should have a Governor Visits/Monitoring/Assurance Policy available to them which explains their responsibilities when visiting the school.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Governing boards should seek to understand the views and experiences of pupils, parents, staff and the wider community. Engagement activities should help governing boards to make informed strategic decisions and strengthen accountability.

The role of governors is not to represent specific interest groups but to consider a wide range of stakeholder views when acting in the best interests of the school. Information gathered through surveys, meetings, school visits and other engagement activities should be used to inform board discussions and school improvement priorities.

WORKFORCE WELLBEING

A positive organisational culture contributes significantly to educational outcomes and staff retention. Governing boards should satisfy themselves that appropriate arrangements are in place to support the wellbeing, workload and professional development of staff.

Governors and trustees should monitor relevant information provided by school leaders and seek assurance that staffing policies and working practices support a healthy and sustainable working environment.

4.4 STATUTORY GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

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.

The Local Authority signposts to the DfE model documents for amendment and use—see more information section below.

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 - complainants will be directed to contact the school.

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 [School complaints procedures: guidance for maintained schools - GOV.UK](#)

Academies [Best practice guidance for academies complaints procedures - GOV.UK](#)

Maintained Schools

In the event of a complaint against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors should contact Governor Services or LCC Children's Service Manager – Head of School 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 Board **must** review certain exclusions and **must** consider any representations about an exclusion made by the parents of the excluded pupil. The Governing Board 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/Governor Discipline Committee. Where the Governing Board establishes a Pupil Discipline Committee/Governor 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

Reference Points:

[School suspensions and permanent exclusions - 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.

The Maintained Governance Guide and Academy Governance Guide has a dedicated section which outlines all statutory policies that schools are required to have.

Reference Points:

[Maintained schools: governance guide - GOV.UK](#)

[Academy trusts: governance guide - GOV.UK](#)

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE AND DATA PROTECTION

Governing boards are responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for the lawful management, storage, retention and sharing of information. Boards should receive assurance that the school complies with data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Clerk/Governance Professionals should ensure that governance records are managed securely, confidential information is handled appropriately, and statutory publication requirements are met. Please liaise with the School's Data Protection Officer to understand your responsibilities.

The Local Authority strongly recommends that all governors and trustees have school email addresses assigned to them, and requests that maintained schools issue a Chair@XXXXSchool email address to the chair.

4.5 ASSURANCE, FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Governors and trustees are responsible for ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of public funds. The board should focus not only on annual budgets but also on long-term financial sustainability, efficient use of resources and achievement of value for money.

The Local Authority Finance Team provides Governor Resources to understand their financial responsibilities – these are located on the Governor Services webpage.

The Clerk/Governance Professional should support the board by ensuring that key financial decisions, approvals and assurances are accurately recorded and that statutory financial responsibilities are incorporated into the annual governance cycle.

ESTATES MANAGEMENT

Governing boards have a strategic responsibility for ensuring that school buildings, premises and assets are safe, compliant and fit for purpose. Boards should receive appropriate assurance regarding health and safety, condition of premises, capital investment priorities and statutory compliance.

Clerk/Governance Professionals should ensure that significant estates-related decisions and assurances are appropriately recorded within governing board minutes.

SUSTAINABILITY

Governing boards should be aware of the importance of environmental sustainability and consider how this is reflected within the school's strategic planning, estate management and procurement decisions. Boards may wish to receive periodic updates on sustainability initiatives and should consider how these contribute to the efficient use of resources and the long-term development of the school.

Clerks/Governance Professionals should ensure that sustainability considerations are reviewed by the governing board where appropriate and reflected in governance discussions and strategic planning. is reviewed by the governing body appropriately.

RISK MANAGEMENT

An important function of governance is ensuring that significant risks to the organisation are identified, monitored and appropriately managed. Risks may relate to educational performance, safeguarding, finance, staffing, estates, compliance or reputation.

The governing board should receive regular assurance that appropriate controls are in place and that emerging risks are being addressed. The Clerk/Governance Professional should ensure that risk management discussions, actions and decisions are appropriately recorded within meeting documentation and minutes.

4.6 COMMITTEE INFORMATION

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 Board 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 Board or elected by that committee. The Governing Board may remove the Chair of a committee from office at any time.

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

The Governing Board **must** appoint a Clerk to each committee with delegated powers. It is recommended that this is the Clerk to the full Governing Board. The Governing Board 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 Board.

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 Board.

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 Board.

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

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 Board (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 Board.

SECTION 5:

GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS OVERVIEW

THE PLANNING AND PREPARATION OF GOVERNING BOARD 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 Board 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 Board, (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 Board. 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 Board. 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 Board 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 Clerk/Governance Professional 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 Board. 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.

Please ensure that minutes of the previous meeting are presented 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 agree, 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 Board **must** be made before the Chair signs them. *Any minute that includes a formal resolution of the Governing Board 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 Board 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 Board meeting and vote is one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the current membership of the Governing Board. 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 Board, 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 Board 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 Board 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 Board 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 Board 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 Board, however this **must** be a specific item on the agenda.

THE HEADTEACHER'S ROLE

The Headteacher is a member of the Governing Board 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 Board. If the Headteacher chooses not to be a Governor he or she can still attend all meetings of the Governing Board but is not allowed to vote.

The Headteacher is responsible to the Governing Board 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 Board 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 Board 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 Board'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 Board. 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 Board 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 Board 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 Board 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>

Boards for Education (Governor Recruitment)

[Boards for Education](#)

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](#)

Glossary of Terms (NB: subject to change/ relevance to educational setting)

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 (see also local governing body)

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

AP Alternative Provision – education for children who cannot attend mainstream school for some or all of the time.

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/board of trustees

ASCL Association of School and College Leaders – a headteacher union

Associate members Individuals appointed by the governing board of a maintained school. They are not part of the board but are allowed to attend meetings and sit on committees and can be given voting powers at committee level. 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/trustees to committees and give them voting rights

ASP Analyse school performance. Access to this service is via the Department for Education's Secure Access portal, governors and trustees can

be given access to view detailed performance analysis to support local school improvement

Assessment without levels A common phrase to describe changes to the primary curriculum. Grade descriptions and levels have been removed from the national curriculum, and it is up to primary schools to decide how they track pupil progress and attainment. Children take Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 as a national benchmark; however, they are not given a grade, but a scaled score; with a score of 100 or above showing that a pupil has met the national expectations

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

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 reception. Baseline assessment became statutory from September 2021: schools carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of children starting school.

Capital funding Spending on projects, improvements and extensions to the school's land and buildings
Catch-up premium Funding to support children and young people to catch up lost time after school closure during COVID-19 pandemic.

Chair's action In maintained schools the chair is allowed to take decisions without asking the governing board 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

Charitable Objects set out within the Articles of Association in academy schools, explaining what the charity set up to run the Trust seeks to achieve
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 will be ultimately accountable to the governing board/board of trustees for all aspects of the MAT as a whole

CiC Children in Care

Clerk (or Governance Professional) Professional-quality clerking is about much more than taking minutes to record the discussions and decisions of the board. It is also about providing governing boards with expert advice on governance, procedures and compliance and directly contributing to its efficient conduct. 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

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 also take a proportion of income known as 'top slice' for the provision of central services

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 (EHCPs), 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

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

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

CPD Continuing Professional Development for school staff or the governing board

CPOMS - Safeguarding and Child Protection Software for Schools

DDA Disability Discrimination Act

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

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

DfE Department for Education – the government department responsible for schools and children

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

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

ECT Early Career Teacher (formerly NCT - Newly Qualified Teacher)

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). The financial responsibilities of the ESFA moved to the Regions Group in 2024

EHCP plans Education, health and care plans (Also EHCP) – 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 hold office and attend meetings by virtue of holding a particular office

Exclusion The 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 maintained schools governed by one board

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

Foundation schools Maintained schools in which the governing board 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)

EYFS Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which sets standards for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to 5-years-old

Free school A type of academy, either a new school set up in response to parental demand or a fee-paying school joining the estate 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 Department for Education (DfE)

GCSE General Certificate of Secondary Education

GCSE grading GCSEs in England have a 9 to 1 grading scale, to better differentiate between the highest performing students and distinguish clearly between the old and new exams. Grade 9 is the

highest grade and will be awarded to fewer students than the previous A* grade.

GDPR General Data Protection Regulation

GIAS Get Information About Schools. Government database. Schools must use GIAS to provide the required information relating to the individuals involved in governance at their setting. Maintained school governing boards are under a duty to provide this information through the Education Act 1996; the requirement for academy schools is contained within the Academy Trust Handbook. The information must be kept up to date when changes occur. It is worth noting that each school in a federation has a separate DfE number, so they appear separately on GIAS, therefore the governance information will need to be completed for each school in the federation. The information is collected and published through a secure site which is accessed via the school's username and password.

HLTA Higher Level Teaching Assistant

HMCI Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools

HMI Her Majesty's Inspector

HSE Health and Safety Executive

Hub Board A governing board established to oversee a group of schools, often within a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). The hub board is, in effect, a committee of the trust board and may have delegated responsibilities, which will be defined in the Scheme of Delegation (SoD)

IEP Individual Education Plan for pupils with special educational needs

IGCSE International GCSE

INSET In-Service Education and Training; training for teachers and other school staff. All maintained schools are required to open for 197 days, of which pupils should attend for 190 days during each academic year. Schools are allowed to set two days of occasional holiday and five staff training (INSET) days.

Instrument of Government A legal document setting out the composition of maintained school boards. The Instrument of Government can be changed through reconstitution

ISP – Individual Support Plan (proposed for under SEND reforms for school-led plan)

KPI's Key Performance Indicators. Used to evaluate the success of a school or of a particular activity in which it engages

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 Key stage 5, this applies to 16-19 year-olds but is not part of the national curriculum

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

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

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

LGB Local governing body A term often used to describe a committee of a trust board for an individual school within a MAT. The Scheme of Delegation will define if the LGB has any delegated responsibilities or is purely advisory. Accountability sits with the MAT Trust board

LGC Local governing committee A term often used to describe the governance of an individual school within a MAT. Local governing committees are, in effect, committees of the trust board; they can be delegated responsibility for items, but accountability will remain with the trust board. The Scheme of Delegation will define if the LGC has any delegated responsibilities, or is purely advisory

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/directors overseeing a multi academy trust

Member In an academy school the Members hold the Trust board to account. Members may be named individuals, or corporate members, such as Diocesan representation

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

NAGAS National Association of Governance Advisory Services

NAHT National Association of Head Teachers – 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.

NEU National Education Union

NFER National Foundation for Educational Research

NGA National Governance Association. A national membership organisation for school governors, trustees and clerk/governance professionals

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

NOR Number on roll; the number of pupils registered to attend the school

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

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 can 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

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. Boards must report on their use of the funding by publishing information on the school website

PFI Private Finance Initiative

PGCE Post-Graduate Certificate of Education

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 School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document will decide if teachers’ pay is linked to their performance. The board will delegate responsibility for performance related pay to a Performance and Pay Committee, under clear terms of reference. PRP no longer mandatory from 2024/25

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) or PTFA (Parent, Teacher and Friends 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 A duty to consider if and how decisions may 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. Boards must report on their pupil premium strategy and how the funding has been spent to improve outcomes for pupils. This information must be published on the school website

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 Directors (RDs) Civil servants that act on behalf of the Secretary of State. Their responsibilities include intervening in underperforming schools, making decisions on conversion to academy status, and encouraging and deciding on applications for academy sponsors.

Resolution A formal decision which has been proposed and agreed 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 – universal support to help all schools improve and targeted interventions for eligible schools

Risk Register A document analysing financial and business risks, identifying the scale of the risk and what mitigating factors have been put in place

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.

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

School Development Plan/School Improvement Plan (SDP/SIP) The operational document describing how the school will work towards the strategic priorities set by the governing board
Secondment The release of staff on a temporary basis for work elsewhere

SEMH Social, emotional and mental health

SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

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

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 (SLA) A contract between a service provider (the local authority or another private sector provider) and a school, defining the level of service expected from the service provider

SLT Senior Leadership Team

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

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

SIAMS Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools.

SIAMS has sought to provide Church schools with a tool for effective self-evaluation and a process of external review which enables continued development. The framework focuses on vision, allowing governing boards to place more emphasis on their purpose in education, ensuring that the school's Christian vision impacts in ways which enable the whole school community to flourish

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 for 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

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

School Resource Management Self-Assessment

Checklist (SRMSAC) A statutory return, providing a means for the governing board in an academy school or multi-academy trust to assess its financial processes, capabilities and skills.

Staff governor/trustee Elected by those who are paid to work at the school, from across the teaching and non-teaching staff. In some academy schools staff trustees are appointed, rather than elected, as defined in the articles

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 receive funding from DfE to work with other schools to provide professional and leadership development, school-led initial teacher training (ITT) and school-to-school support

Teaching school hubs 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 committees' (or individuals') activity and delegated responsibilities

TLR Teaching and Learning Responsibility – agreed payments, defined within the Pay Policy, made to teachers for an additional responsibility

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

Trust School a foundation school. Some schools will need to acquire foundation status to become a trust school, meaning they will take on specific responsibilities which have traditionally been carried out by the Local Authority, including:

- Responsibility for overseeing admissions and appeals processes
- Specific requirement for the make-up of the governing board
- Becoming the legal employers of all staff
- Managing the school premises.

Where Trust Schools are different from other maintained schools is that they are supported by a charitable trust. The Trust is made up of partners, community organisations and sometimes businesses, which share and support the strategic direction of the school or schools

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

Virtual school 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 in the 'real' schools where the pupils are educated. They will also work with professionals in the Children's Services department of the council and with all schools in the area to promote the education of children in care. Boards have a

responsibility to challenge outcomes for children in care within their setting

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 by the LA, 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. The vision will be developed by the board, in consultation with, and with collaboration from, the senior leadership team, staff, parents, pupils and the wider community

Vocational A subject that would not be considered academic in the traditional sense