

A question you have asked

The designated teacher for looked after & previously looked after children, is this the same as the Looked After Children Policy?

DfE guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

Help us to help you and your board

A reminder to update your governing board membership information on the DfE Get information about schools' website. Applies to both maintained and academy schools.

School exclusions

Please read the September 2017 regulations with the latest DfE guidance which was updated on 5 October 2020.

A round up of DfE October updates for Governance, both maintained and Academy board

Governance Handbook- Updated October 2020

Guidance on the roles and duties of governing boards, and advice on the skills, knowledge, and behaviours they need to be effective.

Page summary

Changes made, see pages 8-12

- Revised Teacher Standards
- Importance of skilled and knowledgeable clerks
- importance of the board reflecting the diversity of their community and promoting inclusivity, and New text on the appointment and removal of academy trustees and those on Local Governing Bodies
- Boards should consider giving the vice-chair or another individual on the board a specific responsibility for enabling every person to develop the skills they need to be effective
- The law does not prevent a board from advertising for a highly skilled chair from outside the existing board where current governors or academy trustees do not wish to be appointed to the position.
- The impact of coronavirus on visits to schools by governors and academy trustees.
- Trusts must have a clerk or governance professional to support a governing board
- Updated and new text to clarify the need for trusts to maintain a register of interests for LGB members in accordance with the AFH.
New text on academy trustees' responsibilities for keeping Members informed and new information on forthcoming requirement that Members must not be employees of the trust.

- Updated guidance highlighting the requirement on schools to publish information on their careers programme.
- Removal of the year 7 literacy and numeracy premium

School governance update

Page summary

Important news and communications from the Department for Education (DfE) relating to governance in maintained schools and academy trusts in England.

- **Changes made**
Added 'School governance update: October 2020'.
- New [role descriptors](#) designed to provide high-level information about the roles in maintained school and academy trust governance, and the responsibilities of each role.
- School and trust governance details are set out on the [get information about schools \(GIAS\)](#) website. It is important that these details are kept up to date, including email addresses, so the department can send direct communications when necessary. Academy trusts must [notify ESFA](#) about the appointment or vacating of governance roles within their trust.
- The DfE recently wrote to school leaders with guidance on ransomware. Following this guidance will help schools cover the basics. You should:
 - have an incident plan and test it
 - make sure your data is backed up offline and test the recovery of it
 - regularly review your defences and controls
- Cyber security

Governance structures and roles

Page summary

An explanation of how governing boards of maintained schools and academy trusts are structured and descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of members.

Change made

First published.

Examples:

- The role of a parent governor is not as a spokesperson for the views of parents. They are the same as any other governor on the board, providing a 'parental viewpoint' i.e. representative parents rather than representatives of parents.
- The role of a staff governor is the same as any other governor, strategic leadership and holding the Headteacher to account, but also includes providing a 'staff viewpoint'. It is important for prospective staff governors to fully understand the nature of the role prior to appointment. Staff governors are not a spokesperson for the views of all staff, nor should they be held to account in relation to their staff role by the governing board.

Local-authority-maintained schools: governance

Page summary

Contains list of links to relevant guidance and resources for governors of local-authority-maintained schools.

Change made

Added 'Governance structures and roles.'

[Academy trusts: governance](#)

Page summary

Contains links to relevant guidance and resources for academy trust governors.

Change made

Added 'Governance structures and roles.

As well as illustrating how the roles within trust governance structures function, the role descriptors emphasise the limited but crucial role that company law Members play in safeguarding academy trust governance, and highlight the importance of this role to all those working in trust governance.

In particular, the Members descriptor provides clarity and guidance on:

- The function of the member role and the key documents members should refer to when undertaking it.
- The range of powers members possess such as their power to direct trustees, examples of scenarios in which members might exercise their powers and what members should consider before using them
- The governance structure of academy trusts including the distinction between the department's requirements and preferences.
- The structural relationship between members and trustees including how the roles differ and what members should expect from trustees to help them carry out their role.

[GCSE and A level exams](#)

Students now have more time to prepare for their exams next year, as most AS, A levels and GCSEs will be held 3 weeks later to help address the disruption caused by the pandemic.

- The summer exam series will start on 7 June and end on 2 July for almost all AS and A levels and GCSEs.
- Results days are Tuesday 24 August for A and AS levels and Friday 27 August for GCSEs so students will start the following academic year as normal.

[Good estate management for schools](#)

[Top 10 estate checks that boards](#) need to be confident that school premises are safe and suitable and will keep staff and pupils warm and dry. Good management of the estate reduces the risks associated with buildings. It helps to prevent the need for significant capital expenditure and disruption which can follow building failure.

Ofsted

Have a look on our website for some of the typical questions the board and school may be asked this term. (Once logged in go to 'Guidance Centre-Ofsted information and resources-Typical lines of inquiry') www.governor.support

[DfE/NFER School and Trust Governance-Investigative report](#)

Key findings:

- Many boards had vacancies and were struggling to recruit governors and trustees. However, most governing bodies were relying on word-of-mouth recruitment from their local and personal networks.
- There was a mismatch between the skills the governors/trustees felt their governing board had and those which the executive leaders felt they had, particularly in relation to knowledge and understanding of the education sector. There was also a mismatch in the (lack of) confidence individuals had in their own finance skills and their confidence in their boards' skills in this area.
- Clerks, when utilised properly, were seen as key to the effective running of governing bodies, but not all bodies were making the most of the resource clerks can offer. Importantly, the support of an effective professional clerk was seen to help with the retention of governors/trustees.
- Within trusts there is a lack of separation between the different levels of governance, due to individuals taking on multiple roles across different levels.
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of the trust board, with the input from independent external sources, may help to ensure boards do not become too insular and are independently challenged.
- The complexity of MAT governance presents a unique challenge in ensuring clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the different tiers of governance. The research found that there was confusion between the different tiers of governance as to where responsibility for certain areas of decision making were held.
- Maintained school governing bodies appear to feel less confident in their strategic oversight role than trust boards and were also less likely to have received most forms of training, support and guidance compared to trustees.

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