



## Clerks Briefing, February 2025

### An overview of key issues for Governing Boards to consider and review

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## Department for Education

### Consultations

#### DfE

#### [Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance: proposed amendments](#) (Closes 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025)

DfE plans to update the [use of reasonable force guidance](#) (2013) and commence legislation which mandates schools to record and report each significant incident where force is used.

This consultation seeks views on proposed revisions to the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance. The revised guidance will aim to:

- clarify the use of reasonable force to help school staff use this power safely and appropriately
- help schools use prevention and de-escalation strategies to minimise the need to use reasonable force and other restrictive interventions

## [School accountability reform](#) (Closes 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025)

‘Stuck’ schools will get up to £100,000 specialist support, it has been announced, as government sets out its new intervention regime.

A consultation has been on [school accountability reform](#), to run alongside Ofsted’s proposal to [overhaul inspection with report cards](#).

### **Automatic academisation still for ‘special measures’ schools ...**

Ofsted will continue to identify schools in a category of concern: either ‘special measures’ or ‘requires significant improvement’ ([the latter is to be renamed from the current ‘serious weaknesses’](#)).

Despite repealing a ‘duty’ to academise such schools as part of its school’s bill reforms, the DfE **“default intervention” for both maintained and academy schools put in ‘special measures’ “should be structural intervention.”**

In such a case, a maintained school would become an academy, and an academy would be forced to join a “new and strong trust.”

The consultation states this is the “best way to secure the necessary improvement.”

New regional improvement for standards and excellence (RISE) teams will also engage with those “in a category of concern to ensure that improvement starts immediately.”

### **Schools ‘requiring significant improvement’ to get mandatory RISE support**

Schools rated ‘requires significant improvement’ will continue to academise, with RISE teams supporting “through the transition.”

**From September 2026, DfE plans to provide such schools with “mandatory targeted intervention”.**

RISE teams would deliver “a bespoke package of challenge and support to target areas of weakness identified in Ofsted report cards, instead of moving directly to structural change.”

In such cases, Ofsted plans to conduct five monitoring visits “within 18 months, unless the issues have been resolved earlier”. A full inspection will then take place if it is still causing concern.

Rebrokerages or **academy orders will “be the default if the necessary improvements have not been made.”** Government will “also be ready, where necessary, to use other intervention powers in parallel.”

### **‘Stuck’ schools (will get £20m for support)**

From this month, RISE teams **will deliver “targeted intervention” to the more than 600 ‘stuck’ schools, educating more than 300,000 pupils.**

Stuck schools are defined as those graded ‘requires improvement’ at their most recent inspection and graded below ‘good’ at their previous one.

A £20 million pot has been set aside for support, with up to £100,000 in help available initially for each school.

When Ofsted report cards are introduced, the definition of a ‘stuck’ school will be updated to:

Those that receive “an ‘attention needed’ rating against ‘leadership and governance’”, having been given a grade of “below ‘good’ – or equivalent – at their previous” inspection.

If the school **has not “achieved new secure ratings... in all areas within two years, the default will be to move to structural intervention,”** which means they will either be academised or rebrokered.

#### **RISE teams will also ‘engage’ schools with ‘concerning pupil attainment’**

It was previously revealed that schools will be split into “three tiers” – based on Ofsted’s new report cards – for RISE improvement support: universal help, targeted support, and intervention.

Plans for **teams to “engage” with schools – via their responsible bodies – where “there are concerning levels of pupil attainment, including large year-on-year declines.”**

This is because Ofsted inspections are “periodic and some schools cannot wait until their next inspection to begin to receive help.”

No further detail on this, nor when it might start.

#### **Governors to note**

Consultation documents also show the DfE **may use “its intervention powers to ensure engagement with RISE teams** and the interventions they have arranged.”

For maintained schools, those could mean ordering their “governing board to enter into arrangements for the provision of advisory services, appointing additional governors and imposing an interim executive board, to help create the conditions for improvement.”

The DfE will “publish detailed guidance” on how she will “exercise the power” following the consultation.

## **RISE advisers announced**

The first 20 RISE advisers – school leaders with turnaround experience

They will work alongside teams of civil servants.

More will be selected through a formal recruitment process by April.

In advance of the launch of Ofsted report cards later this year, schools will be eligible for targeted support brokered by RISE teams if they fall into one of three categories:

They were in line to be academised or rebrokered prior to the government's decision to stop intervening in those with two or more below good grades;

Are considered a “stuck school” after two or more ‘requires improvement’ or below inspection ratings.

If they “have not had a change of structure” since their last Ofsted visit

## **National Leaders of Education**

The consultation states that the RISE teams “will build upon and **replace the National Leaders of Education (NLEs) programme** which has delivered school-to-school support across the country” for several years.

NLEs will continue to help schools “until the end of their designations.”

## **School profiles expected in 2025-26 academic year.**

Under the plans, the **DfE will [launch so-called school profiles](#)**. The new “digital service” will act as a “one-stop shop” for parents and professionals to view a “broad range of information” about a school.

It will feature information from inspection report cards, along with performance data, like exam results.

Officials will also “explore if it is helpful to allow easy comparisons, including between schools with similar characteristics, or in similar areas.”

The consultation states: “School profiles are an exciting opportunity. There are a range of options and possibilities for developing them, and there will be different views about what they should include.”

One option is whether to include information “from schools themselves such as its ethos or the breadth of, and pupil engagement in, curriculum enrichment activities.”

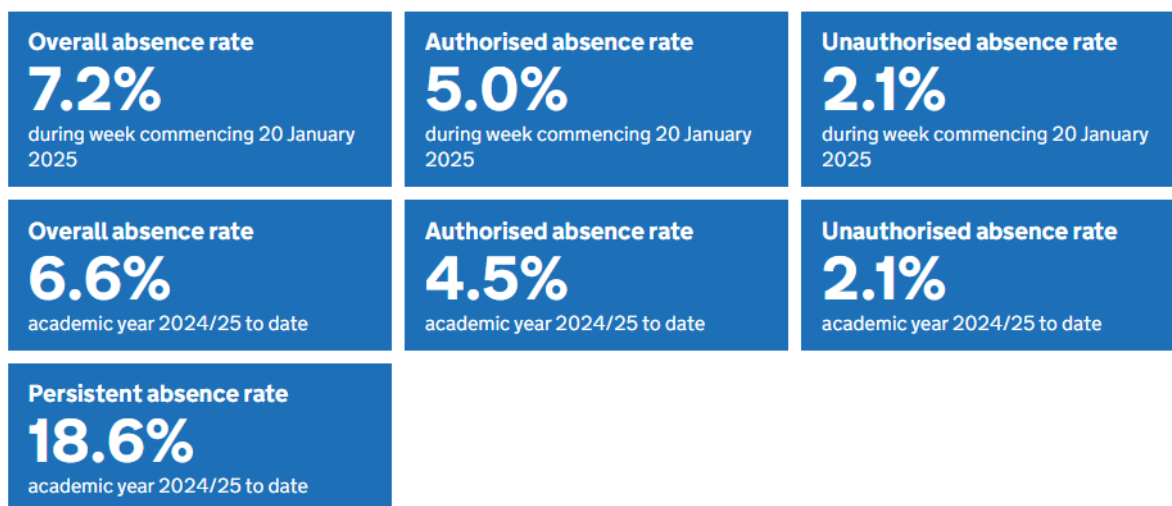
A “first version” of the profiles are expected to launch in the 2025-26 academic year, with further development expected based on “continuous user research”.

## [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill Policy Summary Notes](#)

All thirty-nine proposed policies  
Also see GSS January 2025 clerks briefing

### [Pupil attendance in schools](#)

Pupil attendance in schools to 24<sup>th</sup> January:



This release covers the 2024/25 academic year up to 24 January 2025.

The attendance rate (proportion of possible sessions attended) was 92.8% across all schools in the week commencing 20 January 2025. The absence rate was, therefore, 7.2% across all schools.

By school type, the absence rates across the week commencing 20 January 2025 were:

- 5.6% in state-funded primary schools (4.3% authorised and 1.2% unauthorised)
- 8.9% in state-funded secondary schools (5.7% authorised and 3.2% unauthorised)
- 13.5% in state-funded special schools (10.2% authorised and 3.3% unauthorised)

### [Special educational needs \(SEN\) and disabilities: guidance for school governing boards](#)

The role and responsibilities of the governing board

The board is responsible for setting the values, culture and tone of the organisation  
This includes creating an environment in which all pupils can thrive and play a full part in the life of the school.

Boards play an important role in ensuring high quality outcomes for pupils

with SEN and disabilities. The board, in collaboration with executive and senior leaders, should establish the school's policy and strategy for addressing the SEN and disability requirements of pupils.

While overall responsibility rests with the board, there should be a lead member of the governing body or a sub-committee with specific oversight of the school's arrangements for SEN and disability. The lead member will:

- champion the school's support for pupils with SEN and disabilities, including good practice in pupil engagement
- ensure that the board has the information it needs for assurance about the school's practice
- work closely with the head teacher or principal, senior leadership team and (in the case of mainstream schools) the SENCO
- SEND checklist for governors and trustees

### **Schools financial value standard (SFVS)**

For the financial year 2024 to 2025, schools should submit their SFVS checklist to their local authority no later than 31 March 2025.

### **School food standards: resources for schools**

Resources to help schools plan and provide healthy food in schools.

Statutory responsibility of the governing board and trustees to ensure the School Food Standards are being met.

### **SEN and disability duties: guidance for school governing boards**

Guidance for school governing boards on the board's role and responsibilities supporting pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

This guidance is to help boards with their role and responsibilities in relation to pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities and to empower governors and trustees to hold their schools to account.

School governing boards should play an active role in providing support and challenge to ensure their schools are providing effective support for pupils with SEN and disabilities.

### **New DfE guidance: Breakfast club early adopters**

The DfE has set out expectations for the early adopters of school breakfast clubs in new [guidance](#).

With the scheme set to begin in the summer term of 2025, the [guidance](#) details how the strategic oversight of a free breakfast club can be incorporated into trustees and governing board's responsibilities. This will include ensuring compliance with the

school food standards.

[Read the full guidance](#) for more details about designing and delivering a breakfast club as an early adopter school.

## Academies

### Submit your school resource management self-assessment checklist

The [school resource management self-assessment checklist](#) is now open for academy trusts to complete and return by Friday 14 March 2025.

All academy trusts with an open academy on Tuesday 31 December 2024 must submit a checklist.

## Ofsted Updates

- Trials of new inspection approach to begin week of 6 January.  
Ofsted has announced that it will begin trials of a new approach to education inspection in the first week of the new term, with visits to a small number of volunteer schools. These visits will informally test elements of the proposed inspection framework, which Ofsted will publish for consultation later in January. Later in the term, and in parallel with the consultation, Ofsted will formally pilot the new approach in schools as well as other education settings,
- Consultation on renewed education inspection framework opened in January
- A consultation on introducing school report cards in September has launched this month.
- Under the new report cards, safeguarding will become a separate criteria. Safeguarding should no longer fall under the leadership and governance judgment as words such as 'outstanding' do not fit when judging safeguarding.

### Our evaluation of this provider

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
	Achievement ⌵	Leadership and governance ⌵	Attendance ⌵	
		Curriculum ⌵	Behaviour and attitudes ⌵	
		Developing teaching ⌵	Inclusion ⌵	
		Personal development and well-being ⌵		
		Sixth form ⌵		

### Safeguarding evaluation

Safeguarding	Met	⌵ Show
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[Ofsted video about proposed inspection framework](#)

[Ofsted video, improving education inspections](#)

### The Inspector Calls, is your board prepared?

Just to note there are a number of schools who have not been inspected recently. Please do check that you governors are aware when the last inspection was and are prepared.

Inspection year	Number due for re inspection
2020	1
2021	3
2022	8

We are offering a course for governors and clerks on preparation for Ofsted on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm. Book a place [here](#).



## News in Brief

### Help us to help you and your board

Please let us know about any:

- board appointments, reappointments and resignations
- contact emails and mobile numbers of members of the board
- dates of appointment and term of office
- type of governor
- positions held, i.e., chair, vice chair, committee chair, member of a committee, link governor
- copies of the approved board minutes
- It's important that you [keep your GIAS establishment record up to date](#) so that the DfE can always contact you if needed.



**Every two years, the National Governance Association's (NGA) awards recognise the contributions of boards, governors, trustees, and governance professionals.**

These awards showcase outstanding practice in school and trust governance, shining a spotlight on the transformative impact that effective governance has on schools, trusts, and the education of children and young people.

How to make a nomination

1. Find out more about each of the categories below
2. Download a category information sheet to find out who can be nominated, the criteria and how to make a successful nomination
3. Read the [terms and conditions](#) and email any queries to [awards@nga.org.uk](mailto:awards@nga.org.uk)
4. Complete the relevant category nomination form by 12 pm on Monday 14 April 2025 and return it via email to [awards@nga.org.uk](mailto:awards@nga.org.uk)

[Outstanding clerk award application](#)

[Outstanding lead governance professional application](#)

[Outstanding governance in a single school application](#)

[Outstanding governance in a multi academy trust application](#)

## Governor and Clerk Training and Development Programme

### Spring term /summer term 2025

To book a place on any course:

- **Essential please remember to use the same email account when booking a place and joining the Microsoft Teams meeting**
- Please follow the course link(s) where you will find full details about each course. You will then be able to register and book your place(s),
- You will receive an automatic email reply which will confirm each booking, together with a Microsoft Teams meeting link for the course.
- An automatic reminder email will be sent one hour before the course.

Any questions you have about a course, or any other queries please contact us:

Phone: 01895 717321 Email: [office@governor.support](mailto:office@governor.support)

<b>Clerks briefing meetings</b> <i>Clerks only, book your meetings by clicking on the dates opposite please.</i>	<a href="#">Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025</a> <a href="#">Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025</a> <a href="#">Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025</a> <a href="#">Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025</a> <a href="#">Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025</a> <a href="#">Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025</a> <a href="#">Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025</a>	All at 10.00am- 11.00am	
<b>The Inspector Calls</b> <b>Is your board prepared?</b> <i>Update of current inspection framework &amp; possible future structure</i>	Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Complaints</b> How to prepare and manage the process For clerks and all governors who may be involved in an investigation or serve on a hearing panel	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Taking the chair (Part 1)</b> Course for chairs, vice chairs, committee chairs and aspiring chairs <i>Essential to attend both parts of this course</i>	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Taking the chair (Part 2)</b> Course for chairs, vice chairs, committee chairs and aspiring chairs <i>Essential to attend both parts of</i>	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2025	6.30pm- 8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>

<i>this course</i>			
<b>Understanding the role of the Safeguarding link governor</b>	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2025	6.30pm-8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Hot Topics/Question time</b> Just a selection of some of the topics we can discuss: Budget, Exclusions, Behaviour, Staffing All governors, chairs and clerks welcome	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	6.30pm-8.00pm	<a href="#">Register and book a place here</a>
<b>Governance Essentials: A course for New School Governors</b> Three-part course  <i>We strongly recommend attending all parts of the course</i>	Part 1 Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2025  Part 2 Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2025  Part 3 Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2025	All parts are at 6.30pm-8.00pm	<a href="#">Book Part 1 here</a>  <a href="#">Book Part 2 here</a>  <a href="#">Book Part 3 here</a>

Governor Support Service Ltd

Contact us:

Phone:01895 717321

Email: [office@governor.support](mailto:office@governor.support)

*Edited material including Department of Education, Ofsted, National Governance Association, Schoolweek*