

Governance Updates – Autumn 1 For Academy Governors and Trustees

Welcome to September's edition of Governance Updates

New Academy Trust Handbook for September 2024

Along with the [Letter to accounting officers: 31 July 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), the ESFA has published the new Trust Handbook [here](#). The new handbook requires trustees to include appointment information in their register of interests. It also gives trusts freedom to enter into leases for certain assets without ESFA approval, and introduces tighter requirements for internal scrutiny in trusts with higher incomes. The main changes are summarised on Page 8.

Academies Financial Calendar 2024-25

At the time of this publication, the DfE has not yet published the annual Academies planning calendar showing key dates for payments, publications and academy actions (including return deadlines) for the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Checklist and updated guidance for related party transactions

The guidance on related party transactions (RPTs) has been updated [here](#) to provide greater clarity to academy trusts. A checklist of things to consider when transacting with a related party is also available,

Keeping Children Safe in Education

The new version of [KCSIE](#) comes into force on 1 September 2024. Part two of the guidance sets out the responsibility of governing bodies, proprietors and management committees. Every governing board must ensure it complies with the duties under legislation and ensure that their school's policies, procedures and training are effective, comply with legislation and are in line with KCSIE

New attendance guidance from 19 August 2024

The guidance has been updated to be clearer on the link between improving attendance and wider school culture, including the importance of working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance. The guidance also sets out the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices and reflect changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Schools are required to update their attendance codes and share attendance data through the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2024. The full guidance can be accessed [here](#)

Teachers annual pay award

The government has confirmed that the [inflation pay award for teachers \(5.5%\) has been fully funded](#). The 5.5% award will apply from 1 September and is equivalent to an increase of over £2,500 for the average teacher, which would take the median salary for 2024/25 to over £49,000. The pay award applies to maintained schools, with academies continuing to have freedom over their pay and conditions. The government has also announced further steps to reduce teachers' workload. Alongside the pay award, the requirement for schools to use the performance related pay (PRP) system will be removed from September. The guidance also clarifies that teachers can carry out their planning time at home, improving flexible working for staff.

[School Teachers' Review Body 34th Report \(September 2024\)](#)

New suspensions and exclusions guidance in place from 1st September

The DfE has updated its [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) to reflect the government's ambition to create high standards of behaviour in schools so that 'children and young people are protected from disruption and are in a calm, safe, and supportive environment that brings out the best in every pupil'. The guidance provides schools and other bodies with information so that they can continue to use suspensions and permanent exclusions appropriately. In addition, specific changes to the legislation governing the disciplinary school suspension and permanent exclusion process have been made.

Data protection policies and procedures

The DfE has updated its guidance relating to how schools must comply and document compliance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Under [UK General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\)](#) and the [Data Protection Act 2018 \(DPA\)](#), it's a legal requirement that your school has data protection policies and procedures in place and that you regularly review and update them. You should also review your other [statutory policies](#) in the light of data protection legislation. In terms of cyber security, the DfE has guidance to help schools [keep people and their personal data safe](#) when using digital technology, and on [meeting ICT service and equipment standards](#).

Compliance / Agenda items for Autumn term Governor meetings

- Elect your Chair and Vice-Chair
- Review Committees and Link Governor / Trustee roles – and ensure compliance with the revised ATH
- Approve the School / Trust Improvement Plan and review KPIs
- Agree the SEF and link your governors to the key areas (LGBs)
- Appoint a training & development link trustee / governor and check training subscriptions are up to date
- Update your skills audit matrix
- Safeguarding: Check compliance with updated guidance and ensure all governors receive KCSIE & Prevent training at the start of the year
- Agree the Trust or School Safeguarding policy
- Agree trust / school performance targets
- Single academy trusts (SATs)- keep MAT status on your agenda
- Discuss cyber security and hear annually from your DPO
- Update the risk register and seek board approval
- Publish updated governance arrangements on your school's website
- Appoint a pay review committee and scrutinise teachers' pay recommendations
- Conduct Headteacher / CEO appraisal (and appoint an external advisor)
- Review performance data (performance tables will be published for all school phases)

Trust action Autumn 2024

October

Land and buildings collection tool online form available 3 October
Autumn school census day - Thursday 3 October

November

Submit land and buildings collection tool by 8 November

December

Submit audited financial statements, auditor's management letter, annual summary internal scrutiny report and accounts submission coversheet by 31 December

Free and low cost Governor training

NGA

NGA Learning Link have released new modules including Induction for Local Governors and Safer Recruitment [Learning Link e-learning for school governors and trustees | National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](https://www.nga.org.uk/learning-link)

Click [here](#) for the latest NGA webinars available to play back free of charge including 'Being strategic', 'complaints management', 'Ofsted: inspection and governance' and 'Estate management for governing boards'.

Governors for Schools / Better Governor

Click here <https://governorsforschools.org.uk/> to register for details of free upcoming webinars, including pupil attendance, governance induction, driving school improvement and school finance.

DfE free webinars (including Academy Finance Professionals)

Click [here](#) to access free webinars including the budget forecast return, the new Academy Trust Handbook and Related Party Transactions

Free Governor Recruitment sites

[NASCC | Governance Connections](https://www.nascc.org.uk/governance-connections)
www.inspiringgovernance.org/recruiting-governors
www.governorsforschools.org.uk
www.reachvolunteering.org.uk

Free Governance advice and Resources

Ask A Clerk – Free Advice For School Governors and Clerks

ESFA Update - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – subscribe to the DfE's weekly updates

Recruitment resources for schools - Governors for Schools – free Governor recruitment resources as well as free training and webinars

independentgovernor.com – free and independent support and mentoring for Governors and Trustees

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