



# Governance: Structures and Role Descriptors – exploring the new DfE guidance'

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020



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# The aims of today's session:

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By the end of the session we will have:

- Explored the DfE Guidance published in October;
- Clarified the latest expectations on governance;
- Reflected on how boards should be responding to this guidance moving forward into 2021.

# New DfE Guidance

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## **Maintained School Governance: Structures and Role Descriptors**

October 2020

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## **Academy Trust Governance- Structures and Role Descriptors**

October 2020

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# New DfE Guidance



## Maintained School Governance: Structures and Role Descriptors

October 2020

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### Governance handbook

Academy trusts and maintained schools

October 2020



### A Competency Framework for Governance

The knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for effective governance in maintained schools, academies and multi-academy trusts

January 2017



### Clerking Competency Framework

The knowledge, skills and behaviours required to provide professional support to the governing boards of schools, academies and multi-academy trusts

April 2017



### The constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools

Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and local authorities in England

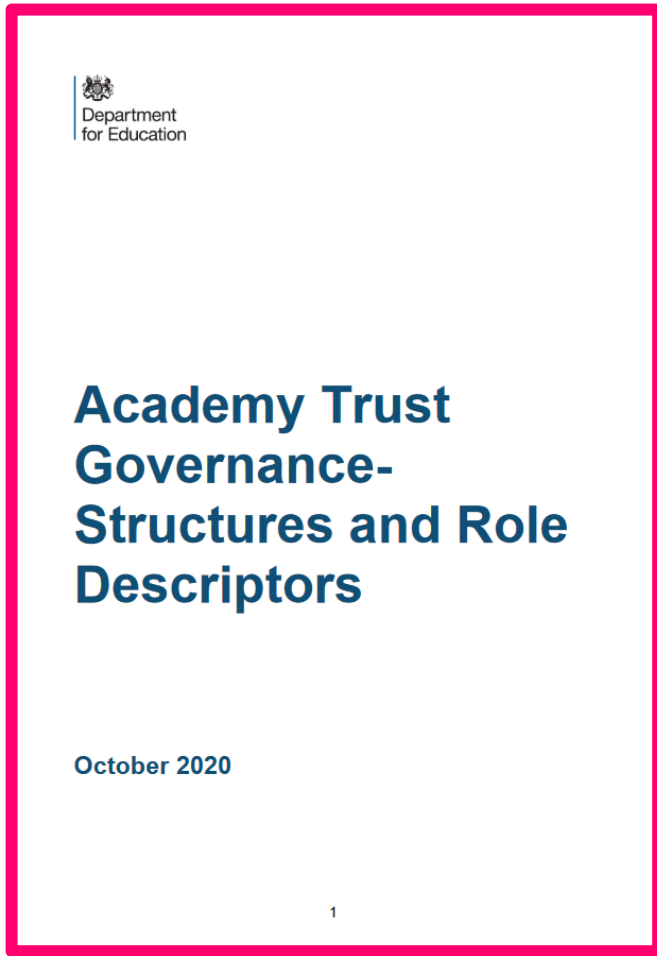
August 2017



**GOVERNORS  
FOR SCHOOLS**

# New DfE Guidance

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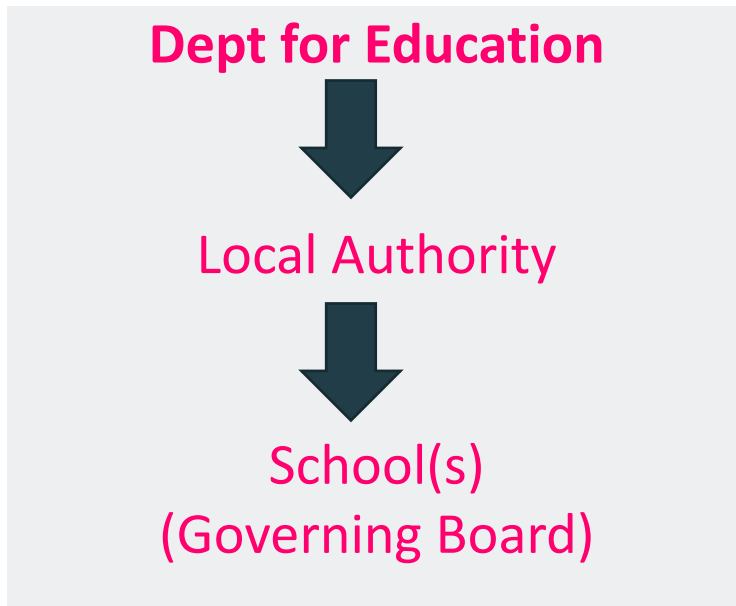


- Focus on roles (pages 1-20)
- Role and structure (pages 18 – 26)
- Further info and links

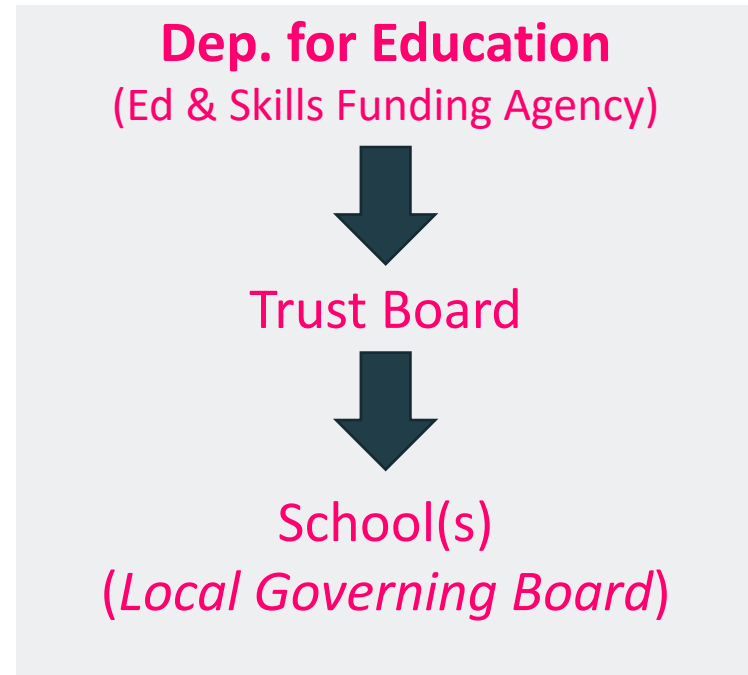
# Structure of Education in England

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## Maintained Schools



## Academies



# Structure of Education in England (2)

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## Other considerations:

- The role of the Clerk
- Schools of religious character
- Ofsted
- Regional Schools Commissioners
- Delegation
- Statutory and contractual obligations



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# Poll #1

# Living up to the DfE expectations

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The legally accountable body:

- **Governing Body** (Maintained schools)
- **The Trust Board** (Academies)

Supported (through  
advice and guidance) by  
a professional clerk

# Delegation

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*(noun) the process of giving somebody work or responsibilities that would usually be yours (OED)*

- To individuals or committees
- In compliance with statutory/contractual frameworks
- Terms of Reference (*Maintained schools*)
- Scheme of Delegation (*Academy trusts*)

# Roles and expectations:

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*Governors must “have the skills required to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school”*

- *Must for maintained schools*
- *In academies the focus is on what is needed for effective governance*

*Governance in 2021 should be skills-based*

# Strategic v operational:

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*In line with core functions:*

- Boards should play a strategic role and avoid routine involvement in operational matters

(Maintained Schools)

- Boards should play a strategic role and avoid routine involvement in operational matters

(Academy Trusts)

However, since the board is responsible in law for the school(s), it may need to intervene in operational matters, if a circumstance arises...

# Chair and Vice Chair:

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A focus on leadership of governance

- *responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the board and has a vital role in setting the highest of expectations for professional standards of governance; (Maintained Schools)*
- The Chair, supported by the Vice-Chair and the Clerk, plays an important role which goes beyond chairing meetings. The Chair takes the lead in ensuring (as above). (Academy Trusts)

**n.b Vice chair role is no hiding place!**

# Some reminders *(not all in this guidance)*:

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- Governance is a collective responsibility;
- The chair has responsibility, *not* power;
- Governance is public office;
- Effective governance champions pupil needs over all other considerations
- Education is dynamic (stay abreast!)

# Governance Questions to reflect on:

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- Do I recognise governance in my school/trust from these *models*?
- How can my board become more effective through using this guidance?
- Does my board utilise the skills of the clerk to support effective governance?



# Actions to take away today:

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- ensure I use these guides to inform and develop individual knowledge within my board;
- use as recruitment and induction resources;
- use with other tools to inform/support review of board structures and delegation;
- encourage the clerk to utilise as a practical first-level tool for advice and guidance;
- Inform and shape the chair and vice chair role descriptions

# Any further questions?

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# Further information

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- DfE Structures and roles (maintained)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/937573/Maintained\\_governance\\_role\\_descriptors.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/937573/Maintained_governance_role_descriptors.pdf)

- DfE Structures and roles (Academies)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/924673/Academies\\_governance\\_role\\_descriptors.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/924673/Academies_governance_role_descriptors.pdf)

# What you need to know, when you need to know it



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