

Governance in maintained schools and academy trusts.

The structure of governance and the responsibilities of governors differ slightly depending on the type of school you join. We've outlined the governance structures of both maintained schools and academy trusts.

Governance in maintained schools

Maintained schools are those that operate within the local authority framework. Examples of maintained schools include:

- community schools
- voluntary aided and controlled schools
- foundation schools

All maintained schools in England are overseen by a governing board.

The board is the accountable body for the school. It has a distinct legal identity and its role and functions are set out in statutory law.

Most maintained schools have their own governing board, but some maintained schools may share a single governing board. This is known as a federation.

Those who sit on maintained school governing boards are known as governors.

There are specific categories of governor, such as parent governor, co-opted governor and staff governor. The headteacher is also a governor.

The governing boards of church schools include foundation governors. It is their role to uphold the religious ethos of the school.

Governance in academy trusts

If you're a governor of an academy, it's likely you'll sit on a local governing board (LGB) within a multi academy trust (MATs).

MATs are charitable companies that run multiple academies under contract with the Department for Education. They have greater autonomy than maintained schools, so they have the flexibility to determine their own governance arrangements.

Technically speaking, LGBs are committees of the MAT's board of trustees. They have been delegated responsibilities for overseeing a particular school within the MAT. The board of trustees can decide which powers to delegate and retains overall accountability for all the academies in the MAT.

This means a governor role on one LGB can look very different to a role on another.

The MAT's scheme of delegation can help you to understand your particular role on the LGB and how decision making takes place more widely across the MAT.