



## NGA Glossary

NGA has produced this guide to help governors and trustees navigate the specialist terms and abbreviations of the education world.

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### A

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#### **Academy**

Academies are publicly funded independent schools. Academies have different governance arrangements from other schools (such as local authority-maintained schools).

#### **Academy committee**

The body to which trustees delegate local governance functions. NGA refers to these bodies as academy committees, but they are often called local governing bodies (LGBs), academy councils or similar.

#### **Academy converter**

A school which converted to academy status voluntarily (usually high performing at the time of conversion), having previously been a local authority-maintained school.

#### **Academy sponsor-led**

A school which converted to academy status with the support of a sponsor (usually lower performing at the time of conversion).

#### **Admissions Code**

A document providing statutory guidance on school admissions with which all schools must comply.

#### **A level**

General Certificate of Education Advanced level – usually completed by some 16-18 year-olds after GCSE.

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## Articles of Association

The formal governing document for an academy that sets out its rules for operating, including the composition of the governing board

## ASP - Analyse School Performance

A service providing schools and other existing user groups with detailed performance analysis to support local school improvement.

## Associate members

Individuals appointed by the governing body of a maintained school. They are not part of the governing body but are allowed to attend meetings and sit on committees and can be given voting powers.

## ATH Academy Trust Handbook

A handbook issued by the ESFA that sets out the management and governance requirements that apply to all academy trusts. (Formerly Academies Financial Handbook).

## Attainment 8

A headline measure of school performance at GCSE introduced from 2016. Measures the achievement of a pupil across English, maths and six further qualifications.

## Attainment targets

These establish what children of different abilities should be expected to know and be able to do by the end of each key stage of the national curriculum.

## AWPU

Age-weighted pupil unit – the sum of money allocated to the school for each pupil according to age. This is the basic unit of funding for the school.

## B

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### Baseline assessment

Assessment of pupils' attainment on entry to year 1 – it is not statutory, but many local authorities encourage schools to carry it out.

### Board of trustees

The governing board of a single academy trust or MAT (also known as trustee board or board of directors).

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## **Bursar**

A school's business professional. The exact role of a bursar varies but their duties almost always include financial and administrative management and many are involved in strategic planning and risk management.

## **C**

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### **Capital funding**

Spending on projects, improvements, and extensions to the school's land and buildings.

### **Chair's action**

In maintained schools, the chair is allowed to take decisions without asking the governing body if a delay will be detrimental to the school, a member of staff, a pupil or a parent. In academies, this power is not automatic and must be delegated to the chair.

### **Chief executive officer (CEO)**

The lead professional and head of the executive branch for a group of academies known as a multi academy trust (MAT). Although not a headteacher in any school, they are ultimately accountable to the governing board for all aspects of the MAT as a whole.

### **Chief financial officer (CFO)**

All MATs are required to appoint a CFO, although trusts may give this person another title (such as finance director or chief operating officer). Their role is to have strategic oversight of the financial performance of each academy within the trust.

### **Clerk**

The clerk provides advice on governance, constitutional and procedural matters. They also offer administrative support to the governing board and relay information on legal requirements. See also 'governance professional'.

### **Collaboration**

An agreement between two or more schools to work together on one particular issue. The schools keep their individual governing boards but may set up a joint committee to which they can delegate powers.

### **Community schools**

Maintained schools at which the local authority (LA) is the employer, owns the land and buildings and sets the admission criteria.

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### **Community special schools**

Maintained schools which make special educational provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or education, health and care (EHC) plans, whose needs cannot be fully met from within mainstream provision.

### **Competency Framework for Governance**

A document developed by the DfE, setting out the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for effective governance.

### **Co-opted governor/trustee**

Appointed by the governing board, generally on the basis of their skills.

### **CPD**

Continuing professional development (for school staff or the governing board).

## **D**

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### **Delegated budget**

Money provided to schools which governors can manage at their discretion.

### **Delegated powers**

Authority given to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher to take action on behalf of the governing board. In multi academy trusts this also refers to powers delegated to academy committees.

### **Designated person**

Liaises with other services on behalf of young people in care and has a responsibility for promoting their educational achievement.

### **DfE**

Department for Education – the government department responsible for schools and children.

### **Directed time**

Time when a teacher must be available to carry out duties, including attending staff and parent meetings, under the direction of the headteacher – a maximum of 1265 hours in a school year.

### **Disapplication**

A term used where national curriculum requirements may not apply to a pupil.

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## **DSG**

Dedicated school grant – funding from central government to the LA, the majority of which is then delegated directly to individual schools through the LA’s funding formula.

## **E**

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### **EAL**

English as an additional language

### **EBacc**

A school performance measure based on achievement of GCSEs in ‘core academic subjects’ of English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language.

### **ECT**

Early career teacher. The term early career teacher (ECT) replaced newly qualified teacher (NQT) in 2021.

### **EHC plans**

Education, health and care plans – the document which replaces statements of SEN and learning difficulties assessments for children and young people with special educational needs.

### **ESFA**

Education and Skills Funding Agency – a single funding agency accountable for funding education and training for children, young people and adults (formerly the EFA and SFA).

### **ESO**

Education supervision order, which local authorities may apply for to deal with cases of poor attendance at school.

### **Ethos**

The morals, values and beliefs that underpin the school culture.

### **EWO**

Education welfare officer – a professional worker who visits pupils’ homes and deals with attendance problems and other welfare matters in co-operation with the school.

### **Ex officio**

Able to attend meetings by virtue of holding a particular office.

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## **Exclusion**

The temporary or permanent removal of a pupil from school for serious breaches of the school's behaviour and discipline policy.

## **Executive headteacher**

Unlike a traditional headteacher who leads one school only, an executive headteacher is the lead professional of more than one school; or a lead professional who manages a school with multiple phases; or who has management responsibility significantly beyond that of a single school site.

## **Executive leaders**

Those held to account by the board for the performance of the organisation. This may be the CEO, executive headteacher, headteacher or principal, as well as other senior employees/staff, depending on the structure of the organisation.

## **Extended schools/services**

Schools that provide a range of services and activities often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of the pupils, their families and the wider community.

## **F**

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### **Federation**

Two or more local authority maintained (or community) schools governed by one governing body.

### **FFT**

Fischer Family Trust – a non-profit company that provides data and analyses to LAs and schools in England and Wales.

### **Form of entry**

The number of classes of 30 children that a school admits each year.

### **Foundation governor/trustee**

Appointed by the foundation board.

### **Foundation schools**

Maintained schools in which the governing body is the employer, owns the land and buildings and sets the admission criteria.

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### **Foundation special schools**

Maintained special schools which have the same freedoms as foundation schools (see above).

### **Foundation stage**

Curriculum followed by children below statutory school age in schools and nursery/pre-school provision.

### **Free school**

A type of academy, either a new school set up in response to parental demand, or a fee-paying school joining the state education system.

### **FSM**

Free school meals – pupils are eligible for FSM if their parents receive certain benefits.

### **Funding agreement**

The document which sets out the relationship between an academy/MAT and the Education and Skills Funding Agency ESFA/Department for Education (DfE).

## **G**

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### **GAG**

General Annual Grant – the main source of revenue funding for academy trusts.

### **GCSE**

General Certificate of Secondary Education.

### **GDPR**

General Data Protection Regulation.

### **GOLDline**

NGA's independent and confidential advice service offering strategic, procedural and legal information about governance.

### **Governance professional**

A collective description for all those involved in supporting and advising governing boards in schools and trusts (including clerks, governance managers and directors of governance).

### **Governing board**

Refers to the board of maintained schools (governing body) and academies/MATs (board of trustees).

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## **Governing body**

Refers to the governing body of a maintained school only.

## **Governor services**

Governor services provide essential support to the governing board which may be in the form of training, advice or clerking services. May be 'in-house' in larger MATs but often externally commissioned.

## **H**

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### **Headteacher Board**

Each regional schools commissioner (RSC) has a board of elected headteachers of academies in their area to advise on and scrutinise their decisions.

### **HLTA**

Higher level teaching assistant.

### **HMCI**

Her Majesty's chief inspector of schools.

### **HMI**

Her Majesty's inspector.

### **HSE**

Health and Safety Executive.

## **I**

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### **ICFP**

Integrated curriculum and financial planning – a collaborative process that brings together the governance, education leadership and business support functions in a school or trust. Effective ICFP helps schools and trusts design a curriculum that is affordable and sustainable.

### **IEB**

Interim Executive Board appointed by the local authority (LA) or Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) in accordance with the Education Act 2006 to replace the governing body of a maintained school that is eligible for intervention.

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## **IEP**

Individual education plan for pupils with special educational needs.

## **INSET**

In-Service education and training – courses for teachers and other school staff (often delivered during up to five 'INSET days' each academic year when pupils do not attend school).

## **Instrument of Government**

A legal document setting out the composition of maintained school governing bodies.

## **K**

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### **Key stage**

Key stages 1-4 are the four stages of the national curriculum: KS1 for pupils aged 5-7; KS2 for 7-11; KS3 for 11-14; KS4 for 14-16.

## **L**

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### **LA**

Local authority. The LA has certain responsibilities regarding education, for example the educational achievement of looked-after children, and for school places planning. It also provides other services to schools, which may be provided via a service-level agreement to maintained schools and, in many cases, academies.

### **LA Governor**

Nominated by the local authority but appointed by the governing body.

### **LAC**

Looked after children. Children who are in care provision. May also refer to children who have been in care at any time in the last six years.

### **Learning Link**

NGA Learning Link is a comprehensive e-learning training platform for governors, trustees and clerks on the full range of their responsibilities.

### **LGA**

Local Government Association – national organisation supporting and representing local government.

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## **LGB**

Local governing body – a term often used to describe a committee of a trust board for an individual school within a MAT. See also ‘academy committee’.

## **Local association**

A group of governors and trustees from different schools in the local area. Local associations vary in size and capacity. The smallest local associations may offer an informal support network for local governors/trustees whereas larger local associations may organise useful local events and provide formal support and training opportunities.

## **M**

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### **Maintained schools**

Publicly funded schools overseen by the local authority. These schools must follow the national curriculum and national pay and conditions guidelines.

## **MAT**

Multi academy trust – where two or more academies are governed by one trust (the members) and a board of trustees (the trustees).

### **MAT board**

Common term for the board of trustees overseeing a multi academy trust.

### **Mixed ability**

A teaching group in which children of all abilities are taught together.

## **N**

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### **National curriculum**

This was established by the 1988 Education Reform Act to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced education, which is relevant to their needs. Academies do not need to follow the national curriculum, but many still choose to.

### **National Schools Commissioner (NSC)**

A civil servant responsible for co-ordinating the work of the eight regional schools commissioners (see RSCs).

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## **NFF**

National Funding Formula – the standardised formula for school funding allocations across every mainstream state funded school in England.

## **Non-teaching (support) staff**

Members of the school staff employed to provide services in a school, such as teaching assistants, cleaners and office staff.

## **NOR**

Number on roll

## **NPQH**

National Professional Qualification for Headship – training for new or aspiring headteachers.

## **NQT**

Newly qualified teacher. The term early career teacher (ECT) replaced newly qualified teacher in 2021.

## **O**

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### **Ofqual**

Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Register – the regulator of examinations and qualifications.

### **Ofsted**

Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills – the body which inspects education and training for learners of all ages and inspects and regulates care for children and young people.

## **P**

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### **PAN**

Published admissions number – the number of children the LA (or governing board of a foundation or voluntary aided school or academy trust) determines must be admitted to any one year group in the school.

### **Parent governor/trustee**

Member of the governing board elected by the parents of the school’s pupils.

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### **Partnership governor**

In schools with a religious character, these governors must be appointed with the purpose of preserving and promoting the religious ethos

### **PE and sport premium**

Funding for years 1 to 6 to provide additional PE and sport beyond that already provided in the curriculum.

### **Peripatetic teacher**

One who teaches in a number of schools to give specialist instruction, such as in music.

### **PFI**

Private finance initiative – enables local authorities to enter into contracts with the private sector for the provision of new and/or improved capital assets (infrastructure for example) and related services.

### **PGCE**

Post-Graduate Certificate of Education.

### **PGR**

Parent governor representative – elected to serve on a local authority committee discharging the education functions of the LA.

### **PI**

Performance indicators (sometimes called key performance indicators). Used to evaluate the success of a school or of a particular activity in which it engages.

### **PPA**

Planning, preparation and assessment – 10% guaranteed non-contact time for teachers.

### **Progress 8**

A headline measure of school performance at GCSE introduced from 2016. It aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of KS2 to the end of KS4.

### **PRP**

Performance related pay – schools following the STCPD must ensure teachers' pay is linked to their performance.

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## **PRU**

Pupil referral unit – alternative education provision for pupils unable to attend a mainstream school or special school.

## **PSHE**

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is a school subject through which pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives, now and in the future.

## **PSP**

Pastoral support programme for pupils at serious risk of permanent exclusion.

## **PTA**

Parent teacher association – or PSA (parent staff association).

## **PTR**

Pupil/teacher ratio – this is calculated by dividing the number of pupils in a school by the number of full-time equivalent teachers.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

A duty on public authorities (including schools) to consider how their decisions might affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

## **Pupil premium**

Funding allocated to schools to support pupils eligible for free school meals, in care, or who have parents in the armed forces.

## **Q**

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### **QTS**

Qualified teacher status.

### **Quorate**

A meeting is quorate if a sufficient number of members are present. Decisions can only be ratified if a meeting is quorate.

### **Quorum**

The minimum number of members present at a meeting before decisions can be made.

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## R

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### **Regional schools commissioners (RSCs)**

Civil servants that act on behalf of the secretary of state. Their responsibilities include intervening in underperforming academies and free schools, making decisions on conversion to academy status, and encouraging and deciding on applications for academy sponsors. There are eight RSCs serving different regions, reporting to the national schools commissioner.

### **Resolution**

A formal decision which has been proposed, seconded and agreed – not necessarily by a vote – at a meeting.

### **Revenue funding**

Revenue funding can be spent to provide services and buy items that will be used within a year. Examples include salaries, heating, lighting, services and small items of equipment.

### **RSE**

Relationships and Sex Education.

## S

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### **SACRE**

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – local statutory board which advises on religious education and collective worship.

### **SATs**

Standard assessment tasks – used for national curriculum assessment.

### **Scheme of delegation**

A document defining the lines of responsibility and accountability in a MAT, sometimes referred to as a roles and responsibilities document.

### **School business manager (SBM)**

A professional employed by a school with responsibility for financial management and often other areas such as human resources and health and safety management. Usually part of the senior leadership team. Also known as a school business professional.

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## **School census**

A statutory return which takes place during the autumn, spring, and summer terms. Maintained schools and academies must take part in the census.

## **School development plan**

The operational document describing how the school will work towards the strategic priorities set by the governing board. Also known as a school improvement plan.

## **Schools Forum**

A schools forum has been established in each LA area to advise on the allocation of the funding for schools – the majority of places on this board should be filled by governors and headteachers, preferably in equal numbers.

## **SENCO**

SEN co-ordinator – the teacher responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision in the school.

## **SEND**

Special educational needs and disabilities – learning difficulties for which special educational provision has to be made.

## **Senior Executive Leader (SEL)**

Academy trusts must appoint a senior executive leader (who may be known as the principal in a single academy trust, or CEO in a MAT, or equivalent) as the accounting officer (AO) for the trust.

## **Service level agreement (SLA)**

A contract between a service provider (the local authority or another private sector provider) and a school that defines the level of service expected.

## **Service premium**

Funding allocated to schools to support pupils whose parents are serving in HM armed forces, or have at any time since 2011, or who are in recipient of a child's pension from the Ministry of Defence.

## **SFVS**

Schools financial value standard – a means for the governing board to assess its financial processes, capabilities and skills.

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### **Short inspection**

A one-day Ofsted inspection carried out at 'good' schools (or special schools, nurseries, and PRUs judged 'outstanding').

### **SIMS**

Schools Information and Management System – a computer package to assist schools in managing information on pupils, staff and resources, provided by Capita.

### **Special school**

For pupils with a statement of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or an education, health and care plan, whose needs cannot be fully met from within mainstream provision.

### **Special unit (or resourced provision)**

A unit attached to a mainstream school to cater for children with specific special needs.

### **Sponsor**

An organisation or person who has received approval from the DfE to support an underperforming academy or group of academies. Examples of sponsors include academies, businesses and charities.

### **Staff governor/trustee**

Elected by those who are paid to work at the school.

### **STPCD**

School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document – an annually published document which forms a part of the contract of all teachers and headteachers in maintained schools in England and Wales. Many academies also follow the STPCD.

### **Strategic plan**

The school's strategic document which sets out a small number of key priorities for the school over the next three to five years. The governing board should take the lead on developing the strategic plan.

### **STRB**

School Teachers' Review Body – makes recommendations to the secretary of state on teachers' pay.

### **Streaming**

Placing pupils in classes according to their ability across a range of subjects.

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## T

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### TA

Teaching assistant.

### Teaching school alliances

Led by teaching schools and include schools that are benefiting from support as well as strategic partners.

### Teaching schools

Schools that work with others to provide CPD for school staff.

### Terms of reference

The scope and limitations of a committee's activity or area of knowledge.

### TLR

Teaching and learning responsibility – payments made to teachers for an additional responsibility.

### Trust Deed

The deed by which a voluntary aided or a voluntary controlled school has been established.

### Trustee board

The governing board of a single academy trust or MAT.

## V

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### Value added (VA)

The progress schools help pupils make relative to their individual starting points – rather than looking at raw results. VA also takes into account prior attainment, thus enabling a judgment to be made about the effect of the school on pupils' current attainment.

### Vertical grouping

Classes formed (in primary schools) with children of different age groups.

### Virement

The agreed transfer of money from the budget heading to which it has been allocated to another budget heading.

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## Virtual school headteacher

Looked after children are on a virtual school roll, and each local authority employs an experienced teacher to oversee the educational progress of all children under the care of that particular LA. The virtual school headteacher has the specialist knowledge to provide extra support to designated teachers. They also work with professionals in the Children's Services department of the council and with all schools in the area to promote the education of children in care.

## Vision

The school's vision should, in a few sentences, describe what the school will look like in three to five years' time.

## Vocational

A subject that would not be considered academic in the traditional sense. Students in key stage 4 and key stage 5 may undertake a vocational apprenticeship or qualification as a viable alternative to GCSEs or A-levels.

## Voluntary aided (VA)

A school set up and owned by a voluntary board, usually a church board, largely financed by the local authority. The governing board employs the staff and controls pupil admissions and religious education. The school's buildings and land (apart from playing fields) are normally be owned by a charitable foundation. VA schools set their own admissions criteria in line with the admissions code.

## Voluntary controlled (VC)

Usually a denominational school wholly maintained but with certain residual rights regarding religious worship.

## Y

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### YGN

Young Governors' Network - created and run by young governors with support from the National Governance Association. YGN is a community of interested, intelligent, creative and questioning young people committed to improving schools for everyone.

### Young Carer

A young carer is anyone under 18 years of age who helps to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem.

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