



# Leading governors

The role of the chair of governors in schools and academies

## Leadership development



In partnership with



---

# Leading governors

## Foreword

Governors are the unsung heroes and heroines of our education system. They give their time freely, often at the end of a long and busy day, in the interests of giving children the chance to aim high and achieve their potential in life. I cannot think of a better embodiment of volunteering and of civil society than the work that our 300,000 governors do. In particular, I want to thank those of you who have stepped up to the role of chair and are leading governing bodies in this vital role.

The governing body should be the most important decision-making group in any school and the key body for school improvement. Through the leadership of the chair of governors, governing bodies should set the overall strategic direction of a school, hold the headteacher to account and have a relentless focus on driving up standards. Many governing bodies fulfil their roles well but too many governors tell me that they spend hours in meetings discussing what are relatively trivial issues when they could be concentrating on strategic leadership and making a difference to children. So there is a need to share good practice and provide training and support for those new to the job.

That is why the Department for Education is funding the National College to develop, with the National Governors' Association and others, a programme of support for chairs of governors. I hope that it will help those who do such an important job in our schools and that this booklet will also be a valuable source of information and advice.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jette Asy". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Lord Hill of Oareford  
**Parliamentary Under-Secretary  
of State for Schools**

---

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Role of the chair</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Leading effective governance</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Building the team</b>	<b>7</b>
Case study 1: Building the team	8
<b>Relationship with the headteacher</b>	<b>9</b>
Case study 2: Relationship with the headteacher	10
<b>Improving your school</b>	<b>11</b>
Case study 3: Improving your school	12
<b>Leading the business</b>	<b>13</b>
Case study 4: Leading the business	14
<b>How the National College can help you</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Key contacts</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Published resources</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Publication vouchers</b>	<b>19</b>

---

# Introduction

Welcome to the National College and to this booklet, which explores the role of the chair of governors and outlines a new programme of support and training for this important job.

Being a chair of governors is a key leadership role and governing bodies are central to the effective accountability of schools. Leading the governing body and working in partnership with the headteacher, the chair plays a pivotal role in school improvement. As schools start to take advantage of the new freedoms and greater autonomy, governing bodies will have to make a range of important decisions including whether or not to federate, become an academy or join a chain of schools. The role of the chair of governors in reaching these decisions will become even more important.

The National College has been given a remit by government to support and provide training for chairs of governors, and the National Governors' Association (NGA) is pleased to be working with the College and also with the National Co-ordinators of Governor Services (NCOGS) and the Foundation, Aided Schools and Academies National Association (FASNA) to develop this offer.

From April 2012 there will be a suite of new support available for chairs of governors, to help you:

- ensure the governing body makes a difference and improves the school
- put the accountability role of the governing body into practice
- lead the team of governors and manage the business of the governing body

The College, NGA and their partners already have close links with chairs of governors and we will be drawing on the expertise of experienced and highly skilled chairs of governors to inform and advise on the development of the training and support programme.

We are also developing a role where outstanding chairs of governors work with other chairs to help them to develop and improve. This builds on the work the National College has done to support excellent school leaders to lead beyond their schools. We now want to offer the same opportunity to outstanding chairs. This support from outstanding chairs of governors will be targeted at specific schools where improvement is needed and where the chair of governors would benefit from additional support.

At the back of this booklet you will find more details of what the National College is planning to offer and how you can get involved. You will also find a list of key contacts and published resources.

This booklet aims to reflect and reinforce the practice of experienced and highly skilled chairs of governors, to provide guidance to new and inexperienced chairs and to provide encouragement for those who may be thinking of stepping up to the role. All the chairs of governors profiled in the case studies here, like many of you, stress the importance of never losing sight of why they do the job. They are committed to improving their schools so that the children in it will learn and flourish.

It is the same message that the National College consistently promotes in all of its work with other school leaders, and that the NGA, together with our partners in this work, promotes with school governors. We look forward to working with you.



Emma Knights  
Chief Executive  
National Governors' Association



Steve Munby  
Chief Executive  
National College

---

# Role of the chair

Being a chair of governors is an extremely worthwhile role, yet at times it can be very demanding. To be effective, you need a good understanding of the role and its responsibilities so that your school gains maximum benefit from the work that you do. You also need to ensure that all governors understand the role and responsibilities of the governing body, which can vary slightly depending on the type of school such as voluntary aided, foundation, academy, multi-academy or federation. For more information, see the NGA publication *Welcome to Governance*.

The key roles of the chair outlined below are explored in the following pages:

## Leading effective governance

Giving the governing body a clear lead and direction, ensuring that the governors work as an effective team and understand their accountability and the part they play in the strategic leadership of the school and in driving school improvement.

## Building the team

Attracting governors with the necessary skills and ensuring that tasks are delegated across the governing body so that all members contribute, feel that their individual skills, knowledge and experience are well used and that the overall workload is shared.

## Relationship with the Headteacher

Being a critical friend by offering support, challenge and encouragement, and ensuring the headteacher's performance management is rigorous and robust; a good comparison is with the role of the chair of a board of trustees who works with the chief executive of an organisation but does not run day-to-day operations.

## Improving your school

Ensuring school improvement is the focus of all policy and strategy and that governor monitoring reflects school improvement priorities.

## Leading the business

Ensuring that statutory requirements and regulations are met, that the school provides value for money in its use of resources and that governing body business is conducted efficiently and effectively.

The chair plays a crucial role in setting the culture of the governing body and is first among equals, but has no individual power. The governing body is a corporate entity and its power and authority rest with the governing body as a whole. On occasions, the chair may need to take chair's action in an emergency, but any such action must be reported to the whole governing body as soon as possible.

Managing your time effectively is important to ensure you have the capacity to do what the chair alone needs to do. Generally being chair should take up no more than 20 days a year, equal to about half a day for each week of term-time. Take time with the headteacher and governors to set priorities and focus your work on these.

The National College's leadership development provision for chairs of governors will address these key aspects of the chair's role.

For more information go to [www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors)

---

# Leading effective governance

As chair, leading the governing body and working in partnership with the headteacher, you are responsible for driving school improvement and ensuring that the school achieves the aims and ambitions it has for its pupils. The work that you do has the ability to transform a school and the lives of the children in it. A thorough understanding of the school is crucial. You need to know its context, what it does well and where it needs to improve.

A key element of your role is to ensure that governors understand the part they play in this and regularly assess whether they are doing their job effectively.

The Department for Education (DfE) has set out 10 key questions that it recommends governors ask to better understand and challenge their school's performance:

1. What are the school's values? Are they reflected in our long-term development plans?
2. How are we going to raise standards for all children, including the most and least able, those with special educational needs, boys and girls, and any who are currently underachieving?
3. Have we got the right staff and the right development and reward arrangements?
4. Do we have a sound financial strategy, get good value for money and have robust procurement and financial systems?
5. Do we keep our buildings and other assets in good condition and are they well used?
6. How well does the curriculum provide for and stretch all pupils?
7. How well do we keep parents informed and take account of their views?

8. Do we keep children safe and meet statutory health and safety requirements?
9. How is pupil behaviour? Do we tackle the root causes of poor behaviour?
10. Do we offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities which engage all pupils?

Effective governance also requires:

- governors with a good mix of skills, knowledge and experience, and with a strong commitment to the school and its pupils, who are able to work together in a way that reflects the vision and ethos of the school
- governors with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and in particular their accountability and the difference between the role in strategic rather than operational decision-making
- good communications and meetings that are well organised and where everyone can contribute and be heard
- a shared workload so that the governing body acts as a corporate body
- a good relationship between governors and the headteacher and school leadership team; the chair and headteacher should model this effective relationship

A chair of a governing body of a maintained school needs to be familiar with *A Guide to the Law for School Governors* (DfE, updated 2011). Chairs of academies must be familiar with the corresponding law for academies, and the academy's own funding agreement and articles of association.

---

# Building the team

A key part of your role as chair is to build a cohesive team of governors, delegating tasks across the governing body so that all members contribute, share responsibility for the overall workload and feel that their individual skills, knowledge and experience are well used.

You need to identify the skills, knowledge and experience of your governors, ensuring that any gaps are filled with training and recruitment. It is important to ensure that the governing body continues to attract and retain good governors including governors with specialist experience as necessary. By delegating some responsibilities – for example, ensuring that your fellow governors take the chair of other committees – you are also helping to grow new leadership talent.

In line with good practice in corporate governance in other sectors, you will also need to take into account the importance of promoting equality and diversity when recruiting, and consider the extent to which the governing body represents the community it serves. Support for building the team and securing diversity is available from a range of organisations (see pages 15-17).

There should be clear, open and honest communication between governors at all times. Effective chairs of governing bodies are approachable, readily accessible to other governors and take the issues they raise and the ideas they have seriously.

Finally, a governing body needs a code of practice that outlines its role and responsibilities. The NGA has developed a *Code of Practice for School Governors* (NGA, 2011) that can be adapted to suit the circumstances of your school.

## Checklist

- Have all new governors been properly inducted? See *Welcome to Governance* (NGA, 2011).
- How recently have you audited the skills of your governing body? See the model skills audit available through NGA
- Which of your governors has accountancy or financial management experience? Do you need to recruit someone?
- Have you considered using the School Governors' One-Stop Shop ([www.sgoss.org.uk](http://www.sgoss.org.uk)) to recruit governors?
- Is there a training link governor and have all governors attended recent, appropriate training?
- Has the governing body allocated funds from the school budget for governor development? How are these funds being used?
- How often do all governors attend meetings? Has attendance been discussed?
- Are there exit interviews with governors who leave?
- What plans are there for developing other members of the team? How are you planning for your successor? See *Succession Breeds Success* (NCOGS, 2007).
- How familiar are governors with sources of support that are available?
- Have governors considered undertaking performance reviews of members of the governing body?

---

## Case study 1: Building the team



Doris Neville-Davies has been chair of the governing body of Sayes Court School in Surrey for five years, having joined the school when it was in challenging circumstances. In 2008 the school

added a foundation class and changed from a junior to a primary school. Governance has recently been judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted. A highly experienced chair, Doris has been a governor at six other schools and is an 'additional skills governor' for the county.

Doris said: "It is the chair's responsibility to enable a group of individual governors to develop into a team of governors who can work together effectively. When I joined Sayes Court, they had some real problems. There was a huge budget deficit, results were poor, people were taking their children away and a lot of the governors were leaving too.

"One of the first tasks was to bring in new governors, people who could contribute to taking the school forward. I wasn't the best person to find new parent governors, existing parent governors were, so they approached people to stand for election while I looked to bring on board people via other channels – the local authority, the local volunteer bureau and School

Governors' One-Stop Shop. Not only was it about sharing the workload but it was important as an expression of our corporate responsibility.

"There's a temptation in these circumstances to go it alone as chair but part of your responsibility as a leader is to know how to delegate. Building a team is about looking at where you have strengths and how you can use them. One of our governor's business experience is invaluable to the resources committee, while another, who works in education, is equally crucial to our children and learning committee. The rest of us can also learn from their skills.

"The chair is also the person who ensures that governors understand the split between their strategic role and the operational one played by the headteacher and senior leaders in school. The need to hold the headteacher to account can be difficult for some. Some parent governors in particular find it very easy to support the school but more difficult to ask that challenging question about, say, why the SATs results are disappointing. It's up to the chair to instil in the governing body the understanding that it is there to offer challenge as well as support."



---

# Relationship with the headteacher

The relationship between the chair and the headteacher is one of the most important working relationships in the school. The chair of governors and the headteacher are both school leaders and their overall purpose is essentially the same – it is their way of working that differs.

An effective working relationship with the headteacher allows the chair to act as a critical friend, offering challenge, support, advice and encouragement as required. A strong partnership will enable the school to achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning for the benefit of all pupils and staff. As chair, it is your responsibility to ensure that there is rigorous and robust performance management of the headteacher, including setting relevant targets that contribute towards school improvement.

Meeting regularly is important, particularly when either the chair or the headteacher is new, but weekly face-to-face meetings are not obligatory and meetings can be supplemented by telephone conversations or email. It is up to you to devise a system that works for you both, given all your other commitments. You also need to ensure that all the governors know and have some links with the headteacher, otherwise the relationship between headteacher and chair can appear exclusive.

Strategic decision-making is carried out by the governing body, drawing on proposals from the headteacher. Unless given a very specific role by the governing body, chairs do not have decision-making powers as individuals. Operational decisions (other than very specific ones) should be left to the headteacher and her or his staff. School leaders should not be micromanaged and it is part of the chair's role to ensure that the governing body understands the difference between strategic and operational decision-making. It is useful to share with your governing body the publication *What governing bodies can expect from their school leaders and what school leaders can expect from their governing bodies* (NGA, ASCL and NAHT).

## Some key points to consider

- Explore your expectations of the relationship with the headteacher. Are they the same or are you each making (different) assumptions?
- Do the arrangements for keeping in touch suit both parties?
- How effective is your critical friendship? Could it be improved?
- In which areas of work would you and the headteacher benefit from joint training?

---

## Case study 2: Relationship with the headteacher



Sarah Adkins, an environmental and planning lawyer, has been chair of governors for Bishop Cornish Primary School, a Church of England voluntary-aided primary school in Saltash,

Cornwall, for three years. The headteacher is Jenny Thomas.

Sarah says: “I have a very strong relationship with Jenny, built on trust, respect and shared values. From the beginning, we have shared the same vision for the school: to value and educate every child. It may sound obvious but it manifests itself in every aspect of our work. We start all decision processes by considering what is best for the children.

“We meet at least weekly to go through our respective actions and discuss school life. Jenny will also call me if she wants my opinion. We ask each other’s views all the time – it is absolutely a relationship of equals, even though we are in different roles.

“It helps that we have complementary skills. My commercial and legal know-how helps with strategies and evaluating evidence. Jenny is great at getting people on board and generally making things happen. For example, very early in my role

as chair, we worked with the governing body to commit £100,000 (six years’ devolved capital with a loan) to a new eco-education centre. A VAT complication meant we might not immediately have enough money to fit it out but we felt the building was too important to the children’s future not to proceed. We worked together to make the educational and the business case to the governing body and the project went ahead. The centre is now being very well used.

“The chair of governors must be capable of independent thought; decisions must not be made just to please other people, even the headteacher! You need to be objective while caring deeply, to be trustworthy and to maintain confidentiality. You need to remember that it is the governing body that makes the decisions and that it is your job to help it come to the best possible outcome.

“You could say that we balance each other but I don’t see my role as being on the opposite side of a divide to the headteacher. I see us as part of the same team, with our own functions. Our relationship is critical for school excellence. Working together we will be vastly stronger and the whole school will benefit.”

---

# Improving your school

As chair, you need to have a thorough understanding and knowledge of your school: its context, the characteristics of the area it serves and the children and families who make up the school's intake.

The governing body sets the direction for the school and needs to know what the school does well, where its strengths lie and where there is room for improvement. Important questions are:

- How do we secure sustained improvement?
- What are the main barriers to high performance and how do we overcome them?
- How do we secure outstanding learning and teaching for every pupil?
- What sort of academy or school do we need to become?

Effective monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is an essential part of school improvement. As chair, you and your governor colleagues will want to ensure that the school has a positive culture and effective processes relating to self-evaluation. You should ensure that good quality and relevant information is available to governors. You all need a good understanding of the data and other sources of evidence that are available to you. These include:

- exam results (SATs, GCSEs and A-levels)
- the school self-evaluation form (SEF), which is no longer compulsory but still used in schools for compiling performance information
- results of lesson observations, work scrutiny and pupil interviews; the chair has an important role here in supporting the headteacher to establish a culture and process of self-evaluation
- school development plan, which governors should have been involved in developing
- Ofsted reports
- data on RAISEonline (the DfE data analysis tool) and school-level data

- headteacher reports to the governing body
- parent, student and staff surveys
- school visits by governors

## Checklist

- Is the headteacher's report to your governing body structured around the priorities of the school development plan?
- Is your governing body involved in monitoring progress against the key objectives in the school development plan?
- Does your governing body have the skills to understand and question the data being presented?
- Does your governing body have access to independent advice on what the data means?
- Did the governors speak to the Ofsted inspectors and receive a report from them?
- Does your governing body receive RAISEonline reports, and do some governors have access to the RAISEonline full report?
- Does your governing body have progress data reported to it as well as attainment?
- Does your governing body know which groups of children in the school are not doing as well as they should, and why that might be?
- How does your governing body seek views from parents?
- How does your governing body seek views from students?
- Do you have a protocol for school visits and does it make clear that the purpose of the visit is linked to the priorities set by your governing body?

More information on using data effectively is available from [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk).

---

## Case study 3: Improving your school



Siddique Hussain, a business owner and adult education lecturer, has been a governor of five schools in Sandwell in the West Midlands, including three years as chair of governors at St Paul's Church

of England School in Tipton.

Siddique said: "I was asked to work with St Paul's by the local authority. The school's 2008 Ofsted inspection had raised some concerns about the governing body and its ability to hold the school leadership team to account, particularly over standards and achievement. The school was rated satisfactory overall.

"With a new headteacher on board, there were several key changes we needed to make. First, we needed to sort out governors' roles and responsibilities. People's understanding of them was either muddled or non-existent and there was very little committee structure. Everything tended to be done in a group, if at all. Finance and staffing, for example, were handled by the same committee with the same members, presenting a potential conflict of interest.

"We set up separate committees and also created a new one for curriculum, enabling us to monitor how each subject area was performing, and any resource issues or particular successes as well as concerns.

"Delegating responsibility was important. One thing I was adamant about was that each committee should have its own chair – and it shouldn't be me. It reinforced the notion of our collective responsibility, and meant the knowledge about the school was widely shared and would also help with succession planning.

"Another key move was getting to grips with data. The school improvement partner (SIP) at the local authority was critical here in helping the governors to analyse data so that we were in a position to ask incisive questions, rather than superficial ones, about the issues in the school. Literacy was one area we needed to improve and the SIP was very good at pinpointing where the data revealed a weakness in a particular group. He would put options to us; we'd examine them and then discuss them with the headteacher. It enabled us to have an informed conversation with the senior leadership team.

"In November 2010, the school was rated 'good with outstanding features' by Ofsted. Inspectors said it had 'improved strongly'. The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school was also rated 'good'."

---

# Leading the business

Working closely with the clerk to the governors, it is the chair's responsibility to ensure that the governing body fulfils its statutory obligations and responsibilities. Governors are accountable for the responsible and effective use of the school's resources. The governing body will also want to ensure that sound financial management practices are in place. To this end, the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS), which replaces the Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSiS), is available from September 2011 (DfE, 2011).

With the emergence of different models of school – federations, academies and chains, for example – these responsibilities are changing and new ones are emerging. There will also be specific pieces of work that the governing body may need to undertake, for example recruiting a headteacher, providing direction for changing a school's status, or related to major building work.

The timing of the schedule of governing body and committee meetings should reflect statutory requirements, such as approving the school's budget. In addition, the committee structure of the governing body should be reviewed annually to make sure it matches the school's needs.

All meetings should have a formal agenda. Minutes of the previous meeting and additional papers must be sent out at least seven days before a meeting so that governors have a chance to prepare.

Chairing a meeting is a key skill and people will operate in different ways with varying degrees of formality. The essential elements are to ensure that all members have the opportunity to contribute and are listened to, discussions are open and honest, and decisions are fair and transparent.

Governing bodies should adopt a code of practice setting out the roles and expectations so that governors understand their responsibilities and the way in which the governing body conducts its business. The National Governors' Association has a model version you can adapt (NGA, 2010).

## Checklist

- Is your governing body's business focused on the priorities in the school development plan?
- Is your school's self-evaluation process robust and is the governing body appropriately engaged at a strategic level in the whole process?
- Does your clerk have a job description and do you manage the clerk's performance?
- Is your clerk accredited? If not, consider this route (for further details, see [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)).
- Do you receive all papers seven days in advance of meetings?
- Do you spend too much meeting time reviewing policies and checking compliance rather than monitoring the impact on the children?
- Does the vice-chair share some of the chair's business?
- Is your governing body delegating as much as it can to the headteacher and the senior leadership team?
- Is your governing body having an impact? Have you carried out an impact assessment? See for example the Governor Mark framework (GLM Partnership, 2009) or the Governor Self-Evaluation Tracker at [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk).

---

## Case study 4: Leading the business

Graham Wilson, a company director, is chair of governors at Manor High School, Oadby, Leicestershire which became an academy on 1 August 2011.

Graham said: “The process of converting to an academy is a significant leadership and managerial challenge for the governors and they need to be as informed as possible. There is a lot of financial data and legal information to wade through, for example, which, unless you sit on the finance committee, will be unfamiliar, especially the various means by which levels of funding are calculated. Some of the governors were up to date on the politics involved and understood how the local authority works and what academy status would mean as an organisation, but there were some for whom it was difficult territory. A key task as chair was to ensure that those who have useful knowledge are sharing it with the others and that any additional financial, HR or other training is in place so that collectively we understand enough to make informed decisions.

“Information-sharing is important in another way, too. It is very easy when changes are afoot for rumours to start swirling around and it can quickly lead to tension. It’s fair to say we had some difficult meetings. For us, the overriding problem seemed to be that people didn’t understand the academy proposal and why the governors felt it would be in the interests of the children.

“As chair it was up to me to lead the governing body through it and to help break down some of the barriers. We set up a committee of staff representatives, people whom the staff trusted, who could keep them up to date with the conversion process. We also had a couple of meetings where the full governing body met the staff which was useful because we were becoming their employers so it seemed only right that they should know who we were. It was all part of building trust at a challenging time.

“On a project of this magnitude, the relationship between headteacher and chair has to be very strong. The headteacher and I worked very closely together and that’s essential. It is not a task that either the chair or the headteacher should be shouldering alone. The leadership has to be shared.”

---

# How the National College can help you

The National College, with its partners, will be developing a leadership development provision that will be available for all chairs of governors and organisations to use. We will also be providing opportunities for outstanding chairs to support other chairs by asking them to play an important system leadership role.

The leadership development provision for chairs will be available from April 2012 and will draw on what really effective chairs of governors do, including:

- ensuring the governing body makes a difference and improves the school
- putting the accountability role of the governing body into practice
- leading the team of governors and managing the business of the governing body

The leadership development provision will also include a self-assessment tool to identify your areas for development as a current or future chair of governors.

We will be looking for groups of chairs to help shape and trial the materials.

Building on the success of the College's National and Local Leaders of Education (NLEs/LLEs) and National Support School (NSS) programmes, we will work with governor associations, local authorities and dioceses to identify and develop outstanding chairs of governors to play a system leadership role. This role will be targeted on school improvement and will involve working with chairs of governors who are working in schools in challenging circumstances, and supporting those new to the role.

If you are interested in getting involved in either of these areas, please email [chairsofgovernors@nationalcollege.org.uk](mailto:chairsofgovernors@nationalcollege.org.uk) or go to [www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors) for more information.

## More help and resources

Membership of the National College is free and gives you access to a range of services, benefits and networking opportunities, including:

- monthly e-newsletter
- comprehensive library of leadership resources and research
- training events
- online seminars, discussions and networking opportunities exploring current issues, good practice, school improvement and leadership development

For more information and to sign up go to [www.nationalcollege.org.uk/national-college-membership](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/national-college-membership)



---

# Key contacts

## National Governors' Association

The NGA is an independent membership organisation that represents school governors of maintained schools and academies in England. Its aim is to improve the wellbeing of children and young people by promoting high standards in all our schools, and improving the effectiveness of their governing bodies.

NGA materials mentioned in this document are available at [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk). Some documents are available to NGA members only; some are available as priced publications and some are available to all. See Published resources for details of publications available to members and non members.

Tel: 0121 237 3780

Email: [governorhq@nga.org.uk](mailto:governorhq@nga.org.uk)

Web: [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

*The Chair's Handbook: A comprehensive guide for chairs of governing bodies is published by the NGA at the cost of £10 for non-members with discounts for NGA members: purchase online at [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk) or call 0121 237 3680.*

## Department for Education

The DfE offers a range of information and advice for governors of all types of school from guidance on the law and constitution of the governing body to committees, training and year planning.

Web: [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance)

## Organisations with a focus on governors

### GovernorLine

GovernorLine offers free, confidential advice, information and support to school governors, clerks and individuals involved directly in the governance of maintained schools in England.

Calls are free from Monday to Friday 9am to 10pm or from 11am to 4pm at weekends and on public holidays.

Tel: 08000 722 181

Web: [www.governorline.info](http://www.governorline.info)

### National Co-ordinators of Governor Services

NCOGS represents local authority providers of services to school governors. It is a source of good practice in training, materials and support services regionally and also lobbies national bodies on governance issues.

Web: [www.ncogs.org.uk](http://www.ncogs.org.uk)

### School Governors' One-Stop Shop

SGOSS is an independent charity dedicated to recruiting volunteers with added-value skills and helping place them on school governing bodies across England. Its services are free to volunteers, employers, schools and local authorities.

Tel: 020 7354 9805

Email: [info@sgoss.org.uk](mailto:info@sgoss.org.uk)

Web: [www.sgoss.org.uk](http://www.sgoss.org.uk)



---

## Other school leadership and governance organisations

### **Consortium of All-Through Schooling**

CATS is an expert group that works with school leaders, governors and other stakeholders of all-through schools and offers advice on key governance issues relevant to federations, other cross-phase structures and academies.

Tel: 01527 529461

Email: [info@allthroughschooling.org.uk](mailto:info@allthroughschooling.org.uk)

Web: [www.allthroughschooling.org.uk](http://www.allthroughschooling.org.uk)

### **Foundation, Aided Schools and Academies National Association**

FASNA is a national forum for Primary, Secondary, Special schools and governors seeking and using greater autonomy in order to raise standards. The National Committee has elected representatives from governors, bursars and clerks as well as headteachers so there is a wealth of expertise on which to draw. The Association is a-political and has strong links with many officials and teams at the DfE. The benefits of membership are wide ranging but above all it provides a forum and network where headteachers and others from forward looking, innovative thinking schools, can inspire and learn from each other.

Tel: 01332 386769

Email: [hoptroff@fasna.org.uk](mailto:hoptroff@fasna.org.uk)

Web: [www.fasna.org.uk](http://www.fasna.org.uk)

### **Independent Academies Association**

IAA is a national body representing state-funded independent schools. A membership association, it brings academy leaders together, runs events and represents members' views on education policy to ministers.

Tel: 0115 942 1238

Email: [iaainfo@iaa.uk.net](mailto:iaainfo@iaa.uk.net)

Web: [www.iaa.uk.net](http://www.iaa.uk.net)

### **The Schools Network**

The Schools Network provides a range of training programmes for academy and school governors including an annual governor training programme for academic year 2011-12. This programme provides access to training for all governors and allows the chair and the clerk to plan governor training in a systematic way.

Specific programmes are available for governors of recently converted academies to ensure all governors are fully up-to-date with their new roles and responsibilities and chairs of academy governing bodies can join a free network to receive academy specific updates. More than 60% of sponsored academies have taken part in our programme to date. For further details see [www.ssatrust.org.uk/governors](http://www.ssatrust.org.uk/governors)

Tel: 020 7802 2300

Email: [info@ssatrust.org.uk](mailto:info@ssatrust.org.uk)

Web: [www.ssatrust.org.uk](http://www.ssatrust.org.uk)

---

## Published resources

DfE (updated 2011), *A guide to the law for school governors*, London, Department for Education. Available for download at [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance/b0065507/gttl](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance/b0065507/gttl)

DfE, 2011, *Schools Financial Value Standard*, London, Department for Education. Available to download from [www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schools%20financial%20value%20standard/a00192114/schools-financial-value-standard-sfvs](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schools%20financial%20value%20standard/a00192114/schools-financial-value-standard-sfvs)

GLM Partnership, 2009, *Governor Mark: Quality Mark for School Governance*, Birmingham, National Governors' Association & Co-ordinators of Governor Services. Available to download at [www.nga.org.uk/Members-Area/Useful-Resources/Governor-Mark.aspx](http://www.nga.org.uk/Members-Area/Useful-Resources/Governor-Mark.aspx)

NGA, 2011, *Welcome to Governance*, Birmingham, National Governors' Association. Available to order online at [www.nga.org.uk/Publications.aspx](http://www.nga.org.uk/Publications.aspx)

NGA, 2011, *The Chair's Handbook: A comprehensive guide for chairs of governing bodies*, Birmingham, National Governors' Association. Available to order online at [www.nga.org.uk/Publications.aspx](http://www.nga.org.uk/Publications.aspx)

NGA, 2011, *Code of Practice for School Governors 2010/11*, Birmingham, National Governors' Association. Available to download at [www.nga.org.uk/About-Us/Policies/Code-of-Practice.aspx](http://www.nga.org.uk/About-Us/Policies/Code-of-Practice.aspx)

NGA, *What governing bodies can expect from their school leaders and what school leaders can expect from their governing bodies*. Available to download at [www.nga.org.uk/Members-Area/Guidance/NGA---ASCL---NAHT-Joint-Guidance.aspx](http://www.nga.org.uk/Members-Area/Guidance/NGA---ASCL---NAHT-Joint-Guidance.aspx)

NGA, *Model Skills Audit*. Available to download at [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

Target Tracker, *Governor Self-Evaluation Tracker*. Available as link from [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

NCOGS, 2007, *Succession Breeds Success: How to grow leaders in your governing body*, Co-ordinators of Governor Services & School Governors' One-Stop Shop. Available to download at [www.ncogs.org.uk/emie/content.asp?id\\_content=2202&id\\_category=920&level=1](http://www.ncogs.org.uk/emie/content.asp?id_content=2202&id_category=920&level=1)

# Help us to help other chairs of governing bodies

Do you know of another chair of governors who could benefit from this booklet? Or a vice chair that would like to have a copy?

Tear off the voucher below and provide your colleagues with the information they need to request their own free copy.

Don't forget to take advantage of the NGA's voucher for a free publication - *The Chair's Handbook*, an excellent guide to chairing.



## Get your copy – *Leading governors: The role of the chair of governors in schools and academies*



To request your copy of *Leading governors: The role of the chair of governors in schools and academies* please provide us with your name and address by:

emailing [chairsofgovernors@nationalcollege.org.uk](mailto:chairsofgovernors@nationalcollege.org.uk), calling 0845 609 0009, or posting this voucher to, Chairs of Governors training and support, National College for School Leadership, Triumph Road, Nottingham, NG8 1DH

For more information on the College's support available for chairs of governors visit [www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors)



## Get your copy – *Leading governors: The role of the chair of governors in schools and academies*



To request your copy of *Leading governors: The role of the chair of governors in schools and academies* please provide us with your name and address by:

emailing [chairsofgovernors@nationalcollege.org.uk](mailto:chairsofgovernors@nationalcollege.org.uk), calling 0845 609 0009, or posting this voucher to, Chairs of Governors training and support, National College for School Leadership, Triumph Road, Nottingham, NG8 1DH

For more information on the College's support available for chairs of governors visit [www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/chairsofgovernors)



## FREE National Governors' Association publication – *The Chair's Handbook*



This voucher entitles you to a free copy\* of *The Chair's Handbook* from the NGA.

Send your name, address, telephone number and the name of the school at which you are currently chair of governors, and either:

post this voucher to National Governors' Association, Ground Floor, 36 Great Charles Street, Birmingham B3 3JY, email [admin@nga.org.uk](mailto:admin@nga.org.uk) with the subject line 'Chair's Handbook offer' or call 0121 237 3780.

For more details of other NGA publications, including *Welcome to Governance* and *Welcome to Clerking*, visit the NGA's website at [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk).

The National College is uniquely dedicated to developing and supporting chairs of governors and aspiring and serving leaders in schools, academies and early years settings.

The College gives its members the professional development and recognition they need to build their careers and support those they work with. Members are part of a community of thousands of other leaders – exchanging ideas, sharing good practice and working together to make a bigger difference for children and young people.

©2011 National College for School Leadership – all rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced without prior permission from the National College. To reuse this material, please contact the Marketing and Communications team at the National College or email [publications@nationalcollege.org.uk](mailto:publications@nationalcollege.org.uk).

Triumph Road  
Nottingham NG8 1DH  
T 0845 609 0009  
F 0115 872 2001  
E [enquiries@nationalcollege.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nationalcollege.org.uk)  
[www.nationalcollege.org.uk](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk)

#### We care about the environment

We are always looking for ways to minimise our environmental impact. We only print where necessary, which is why you will find most of our materials online. When we do print we use environmentally friendly paper.