

Glossary

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

Academy	Academies are publicly funded independent schools. Academies have different governance arrangements from other schools
AC	Academy committee – a committee of the trust board in a MAT. The role and responsibility of any committee is defined in the MAT's scheme of delegation
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 sponsored	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 schools admission with which all schools must comply
AFH	Academies Financial Handbook – a handbook issued by the EFA that sets out the financial management and financial governance requirements that apply to all academy trusts
A-level	General Certificate of Education Advanced level – usually completed by some 16-18 year-olds after GCSE
Articles of association	The articles of association is the formal governing document for an academy and sets out its rules for operating, including the composition of the governing board
ASCL	Association of School and College Leaders – a headteacher union
Assessment without levels	A common phrase to describe changes to the primary curriculum. Grade descriptions and levels have now been removed from the national curriculum and it is up to primary schools to decide how they track pupil progress and attainment. Children will still sit SATs exams in KS1 and KS2 as a national benchmark, however they will no longer be given a grade. Instead, they will be given a scaled score, with a score of 100 or above showing that a pupil has met national expectations
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. They are appointed for 1-4 years, with the opportunity for re-appointment. An associate member could be a pupil, member of staff or someone with expertise in a particular area. Academies' articles of association allow them to appoint non-governors to committees and give them voting rights

ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers – a union for education professionals
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 (three of which must count in the EBacc measure)
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
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. Schools may now decide to conduct baseline assessments in reception, but again this is not a statutory requirement
Capital funding	Spending on projects, improvements, and extensions to the school's land and buildings
CC	Cluster committee – a committee established by the trust board with delegated responsibilities concerning the performance of a set groups of academies within the MAT
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
CEO	Chief executive officer – the lead professional and head of the executive branch for a group of academies known as a multi academy trust (MAT). Although not being a headteacher in any school, they will be ultimately accountable to the governing board for all aspects of the MAT as a whole
CFO	Chief financial officer – the individual who leads the finance department, such as the finance director, business manager or equivalent
Clerk	The clerk is the 'constitutional conscience' of the governing board. They provide advice on governance, and constitutional and procedural matters. They also offer administrative support to the governing board and relay information on legal requirements
Cluster committee	A committee used by some MATs to carry out some of its school level governance functions across two or more academies
'Coasting' school	A school or academy whose performance falls within the government's 'coasting' definition and is therefore eligible for intervention
Collaboration	An agreement between two or more schools to work together on one particular issue. They keep their individual governing boards, but may set up a joint committee to which they can delegate powers
Community MAT	A local community-centred, schools-led MAT. These MATs tend to have pupil numbers in the thousands, rather than the tens of thousands, with genuine collaboration between multiple schools in close geographical proximity

Community schools	Maintained schools at which the local authority (LA) is the employer, owns the land and buildings and sets the admission criteria. The LA also take a proportion of income known as 'top slice' for the provision of central services such as HR, legal etc
Community special schools	Maintained schools that make special educational provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or education, health and care plans (EHCPs), whose needs cannot be fully met from within mainstream provision. The LA is the employer, owns the land and buildings and sets the admission criteria
Competency framework for	A document developed by the DfE, setting out the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for effective governance
Competitive tendering	Obtaining quotes or tenders from alternative suppliers before awarding contracts
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
CTC	City Technology Colleges were the forerunners of the current academies, set up via a direct agreement with the secretary of state for education as charitable companies
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
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 MATs 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 (formerly DCSF)
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 1,265 hours in a school year
Disapplication	A term used where national curriculum requirements may not apply to a pupil
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
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
EBD	Emotional and behavioural difficulties
Education Forum	Established by the government as a consultative group including the National Governors' Association (NGA), the Local Government Association (LGA) and all the teaching and headteacher unions
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EFA	Education Funding Agency – it is responsible for all revenue and capital funding for schools and is part of the DfE
EHC plan	Education, health and care plan – the document that replaces statements of SEN and learning difficulties assessments for children and young people with special educational needs
ESG	Education Services Grant – Introduced in 2013 to replace the Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) to make funding of education services more appropriate for increasing number of academies. The ESG gives local authorities and academy trusts money to fund their schools' services on a per pupil basis as an unringfenced grant
ESO	Education Supervision Order, which LAs may apply for to deal with cases of poor attendance at school
Ethos	The morals, values and beliefs that do, or at least should, 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
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
Ex officio	Able to attend meetings by virtue of holding a particular office
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
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
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 that sets out the relationship between an academy/MAT and the Education Funding Agency (EFA)/Department for Education (DfE)
GAG	General Annual Grant – the main source of revenue funding for academy trusts
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
Governing board	Refers to the board of maintained schools (governing body) and academies/MATs (board of trustees)
Governing body	Refers to the governing body of a maintained school only
Governor services	May be 'in-house' in larger MATs but often externally commissioned, governor services provide essential support to the governing board which may be in the form of training, advice or clerking services. This has historically been offered by the local authority through a service level agreement. Academies and maintained schools are free to buy into their local authority's governor services or seek alternative arrangements
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
IEP	Individual education plan for pupils with special educational needs
IGCSE	International GCSE
INSET	In-service education and training – courses for practising teachers and other school staff
Instrument of government	A legal document setting out the composition of maintained school governing bodies
KS 1-4	Key stages 1-4. 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. KS5 applies to 16-19 year-olds but is not part of the national curriculum
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 will also provide other services to schools, which may be provided via a service level agreement to maintained schools and in many cases academies
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
LA governor	Nominated by the LA but appointed by the governing body
LGA	Local Government Association – national organisation supporting and representing local government
LGB	Local governing body – a term often used to describe a committee of a trust board for an individual school within a MAT. See LGC, academy committee
LGC	Local governing committee – a term often used to describe a committee of a trust board for an individual school within a MAT. See LGB, 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 whereas larger local associations may organise events and provide formal support and training opportunities
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 MAT

Mixed ability	A teaching group in which children of all abilities are taught together
Mixed MAT	Some MATs are known as “mixed” MATs because the academies in the MAT will be a mix of those with of a religious character and those without. The governance arrangements will reflect this. Usually the foundation body (i.e. the diocese) is a member, and that member appoints a certain number of trustees. The specific arrangements will be described in the articles of association.
NAHT	National Association of Head Teachers – a headteacher union
NAO	National Audit Office – scrutinises public spending for parliament. It audits the financial statements of all central government departments, agencies and other public bodies, and reports the results to parliament
NASBM	National Association of School Business Managers
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers – a teaching union
National College	National College for Teaching and Leadership – the organisation responsible for national training programmes for school leaders, aspiring school leaders and the development of leaders of children’s services. In particular, it is responsible for the National Professional Qualification for Headship, the Chairs of Governors’ Leadership Development Programme and National Clerks’ Development Programme
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
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NSC	National schools commissioner – a civil servant responsible for co-ordinating the work of the eight RSCs
NGA	National Governors’ Association. The national membership organisation for school governors and trustees
Non-teaching (support)	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
NUT	National Union of Teachers – a teaching union
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 that inspects education and training for learners of all ages and inspects and regulates care for children and young people
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
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 sports 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, eg 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 (eg infrastructure) 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 now ensure teachers' pay is linked to their performance
PRU	Pupil referral unit – alternative education provision for pupils unable to attend a mainstream school or special school
PSP	Pastoral support programme for pupils at serious risk of permanent exclusion
PTA	Parent teacher association – or PSA (parent staff association)

PTA UK	National membership organisation for parent teacher associations – formerly NCPTA
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	Its decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010
Pupil premium	Funding allocated to schools to support pupils eligible for FSM, in care, or who have parents in the armed forces
Pupil profile	Broad evaluation of a pupil's personality, interests and capabilities – this forms part of the pupil's record of achievement
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
RAISEonline	Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School Self-Evaluation is the web-based system to disseminate school performance data to schools
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
ROA	Record of achievement
RSCs	Regional schools commissioners – civil servants who 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 schools commissioner
SACRE	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – local statutory board that advises on religious education and collective worship
SAT	Single academy trust – an academy trust that consists of just one school
SATs	Standard assessment tasks – used for national curriculum assessment

SBM	School business manager – 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
School census	A statutory return that takes place during the autumn, spring, and summer terms. Maintained schools and academies should take part in the census
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
SDP	School development plan – the operational document describing how the school will work towards the strategic priorities set by the governing board
Secondment	The release of staff on a temporary basis for work elsewhere
Secretary of state for education	The senior government minister with responsibility for education. Leads the Department for Education
SENCO	Special educational needs 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
SENDIST	Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal
Service level agreement	A contract between a service provider (the local authority or another private sector provider) and a school that defines the level of service expected from the service provider
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 receipt of a child's pension from the Ministry of Defence
Setting	A system of organising pupils into ability groups for particular subjects
SFVS	Schools Financial Value Standard – a means for the governing board to assess its financial processes, capabilities and skills
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
SoD	Scheme of delegation – the key document in a MAT defining which functions have been delegated and to whom, clearly showing the lines of accountability within a trust

Special school	Pupils with a statement of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or an education, health and care EHC 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
SSAT	Specialist Schools and Academies Trust
STA	Standards and Testing Agency – the government agency responsible for setting national curriculum tests for pupils up to KS2 and managing the assessment of those tests
Staff governor/trustee	Elected by those who are paid to work at the school
Statementing	Officially assessing a child as having special educational needs. In 2014 this procedure was replaced by education, health and care EHC plans
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 that sets out a small number of key priorities for the school over the next 3-5 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
TA	Teaching assistant
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
TES	Formerly known as the Times Educational Supplement, a weekly publication providing education news, analysis and opinion for teachers, school leaders and other educators
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
TSA	Teaching school alliances – led by teaching schools and include schools that are benefiting from support as well as strategic partners
UNISON	Union of Public Employees. Many school support staff will be members of this union
UTC	University technical college – a type of academy, specifically for pupils aged 14–19 and designed to offer a combination of technical, practical and academic learning
VA	Voluntary aided – a school set up and owned by a voluntary board, usually a church board, largely financed by the LA. The governing board employs the staff and controls pupil admissions and religious education. The school’s buildings and land (apart from playing fields) will normally be owned by a charitable foundation. VA schools set their own admissions criteria in line with the admissions code
Value added	The progress schools help pupils make relative to their individual starting points – rather than looking at raw results value added also takes into account the prior attainment, thus enabling a judgment to be made about the effect of the school on pupils’ current attainment
VC	Voluntary controlled – usually a denominational school wholly maintained but with certain residual rights regarding religious worship
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
Virtual school headteacher	Looked-after children are on a virtual school roll, and each local authority will employ an experienced teacher to oversee the educational progress of all children under the care of that particular LA. The virtual school headteacher will have the specialist knowledge to provide extra support to designated teachers. They will 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 KS4 and KS5 may undertake a vocational apprenticeship or qualification as a viable alternative to GCSEs or A-levels
VOICE	A teaching union
Work experience	A planned programme as part of careers education, which enables pupils to sample experience of a working environment of their choice in school time