



Growing School Governance

our achievements in 2018

Chair's welcome

In my first year as chair of the National Governance Association, I am delighted that we have continued to go from strength to strength, with more than a third of schools of England now benefitting from NGA membership.

Against a backdrop of continuing change and increased pressure in the education sector, where school governors and trustees have to make more and more difficult decisions, we continue to support individual boards in improving their effectiveness as well as pushing for changes at a national level to help governance become more consistently effective.

Our guidance, research and advice helps governing boards to navigate this complex landscape and deliver effective governance in the context of their own school or trust, whilst our professional development services ensure that governors, trustees and clerks are equipped to carry out their role with confidence and skill.

I am pleased that this year we are investing in a new website and accompanying member relationship system that will greatly improve the experience of our members, and other visitors to the NGA website, by providing a personalised user journey and making our wealth of resources more accessible.

We will continue to campaign courageously on matters that are important to our members and to us. Funding is the greatest challenge facing school governors and trustees today, and an overwhelming 80% of our members told us that increased overall funding for the schools system is the main issue they want us to campaign on next year. To make an effective case, we do need governors and trustees to share their experiences on the real impact of funding pressures to add to the already extensive evidence base ahead of the comprehensive spending review 2019.

There are many other issues that we also seek change on in the practice of governing boards and in education policy to further our aim of improving the effectiveness of governing boards in the interests of children and young people. Some of our priorities this year will include encouraging a broad and balanced curriculum, exploring the benefits of collaboration, and ensuring that governance is effective, ethical and accountable.

NGA continues to live by its values, and in accordance with this, the board of trustees was unanimous in its decision earlier in the year to agree that NGA will voluntarily pay the real Living Wage to all our staff. Diversity of governing boards is something we have long campaigned for, and as we launched our Everyone on Board campaign, it was all too clear that diversity was lacking on our own board. We are pleased to have taken positive steps to address this, and we will continue to ensure that our board reflects the diverse range of members we serve.

I want to finish by saying thank you to two groups of people without whom we simply could not do what we do. Firstly, the quarter of a million school governance volunteers and professionals, including our 62,000 members. Your commitment to making a difference and creating the best opportunities for children and young people is simply astounding.

Finally, on behalf of the trustees, I would like to share our appreciation of the NGA team – from our well-regarded leadership team to our dedicated operational staff, everyone makes a vital and valuable contribution. It is to them that we owe our success and the satisfaction of our members.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maggi Bull". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maggi Bull
Chair of trustees
National Governance Association

Welcome to our annual report of achievements

National Governance Association are the school and academy governance experts. We deliver well-received membership services, influence governance practice and policy, and provide high-quality development opportunities to school governors, trustees and clerks.

Our charitable object is to improve the educational welfare of children and young people in England by promoting high standards in all our state funded schools and improving the effectiveness of their governing boards.

We value the voices of all, evidence, expertise and our independence.

As well as embracing the Nolan Principles of Public Life (Selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; leadership), we aim to be courageous, creative, visionary and light on our feet.

We champion fairness and opportunity for all young people.

Our aims

To achieve our charitable object, we aim to

1. Influence and shape the practice and culture of school governance and relevant policy in a way which strengthens accountability in order to improve the education of pupils
2. Continue to be the leading independent source of information, support and e-learning for all those involved in school governance
3. Ensure the voices of those involved in school governance are heard
4. Be a trusted partner of school improvement organisations, school leadership organisations and local and regional governance support and training organisations

We are a not-for-profit social enterprise, a charity and a company limited by guarantee.

35 colleagues

deliver our services from GovernorHQ in Birmingham.



Led by our executive team of Emma Knights (chief executive), Gillian Allcroft (deputy chief executive) and Heidi Copland (chief operating officer), our policy and information, advice and guidance, business development, membership and professional development

teams combine a wealth of governance and professional skills and expertise to deliver our services.

Being a happy and rewarding place to work is intrinsic to our success, and we are delighted that, in our staff survey 2018, when asked about the extent to which they feel proud to work for NGA, the average score given by our team was 4.3 out of 5.

38%

of school governing boards in England are NGA members.

Over

62,000

individuals have access to our services.

Over

8,000

governing boards use our eLearning.

100+

valued partners support our work nationally.

The data reported as 'this year' is for the period 1st November 2017 to 31st October 2018. All other data is correct at 31st October 2018.

Our membership services

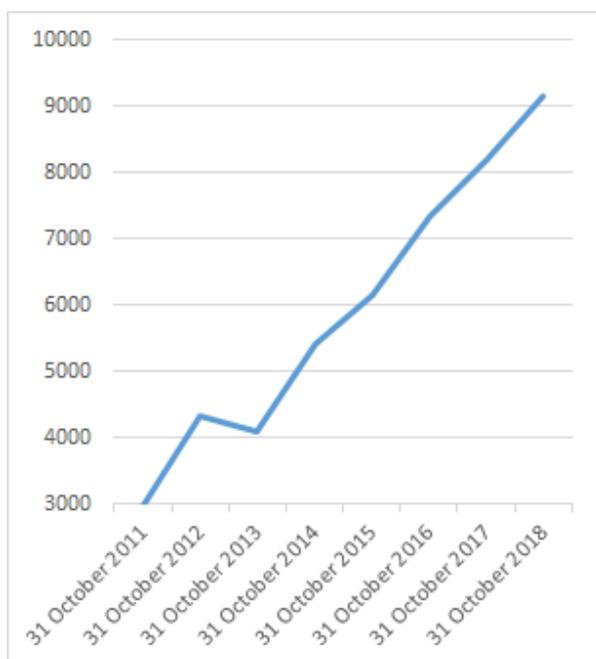
First and foremost, we exist to serve our members and emphasise that they guide all our decisions and priorities. We listen to members through our research, and through consultations at our regional events.

Membership of NGA offers significant benefits to governing boards and clerks. Thousands of schools, trusts and organisations that support those governing schools locally join us so that they can:

- Access independent information, guidance and resources
- Broaden their awareness of issues affecting governance
- Learn about best practice from others
- Keep up to date with changes in education

Our membership growth

Over the past year, our membership has grown to reach 9,000 schools, trusts, local associations and governance support organisations. We are delighted that so many organisations continue to trust us to help them further their impact through our school governance expertise.



Governing Matters

Over **41,000** governors, trustees and clerks receive our bi-monthly membership magazine **Governing Matters**.



Governing Matters includes in-depth updates on policy, guidance and reports from the NGA team; welcomes guest contributors introducing their own insights and work relevant to governing boards; and facilitates governing boards to share their experiences and best practice with others.



Newsletter

Our weekly members' newsletter is distributed to over **62,000** readers.



This comprehensive newsletter, sent every Friday throughout term time, equips members with the insight they need to perform their role effectively. We analyse the latest news from education and what it means for school governance; and signpost useful guidance, resource and opportunities for governing boards to utilise in their work.

Publications

We have distributed over **16,000** copies of our publications this year.



Our comprehensive publications offer both an in-depth induction and handy reference for new and experienced governors, trustees and chairs alike. Complimentary copies of these publications are available to our GOLD members as well as to governors and trustees placed

through Inspiring Governance and those participating in our Leading Governance development courses. They are also available at a discount to other members and on general sale. This year, we released updated versions of Welcome to Governance (10th edition), Welcome to a Multi Academy Trust (2nd edition) and The Chair's Handbook (7th edition).



“ Welcome to Governance is an invaluable and comprehensive companion for anyone playing an important governance role within our school system. ”

Andy Buck, Managing Director #honk, Founding Director Leadership Matters.



Exclusive events

Over **1,000** members attended our free events across the country.



Governors and trustees already give freely a significant amount of time – that's why we are committed to keeping our events free for members. This year, we held two national conferences, six regional conferences, twelve regional meetings, three specialist conferences, and several special interest group meetings.



A highlight of our events calendar was our summer conference where both the Secretary of State for Education Damian Hinds and Shadow Secretary of State for Education Angela Rayner addressed our members. The secretary of state acknowledged the contribution of governors and trustees, and made announcements on a number of matters which we have been campaigning for including increased investment in governance training and reducing conflicts of interest by introducing new rules on related party transactions. Delegates also had a choice of ten practical workshops on essential topics including parental engagement, finances, and safeguarding and we were pleased to welcome a range of partners to deliver these. On the morning of the conference, our chief executive Emma Knights took the opportunity to appear on BBC Breakfast to talk about the role and views of school governors and trustees.

Our team visited each region of England to deliver conferences and meetings to our members locally. Contributors including the National and Regional Schools Commissioners, Fischer Family Trust and the Arts Council addressed delegates at our conferences, whilst at our meetings we have explored topics including supporting disadvantaged children, senior leadership teams and finances and curriculum planning with members.

What our members say

As a membership organisation, it is important that we know how well we are representing our members views and that we are providing them with the resources and support they need.

88.1%
of members agreed that membership has a positive impact on the effectiveness of their governing board.



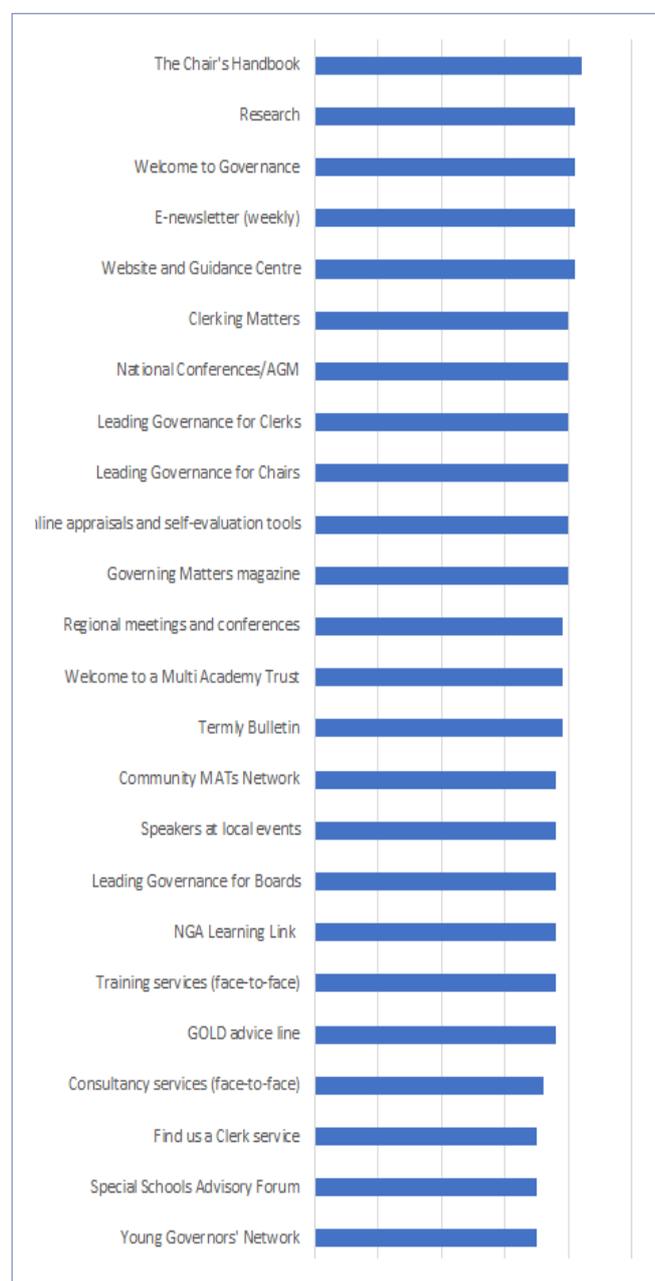
In particular, members really value the core benefits of their membership: our publications, events, guidance centre, newsletter and Governing Matters magazine, as well as our professional

development services. We are delighted that all of these results are positive, but there's always room for improvement so our teams will be reviewing their scores and the detailed feedback to continue to improve their offer to both our members and others involved in school governance.

Our independent position is crucial to NGA being able to effectively campaign for changes to governance policy and practice, and we always gather views from a wide range of our membership when forming our policy positions and seeking to influence. However, we appreciate that within our membership itself, there will be a diverse range of views and experience which means that governors, trustees and clerks won't always speak with one voice. When we asked our members how well we represent their voice, the average score was 3.6 out of 5.

Providing a first-class service to members is crucial to our success and we want every member to have an efficient and good experience when they contact us. It is pleasing that the average satisfaction score given by our members for their contact with GovernorHQ is 4.2 out of 5.

We asked members to tell us how satisfied they are with the NGA products and services they have experienced (out of 5).



Policy and practice

From conducting insightful research and learning from our special interest groups, to expanding and refreshing our extensive guidance centre and offering tailored advice, our policy and practice teams combine a range of disciplines that enable us to represent the voice of school governance on a national stage and help governing boards to improve their practice.

To drive changes that will benefit young people, we campaign on policy and practice issues that are both important to our members and that we believe need to change in order to improve the effectiveness of governance. This year, the issues we have asked the Department for Education to address include:

- Introducing a fourth core function of governing boards to ensure effective engagement with stakeholders. We believe that the current functions do not encapsulate the importance of making sure that the voices of stakeholders are heard and taken into account in the governance of schools, a particular risk as multi-academy trusts grow and become more distant from local stakeholders.
- Making induction training for school governors and trustees mandatory to raise the effectiveness of governance – only 3% of respondents to the School Governance in 2018 survey disagree that induction training should be mandatory for new governors and trustees.
- Reviewing the appeal system for exclusion decisions, which was last changed in 2012. We suggest that the review stage by panels of governing boards may not be serving a useful purpose and that the process should include an appeal stage, entirely independent of the institution that made the decision to exclude the pupil.

Spotlight on disadvantage research

Since the introduction of the pupil premium in April 2011, little has been done to recognise the role of the governing board in spending the pupil premium. To begin to understand the impact of governance on supporting disadvantaged pupils, we conducted a survey of 875 governors and trustees as well as document analysis of

36 pupil premium statements. The subsequent Spotlight on Disadvantage report explores the governing board's role in spending, monitoring and evaluating the pupil premium, and makes recommendations to improve effectiveness. As well as sharing these findings with our members, we have presented this research at conferences and workshops, and have received positive feedback on our report from prominent thinkers on pupil premium and disadvantage.



Headteacher's appraisal research

Holding the executive to account is one of the core functions of the governing board, and as part of our work on staffing, we conducted research to explore how schools are currently conducting headteacher appraisal. This includes the challenges they face and the obstacles they need to overcome to ensure an effective, robust and meaningful process is in place. We surveyed 1,164 chairs of governors and trustees of state-schools in England and interviewed 10 headteachers, chairs of governors and external advisors. This research reveals the arrangements that governing boards make for headteacher appraisal including how objectives are set and how performance against objectives is measured. Recommendations are made to governing boards and it also allows governing boards to compare their practice to others. We are delighted to have presented this research to the British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society (BELMAS) conference.

Guidance on being strategic

Being strategic: a guide for governing boards, published in partnership with The Wellcome Trust, supports governing boards with their first core function of ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. We listened to extensive feedback from governors, trustees and senior leaders, drawing on practical experience and real life examples, to offer guidance on a robust annual cycle for creating, monitoring and reviewing strategy, supporting school leaders in taking a broad and long-term perspective. Since its launch in March, it's been viewed over 10,000 times with 4,000 printed copies also given away.



topics. These discussions have since informed our guidance and policy positions on MAT governance, and provided a useful confidant to ensure our views are reflective of the observations and experiences of those impacted.

It is important to have research from a governance perspective to inform others looking to form or join a MAT about the approaches others have found productive and common barriers to success. Recognising the need for those governing MATs to share their experiences, we have curated three in-depth case studies from diverse MATs, focusing on the stories that each MAT has to tell, rather than making a judgement. This includes what trustees and executive leaders have learned from any obstacles faced, what they have found successful or less so and how they have adapted over time in response to these challenges and changing circumstances. We also presented this research to BELMAS.

The role of academy trust members is another confusing area of MAT governance. To clarify the role of members in trusts, and to encourage trusts to improve their governance practice, we produced guidance which positions members as 'the guardians of the governance' of the trust and which sets out eight responsibilities for members of trusts. Separation between members and trustees of the trust is a core topic of the guidance, which has been viewed over 1,200 times since its launch in September, and it has also been positively received by education policy makers.

To facilitate learning and collaboration between MATs that are strongly rooted in the communities they serve, our Community MATs network – now entering its third year – brings together trustees, clerks and governance professionals. This is a safe space for those involved in MAT governance to discuss their experiences and the challenges they face. The network also informs our MAT governance work, helps us to capture and share the common opportunities and challenges facing MATs and enables us to relay our guidance and best practice directly to those responsible for governing MATs. We have held three network meetings this year in different locations, distributing our recent learnings from working with MATs and facilitating attendees to present their own experiences.

Clerks Advisory Group

Professional clerking is one of our eight elements of effective governance, and our Clerking Matters campaign seeks to raise both the status and professionalism of governing board clerks. Our Clerks Advisory Group, which directs our Clerking Matters campaign, gives clerks the opportunity to discuss issues and share good practice, as well as telling us what else we can do to help them carry out their work. There have been four meetings of the Clerks Advisory Group along with a dedicated clerk's conference this year, which featured from a keynote speech from ICSA: the governance institute and workshops on the administrative role of a clerk in various school settings and on how to manage relationships within a governing board.



MAT governance expertise

With the recent growth of multi-academy trusts (MATs), there are many new and evolving governance opportunities and challenges. Our research and networks provide unrivalled insights on MAT governance, putting us ahead of the curve on the knowledge and practice of governing a group of schools.

In June, we hosted a roundtable for MAT trustees and school improvement organisations to take stock of some of the key themes in MAT governance identified through our work, and to gain feedback on our contentions on these

School governance in 2018 survey

5,218 governors and trustees completed our annual survey in partnership with Tes. This is the only systematic, large-scale research in to the views, experience and practices of school governors and trustees. Our School Governance in 2018 report makes recommendations for both policy makers and governing boards on practice. The report provides us with a number of opportunities – it enables us

to ensure the voices of school governors and trustees are present in national education conversations; it helps governing boards to understand what others are doing and recognise trends in practice; and it gives us the opportunity to forge partnerships with other education sector organisations around key issues, which we did by



hosting a roundtable to discuss the findings. The report is disseminated widely, and we are pleased that coverage of the views of governors and trustees on specific issues were reported in national press and have been cited by education influencers and organisations.

Funding the Future campaign

Funding remains the most important issue for the majority of school governors and trustees, and a key issue that our members want us to keep campaigning on. From our School Governance in 2018 survey, we gathered lots of evidence to underpin our calls for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to increase the level of school funding. This year, we have been encouraging those governing to share their stories with us to illustrate the breadth and depth of the issues. We have continued to write to those in government with our concerns and to report what governors and trustees are telling us, and have encouraged our members to do the same. Our approach to working with partner organisations – representing headteacher's, teachers, parents and others – builds the case for increased funding and brings greater scale and gravity to our ask. We will continue our campaign in the run up to the comprehensive spending review 2019.

Governance recruitment

To support governing boards in recruiting skilled volunteers to become governors and trustees, we partner with the Education and Employers charity to provide Inspiring Governance – a free service connecting volunteers who are interested in becoming governors and trustees with schools that need them. We take a lead in making governing boards aware of the service, and in providing expert support and training to volunteers appointed via Inspiring Governance. Over 6,600 schools, trusts and governance support services now benefit from the service.

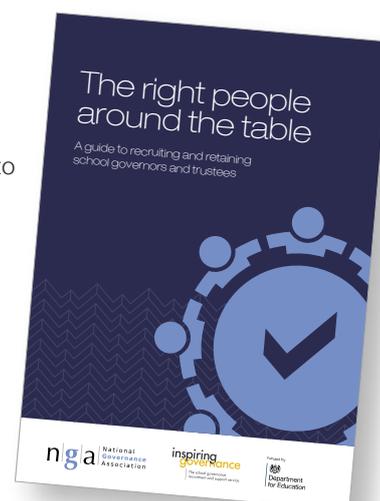
**inspiring
governance**

“ Good governance needs a range of voices. And that was powerfully on display in the video we have just seen – and I champion the work NGA are doing, through your Everyone on Board campaign, to encourage more diversity. ”

Damian Hinds, Secretary of State for Education.

Getting the right people around the table is one of our eight elements of effective governance, and this year we published updated guidance to support governor and trustee recruitment and retention. From evaluating the current board to interviewing and appointing volunteers, this guidance is full of practical advice, suggestions of good practice and signposting to further tools and resources.

The guidance is designed to complement Inspiring Governance, and demonstrates how governing boards can get the best out of the service. It's been viewed over 3,700 times since February with a further 900 printed copies given away.



Diversity is another issue we see on governing boards – currently just 5% governors and trustees are from an ethnic minority, and 10% are aged under 40 (School Governance in 2018). To increase the number of ethnic minority and young school governors, we launched the Everyone on Board campaign in June, in partnership with Inspiring Governance. This aims to ensure that governing boards reflect the communities they serve and the wider society in which young people live. In our film which underpins this campaign, six serving governors shared insight from their personal experiences on why governing boards need to be diverse so that they are successful for everyone.

To encourage a focus on improving diversity at all levels of schools and trusts, we signed the Department for Education's 'statement of intent' in response to the government's race disparity audit – this calls on everyone in the schools sector to play their part in driving this important change. This reinforces our commitment to continue to address issues of diversity on governing boards, and to supporting diversity and inclusion throughout schools.

Our Young Governors' Network aims to support and encourage those aged under 40 to govern in schools by facilitating them to share their experiences, addressing the challenges faced by young people governing schools and creating sustainable connections amongst current and prospective governors. There are now over 250 members of the network. This year we held meetings in London and Birmingham, and for the first time extended the network to Sheffield, Manchester and Bristol. These well-received meetings provided a mixture of networking opportunities and facilitated discussions to aid personal and professional development.



Many governing boards tell us it is a challenge to find someone to become chair, so as an innovative succession solution for governing boards, we are leading a pilot of the Future chairs service. Future Chairs is a free recruitment service designed to help governing boards that will need a chair, vice-chair or committee chair within a year to connect with volunteers with the right skills and willingness to take on a leadership role. A bespoke service is being delivered in 17 priority areas, whilst the service is available nationally through the Inspiring Governance platform. This year we have placed 37 volunteers with governing boards that have identified a need for a future chair.



Supporting special schools

Those governing special schools face some different and quite specific issues from those governing mainstream schools. Our Special Schools Advisory Group provides an opportunity to discuss the particular needs of governance in a diverse range of special schools to inform our policymaking and representation, and to raise awareness of the issues facing special school governance. We held a meeting of the advisory group this year, and a dedicated SEND conference in July saw external speakers from organisations that support young people with SEND address governors and trustees. Effective governance of SEND was also a core topic of our autumn events programme.

External events

Over the course of the year, the NGA team have visited over one hundred events to speak about different aspects of school governance. Engagements include:

- Giving keynote speeches at conferences
- Delivering governance focused workshops at events
- Attending roundtables, forums and seminars with other organisations
- Supporting local associations by addressing delegates at their conferences
- Exhibiting at events to extend the opportunity to access our support and resources to as many governing boards as possible

We are asked to talk to delegates about a range of topics, and some of our most requested topics this year include good governance (effective, ethical and accountable); equality and diversity; and vision and culture. We welcome the opportunity to speak to governors and trustees, and others in the education sector, at events across the country.

Advice on governance practice

We resolved **1,385** advice queries this year.



For governing boards with GOLD membership, we offer a bespoke advice line which provides detailed and independent legal advice to chairs and clerks. This year, our advice team broke its record for the total number of queries it answered, with a 4.8% increase on last year. Advice is provided on a whole range of topics, with the most common queries being parental complaints; exclusions; conflicts of interest; governor eligibility; governor appointment; and headteachers. However, no single topic accounted for more than 9% of queries, highlighting the variety of issues that governing boards are responsible for and seek guidance on. On average, the time taken to resolve a query was exactly two working days and this was the quickest response rate ever, a significant (24.5%) improvement on last year's average response time of 2.65 working days.



Influencing and representation

Utilising our research and feedback from members, we work hard to influence government and other education policy makers by making sure that voices of those involved in school governance are heard.

Consultations

We responded to 20 consultations this year. These include consultations by Ofsted, Ofqual, the Department for Education, the Labour Party, Education Select Committee, National Audit Office and School Teachers' Review Body. We also make members aware of consultations so that they have the opportunity to send their own views direct to policy makers.

Our chief executive Emma Knights gave oral evidence to the Public Accounts Committee as part of their inquiry into the value for money delivered on converting schools to academies following a report by the National Audit Office, and our comments were subsequently included in the Education Select Committee's report on the matter.

We also gave evidence to the Labour Party's backbench inquiry into school improvement, oversight and accountability to help shape the principles of what Labour's oversight and accountability policy should be.

Meetings and groups

NGA takes the views and experiences of school governors, trustees and clerks to the government and to school improvement and leadership organisations. We work closely with the Department for Education (DfE) and offer both support and challenge on ideas and initiatives, placing emphasis on maintaining our independent position.

Some of the groups in which we participate include:

- the DfE's School and Academy Funding Group and its sub-groups (early years and efficiency) to advise on matters relating to all aspects of school funding;
- the DfE Advisory Group on Governance which provides a forum for representatives to raise and discuss issues of general principle and detail affecting school governance.

We have also met with Lord Agnew (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Education), the National Schools Commissioner, various Regional Schools Commissioners, and Ofsted's HM Chief Inspector of Education to discuss issues pertinent to school governance policy and practice.

Commissions

To bring governance expertise to specific topics, our chief executive Emma Knights continued to sit on a number of commissions throughout the year.

- NAHT's accountability commission – sought to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the current school accountability system. The commission released its report in September, with recommendations to policy makers. We used this opportunity to encourage the education system to stop limiting accountability as numerical targets and Ofsted, and to recognise the role of governance as a form of accountability.
- Commission on Religious Education – a high-profile commission with a remit to make recommendations designed to improve the quality and rigour of religious education, which governing boards must meet their statutory responsibility in ensuring RE is taught to pupils. The commission presented its report in September.
- ASCL's ethical leadership commission – produced a Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education which is based on the Nolan Principles of Public Life. It is being formally launched next year along with a pathfinder programme which NGA is running during 2019.
- Knowsley Education Commission - convened to improve education in the borough and ensure that Knowsley children get the education they deserve, we were invited to sit on this commission to bring an expert perspective on the role of school governance in driving these changes. It will come to an end early in 2019 with a report of progress and a plan to sustain partnership for school led improvement across the borough.

Professional development

Recognising that being a school governor, trustee or clerk is a role which has significant responsibility, we renamed our training and consultancy offer as NGA Professional Development this year. With this change, we aim to further raise the status of school governance roles and of professional clerking.

Leading Governance

Over **600** chairs and clerks are currently undertaking our development programmes.



Delivering development training to ensure that governors, trustees and clerks can carry out their role confidently and effectively is important to us. We were delighted to secure a contract from the Department for Education in January to deliver governance development

training for chairs (including vice chair, committee chairs and aspiring chairs), clerks and boards.

Our Leading Governance programmes offer blended learning combining mentoring, face to face sessions, school based projects and eLearning, and are delivered with the support of NGA's large network of local and national partners, including ICSEA: the governance institute who accredit our Clerks programme.

n|g|a| leading governance

100% of participants on our chairs programme have rated their experience so far as good or above.



Since our courses began in August, we have established 34 cohort locations across the country with another 70 cohorts planned to begin this contract year. A significant number of participants have been recommended to our programmes by their local authority or by personal referral,

showing that the programmes are valued by professional governance organisations.

“ This comes highly recommended. I've really enjoyed being on this programme over the last six months or so. Great networking opportunities, idea sharing and reflection time in an otherwise frantic world of work and governance intertwined. ”

Tom Meeks, chair of trustees, Chilford Hundred Education Trust. Leading Governance for Chairs participant.

Learning Link

Over **8,000** schools subscribe to Learning Link.



Learning Link – our eLearning offer – reached its one-year anniversary in April. Governing boards and local partners buy in to Learning Link to access training for all governors, trustees and clerks on their full range of

duties. Since last year, Learning Link has seen a 45% increase of new registrations and a 75% increase in completed modules by our users. Our eight CPD-accredited modules focus on core governance knowledge including resources, strategy and compliance. Learning Link also offers a further 50 training modules for a range of roles and responsibilities. We have been working closely with partners and subject matter experts to create new modules for the coming year.

In a recent survey, we asked Learning Link users about their experience of the service:

- 65% of respondents said they have improved their governance as a result of using Learning Link
- 71% of respondents say the content has increased their governance knowledge
- 82% of respondents would recommend Learning Link to another governor/trustee
- 82% of respondents rate the quality of the modules on Learning Link as good or excellent

n|g|a learninglink



We asked users how Learning Link has improved their governance practice. They said:

“It has increased my knowledge significantly, which has helped me to recommend improvements to a number of our procedures.”

“Understanding topic matter means that we have asked better questions in meetings.”

“I have learnt a great deal from Learning Link, it has helped me keep updated on any changes which I have then been able to share with the governing board. I have felt much more informed.”

“Being aware of where governance fits in with the whole framework of education and understanding the scope of governance. I understand better the areas that governors get involved in and where they don’t.”

“Whenever a different situation arises and I am unsure as to how to address the situation I will read the relevant module or the notes which I have written whilst working on a module.”

“With far greater understanding of aspects of governorship I am more confident in questioning school leaders and supporting fellow governors.”

“Although I am an experienced governor, I undertake the courses as refreshers and always take something back to improve our board.”

“By having a clearer understanding of responsibilities highlighted in the modules I feel I will always be improving my knowledge and hence be able to apply new ways of dealing with particular issues.”



n|g|a National Governance Association

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training and consultancy services

Effective, mutually supportive and respectful working practices between those leading and those governing schools is vital to improving education for children and young people. Therefore, we are delighted to partner with the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) to create and deliver the MAT governance element of their National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL), designed to support and prepare those leading more than one school or college.

We have also worked with the Ofsted training team to deliver training to lead inspectors on MAT governance. This training will be rolled out to all inspectors throughout 2019.

Governing boards can choose (or are sometimes required) to undergo an external review of governance - an in depth exploration of the governing boards performance which results in a plan to improve and develop governance. This year has seen a steady increase in the number of reviews NGA is being commissioned to carry out, and we vary our approach according to the individual requirements of the school or trust, through our extensive team of quality assured consultants.

Other commissions include consultants advising on senior executive leadership performance management, facilitating away days, conducting peer reviews, supporting MATs with change management, and other such tailored work. It is pleasing to note the number of follow up commissions.

Training on bespoke topics is also a key way we help governors, trustees and clerks to understand their role. We have been developing our work with local authorities in a number of ways, including in relation to their public offer governance development programmes. A number of local governor services commission us to deliver training, including inductions for all new governors and trustees in the authority. We also contribute expertise to tailored local education and governance improvement programmes, reviewing governance and delivering training on areas in need of enhancement.

Collaborating to improve governance

We are proud that many organisations that support school governance choose to work with us to enable the schools and trusts that they support to benefit from our insight and services.

We work with over

100 partners

to support school governance in their local area.



The support of partners is essential to our ability to support school governance across the country, and we value the opportunity to work with a range of local authorities, traded services and school improvement organisations to deliver in particular our Leading

Governance, Learning Link, consultancy and training, and Inspiring Governance services. To say thank you to these partners for their commitment to utilising our services to support governors, trustees and clerks in the schools they serve, and to understand how we can better support them in achieving their own aims, we held our inaugural partners conference this year.

Local Associations – independent, volunteer-led organisations which provide a forum for governors and trustees in a local area – continue to be valued affiliates. They are an important part of our membership, and they provide vital local information which we would not have access to otherwise. We continue to support the executive committees of over 30 Local Associations with a comprehensive termly bulletin which they are free to distribute to their own members; legal and procedural

advice on matters relating to the association; and with the offer of an NGA speaker free-of-charge to address their own governance conferences. We are also happy to help individuals to set up a new local association and can offer support and advice throughout the process.

Learning from the governance successes and failures of other organisations – the wider charity sector, and the public and private sectors – is essential. In setting our policy positions and writing guidance, we look not just to the education sector, but at governance across all sectors. This year, we have participated in the #R29 campaign, which emerged from the Who governs our schools? report, published by the RSA, and calls for an all-sector governance commission to be established. The campaign has progressed this year with a series of roundtables, including one hosted by NGA, which brought together a range of interested organisations to unearth commonalities and differences between governance in different sectors.

As an organisation and as individuals, we take an active role in participating in charity sector and professional development opportunities and employ the insights we gain in both improving the NGA and in translating these to the context of school governance so that we can further our charitable aims too.

Finally, we are very pleased to work with a number of organisations across the education sector in pursuit of our aims.



Association of School and College Leaders



The Governance Institute



