

The staff governor role

Guidance for governing boards in schools and trusts

Staff governors have first-hand knowledge of the school's day-to-day running and bring valuable professional knowledge to the governing board.

Becoming a governor offers staff members a range of professional development opportunities such as building leadership and evaluation skills and gaining knowledge of governance practice.

This resource covers:

- [who can be a staff governor](#)
- [staff governor responsibilities](#)
- [managing conflicts of interest](#)
- [maintaining confidentiality](#)
- [governing effectively](#)

Who can be a staff governor?

In maintained schools:

- Maintained school governing bodies have one staff governor who is elected by other members of staff.
- Teaching and support staff employed by the school are eligible to become staff governors.

In academy trusts:

- In academy trusts, no employees (other than the CEO in some cases) should sit on the trust board.
- In some cases, academy committees (local governing bodies) elect or appoint members of trust staff as local governors.

Staff governor responsibilities

It is not the role of staff governors to represent staff or act as a spokesperson. The governing board should have systems in place to [engage with staff](#).

Staff governors, like all governors, make strategic decisions and work together to:

- develop a vision and strategy for the school
- oversee financial performance and make sure money is well spent
- hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school
- engage with pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community to understand their views

A staff governor cannot be the chair or vice chair of the governing board.

While staff governors know their school well and likely have a good understanding of the education sector, they should participate in their board's [induction programme](#) to learn about governor duties, responsibilities and expectations.

[NCA members](#) also have unlimited access to our guidance, tools and resources to support effective governance.

How staff governors manage conflicts of interest

All governors must [declare business or personal interests](#) that might affect their ability to make impartial decisions.

As staff governors are often holding their line managers to account, handling conflicts of interest can be challenging. Conflicts arise where the issues being discussed affect the staff governor or their colleagues.

It is therefore not appropriate for staff governors to be involved in board discussions relating to:

- senior leader appraisal or recruitment
- staff restructuring
- pay decisions or reviews
- staff disciplinary, grievance or capability hearings
- exclusion or complaints panels (where they are reviewing their own headteacher's decisions)

Staff governors should declare their interest and remove themselves from discussion and voting on these matters.

In most cases, staff governors do not sit on a staffing and finance committee as the areas under scrutiny are more likely to result in a conflict of interest. Similarly, staff governors should not take on a [link role](#).

Maintaining confidentiality

It is important for all governors to keep board matters confidential. Staff governors should avoid sharing any information away from governing board meetings or discussing board business with other members of staff.

Where decisions do need to be shared with the wider staff body, the governing board should discuss what can be reported on and the staff governor should be clear on how this will happen.

Governing effectively

Effective staff governors:

- help other governors to understand the working of the school
- take responsibility for their learning and development as a governor, including attending [training](#)
- do not canvas the opinions of staff (they might want to let the governing board know the general feelings of staff but must use their own judgement in decision making)
- act impartially, making decisions that are in the best interests of pupils

We also encourage education professionals, such as teachers, middle leaders, senior leaders, and executive leaders to govern at other schools. This provides an opportunity for educators to grow professionally and is especially beneficial for aspiring senior leaders. See our [Educators on Board campaign](#) for more details.

New to school governance?

- Find out more about [becoming a governor or trustee](#) and the work of governing boards.
- [Explore NGA membership](#) and the support we offer governors and trustees.
- Access [induction training and resources](#) for your governance role.