

7. Support and Training for Governors

This section gives information relating to:

- support and training available for governors, how it is funded and how to access it;
- payment of allowances for expenses; and
- entitlement to time off work to undertake governance duties.

Background

1. Governors have an essential role to play in improving performance and a duty to promote the highest standards of educational achievement for all learners. Governors therefore need to be knowledgeable to carry out their roles and responsibilities and to effectively contribute to the school performance agenda.
2. The LA is required to provide such information and training as it considers necessary to enable governors to carry out their duties effectively. They must do so free of charge to each individual governor. For information on courses provided contact your local governor support officer. Subject to local arrangements, most LAs offer a package of governor and clerk training to schools (the training for clerks may be at a charge to the governing body).
3. Training may also be arranged in organised sessions for groups of governors, individual governing body sessions or cluster sessions of governing bodies. LAs may also provide on line e-learning training for governors.
4. Most of the training for governors and clerks is not compulsory but it is strongly encouraged so that governors have a better understanding of their roles and the limits of their responsibilities which will help individual governors and ultimately the governing body, to become more effective. All governors, **however experienced**, need training to keep abreast of change.

Mandatory Training for Governors

5. The Education (Wales) Measure 2011 includes provisions to allow Welsh Ministers to make regulations to make governor training mandatory on specific issues. The Government of Maintained Schools (Training Requirements for Governors) (Wales) Regulations 2013 were made for this purpose and came into force in September 2013.
6. They require certain governors to carry out the following training:
 - Induction Training – for governors appointed or elected after 20 September 2013
 - Training for Chairs – elected after 20 September

- Understanding School Data - for governors appointed or elected after 20 September 2013.
7. The Measure also allowed Welsh Ministers to set the content of the training for both governors and clerks to introduce consistency in the standards of training being delivered across Wales. Headteachers are exempt from completing the mandatory training although it would be considered good practice to invite newly appointed headteachers to attend the training.

Mandatory Induction Training

8. Focuses on a governor's role and the parameters of their responsibilities and provides a broad outline of the legal context within which governors conduct their business which will give new governors encouragement and confidence to take a full and active part in governing body discussions.

Who has to attend the training?

9. Any governor newly elected or appointed or re-elected or re-appointed after 20 September 2013 must attend the training within one year of their appointment or election. Any governor who attended the local authority induction training or the mandatory training and have had a break in service for five consecutive years must also complete the induction training again within one year of their appointment or election.

Who is exempt?

10. The following governors are exempt:
- Any governor who had been in post for more than two years before the regulations came into force in September 2013 who has not had a break in service and who is being appointed or elected for a further term of office,
 - A governor who has completed the mandatory training and is being appointed or elected for a further term of office, and who has not had a relevant break in service,
 - A governor who was in post for less than 2 years before the regulations came into force, who completed the local authority induction training, is being appointed or elected for a further term of office at any school in Wales and who has not had a relevant break in service.

Understanding School Performance Data

11. This training will develop governors' understanding of the data which is routinely provided by and for schools and how to use it to improve school performance. Being able to analyse school performance data

and drill down to core information will enable governors to question and challenge headteachers and the school senior leadership team and to make comparisons and benchmark how their school is performing compared to other schools in similar circumstances.

Who has to attend the data training?

12. All governors elected or appointed, including for a further term of office, after the date the regulations came into force in September 2013 must attend the data training within one year of their appointment or election.

Who is exempt?

13. Any governor who completed the LA data training in the year before the regulations came into force in September 2013, or completed the mandatory training and is being elected or appointed for a further term of office, without a relevant break in service (5 years or more).

Training for Chairs

14. The position of chair of governors and his/her relationship with the headteacher is critical in ensuring the governing body is effective in supporting and challenging the headteacher and senior management team in the school to make sure the school is continually striving to improve performance. The training clearly defines what is expected from a chair, including providing a clear lead in organising the work of the governing body, focusing discussions on the strategic role of governors, and will improve key skills for chairs including good delegation, team work and leadership, time management, self confidence.

Who has to attend?

- All chairs elected for the first time after September 2013,
- Any chair elected after the regulations came into force who has not previously attended the mandatory training or chair training provided by the local authority,,
- Any chair elected after a relevant break in service of five consecutive years

Who is exempt?

15. Any chair who has completed the mandatory or local authority chair training and who has been elected to serve a further term of office and not had a relevant break in service.

Suspension and Disqualification

16. Governors who do not attend the mandatory training within the required training period are automatically suspended for a period of up to six months. If the training is not completed within that six month period the person is automatically disqualified from continuing in office.

Mandatory Training for Clerks

17. The Education (Wales) Measure 2011 also included provision for Welsh Ministers to make regulations covering governing body clerking. The Government of Maintained Schools (Clerk to Governing Body) (Wales) Regulations 2013 which came into force in September 2013 requires LAs to provide their schools with a suitable person to appoint as clerk. Once the local authority receives such a request it has 16 weeks to provide a suitable person for appointment. These regulations also place a requirement on all clerks to attend the mandatory clerk training within one year of their appointment or within one year of the regulations coming into force. Any costs incurred by the LA in providing training for clerks may be charged to the governing body's delegated budget.

Who is exempt?

18. Governor Support Officers and those clerks who have satisfactorily completed the mandatory training. Any governor appointed as a clerk in an emergency because the clerk has not turned up is also exempt.
19. In order to maximise on the governor training and support that is available each governing body should regularly self-evaluate its performance, consider its developmental needs and identify training, for both the GB and individual governors, to meet those needs.

Other Sources of Training and Advice

20. In foundation or foundation special schools, the relevant foundation, often a diocesan body, may also make provision for training on specific topics relevant to such schools.

21. In addition to these, there are many independent sources of advice and support for governors, in both printed and web based formats. If websites in England are accessed for information it is strongly recommended governors ensure that any advice being given is relevant to legislation and regulations in force in Wales.

Time off from work

22. Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 employers must give employees who are school governors, reasonable time off to carry out the duties of the role. The employee and employer should reach agreement on what is 'reasonable time off'. Among the points they may consider are:

- how much time is required overall to carry out a governor's duties;
- whether the employee is also being given time off from work for other activities;
- the circumstances of the employer's business; and
- the likely effect which the employee's absence may have on it.

Payment for time off

23. Employers may give time off with pay but do not have to do so. This is for discussion between the employee and the employer.

Settling disagreements

24. If the employee and employer cannot agree on any of these questions, either of them can ask for help from the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), which will try to settle any differences informally. An employee who is still not satisfied may complain to an employment tribunal.

Allowances for expenses

25. The Governor Allowances (Wales) Regulations 2005 make provision for allowances to be paid to governors, and non-governor members of committees.

26. A governing body of a maintained school with a delegated budget may make payments in the form of allowances to its members.

27. In order to do this, the governing body must agree a policy or scheme for the payment of such allowances which is in accordance with the Regulations. The scheme can not differentiate between members of the governing body and members of sub-committees or different categories of governors.

28. Travel and subsistence may be paid but the rate paid can not exceed that specified by the WG.

29. Other expenses can be paid on production of a receipt at a rate agreed by the governing body. Payments can only be made for expenditure incurred by a governor for the purpose of enabling him or her to perform their duty as a governor or a member of a sub-committee of the governing body, such as reimbursement of costs for:

- care arrangements for a dependent relative (including childcare or baby-sitting expenses);

- support for governors audio-equipment;
- support for governors whose first language is not English (for example translations); and
- telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, etc.

30. This is not an exhaustive list and it is for the governing body to set out what allowances can be paid in a scheme to be made by them. Attendance allowance and loss of earnings cannot be paid. Travelling and subsistence allowances must be shown in the governor's annual report.

31. The Regulations also make provision for a LA to make provision for allowances to be paid by them to members of a governing body of maintained schools without a delegated budget.

Further Information

32. You can obtain information about the training and support available to governors from LA governor training co-ordinators. Further information is also available from the following organisations:

Catholic Education Service
39 Ecclestone Square
London
SW1 1BX

Tel: 020 7901 4880
E-mail: general@cesew.org.uk
<http://www.cesew.org.uk>

Diocesan Schools Commission
41-43 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF1 9HD

Tel: 029 20233838
E-mail: publications@rcadc.org
www.rcadc.org/index.htm

The Law

Employment Rights Act 1996, sections 50 and 51
Education Act 2002 Part 3, Chapter 1, Section 22
The Governors Allowances (Wales) Regulations 2005 SI 2005/2915
The Education (Wales) Measure 2011
The Government of Maintained Schools (Training Requirements for Governors) (Wales) Regulations 2013
The Government of Maintained Schools (Clerk to Governing Body)(Wales) Regulations 2013

Guidance

Training for School Governors in Wales on Understanding School – Content Document

Training for Chairs of Governors in Wales – Content Document

Induction Training for Governors in Wales – Content Document

Governing Body Clerk Training in Wales – Content Document

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. 'Time Off Work for Public Duties' www.gov.uk/time-off-work-public-duties

