

## 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
- entitlement to time off work to undertake governance duties.

### Background

1. Governors have an essential role to play in helping to improve school 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 diligently 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. Local governor support officers can provide more information on what training is offered. Subject to local arrangements, most LAs offer a package of governor and clerk training to schools.

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 online 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 range of their responsibilities which will help individual governors and ultimately the governing body, to be more effective. All governors, however experienced, need up-to-date training to keep abreast of changes and to refresh their knowledge.

### 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.

They require governors to carry out the following training:

- Induction training
- Training for chairs
- Understanding the role of data in supporting self-evaluation and improvement in schools

6. The Measure also allows Welsh Ministers to set the content of the required training for both governors and clerks to ensure consistency in the standards of training being delivered across Wales. Head teachers are exempt from completing the mandatory training although it would be considered good practice to invite newly appointed head teachers to attend the training.

### **Mandatory induction training**

7. Induction training 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. It is intended to give new governors the encouragement and confidence to take a full and active part in governing body business and discussions.

8. Any governor newly elected or appointed or re-elected or re-appointed 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 had a break in service for five consecutive years must also complete the induction training again within one year of their appointment or election.

9. Any 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 is exempted from the mandatory induction training.

### **Understanding the role of data in supporting self-evaluation and improvement in schools**

10. This training helps governing bodies to understand how they play a key role in the evidence-based self-evaluation of a school, subsequent improvement planning and monitoring of progress and holding the head teacher and senior leaders to account for the performance and effectiveness of the school.

11. All governors elected or appointed, including for a further term of office, must attend the data training within one year of their appointment or election.

### **Training for chairs**

12. The chair of governors is critical in ensuring the governing body is effective in supporting and challenging the head teacher and senior management team 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.

13. All chairs elected for the first time, any chair who has not previously attended the mandatory training or chair training provided by the local authority and any chair elected after a relevant break in service of five consecutive years must attend the training for chairs.

### **Suspension and disqualification**

14. 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**

15. The Education (Wales) Measure 2011 includes provision for the Welsh Ministers to make regulations setting out the role of clerk to the governing body. The Government of Maintained Schools (Clerk to Governing Body) (Wales) Regulations 2013 require LAs to provide their schools with a suitable person to appoint as clerk on request. 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.

16. Governor Support Officers do not have to attend the mandatory training; neither do those clerks who have already completed the training satisfactorily. In addition, any governor who acts as a clerk in an emergency because the appointed clerk is absent from a meeting is also exempt from attending the mandatory training for clerks.

17. In order to make full use of 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 governing body and individual governors, to meet those needs.

18. The school's delegated budget is the primary source of funding for other governor training which is not provided for free by the local authority. The governing body is responsible for approving the budget in any year and should ensure that provision is allocated within that to ensure the developmental needs of the governing body are met.

### **Recommended training**

19. In addition to the mandatory content provided for in the induction training, further more in-depth training is recommended for all governors in equality, safeguarding and language awareness. Local authorities may also provide any specific training they feel is appropriate for the governors in their area.

## **Equality**

20. Governors should have a good awareness of equality issues and discrimination. This will help them to deal with complaints, bullying and other issues that arise as a result of racism, sexism, all forms of harassment.

21. Governing bodies should also aim to lead their schools by setting positive examples of diversity and respect for others, and challenge unfair treatment of learners and school staff quickly and effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

22. Keeping learners safe is a role for the whole school community. Whilst it is recommended to have a lead governor for safeguarding and a named person for all child protection concerns, all governors should receive training on how to ensure learners are protected from harm.

## **Welsh language training**

23. Language awareness training should be provided for governors in dual stream schools. The whole governing body should receive language awareness training to understand its obligations to both sectors. Training should also be provided to governors in English medium schools to understand their obligations regarding Cymraeg Campus.

24. Specific training should be offered to governors following the implementation of the revised categories to define the medium of provision in schools, to ensure that the governing body is aware of the schools linguistic category and is supportive of the aims of any school placed in the transitional categories.

## **Other sources of training and advice**

25. Welsh Government's Hwb website has a wealth of training courses and resources that will be useful to governors.

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

27. In addition, there are many independent and third sector sources of advice and support for governors, such as Show Racism the Red Card, Stonewall and the NSPCC. . . When accessing information online, 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**

28. Under [section 50](#) of the Employment Rights Act 1996 employers must give employees who are school governors reasonable time off work 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 should 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
- the likely effect the employee's absence may have on the business.

### **Payment for time off**

29. 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**

30. If the employee and employer cannot agree on any of these matters, either of them can ask for help from [ACAS](#), which will try to settle any differences informally.

31. An employee who is refused time off to attend to the duties of a governor may have grounds to complain to an employment tribunal.

### **Allowances for expenses**

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

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

34. 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.

35. Travel and subsistence may be paid but the rate paid can not exceed that specified by the [HMRC Expenses and benefits](#) guidance.

36. 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 them 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 or Welsh (for example translations)
- telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, etc.

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

38. The Regulations also allow an 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.

## The Law

[Employment Rights Act 1996](#), sections 50 and 51

[Education Act 2002](#) Part 3, Chapter 1, Section 22

[The Governor 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 data](#)

[Training for chairs of governors in Wales](#)

[Induction training for governors in Wales](#)

[Mandatory training for school governors and clerks](#)

<https://gov.wales/parent-meetings-guidance-governing-bodies>