

Types of Governor Roles

Essentially all governors have the same role. Their different titles usually indicate how they came to be on the governing board, or what kind of organisation they are in.

Academy Trustee – (sometimes called a non-executive director or director) An individual who is a director under company law and a trustee under charity law of either a stand-alone academy trust (SAT), a multi-academy trust (MAT) or a Catholic academy company (CAC). They are appointed by the members of the trust.

The trustees are responsible for the same three core governance functions performed by the governing board in a maintained school: setting the direction, holding the senior leadership to account and ensuring financial probity. As charity trustees, they must also ensure that they are complying with charity law requirements.

Academy Members – The members of a trust are akin to the shareholders of a company. They have ultimate control over the academy trust, with the ability to appoint some of the trustees and the right to amend the trust's articles of association.

Chair of Governors – An individual elected by the governing board of to lead the governing board. They should be elected every year. Staff governors and head teachers cannot be a chair, vice chair or chair of a committee. Any other type of governor can be elected as a chair. In a multi-academy trust the chair is usually appointed by the trustees.

Co-opted Governor – This is an individual from the community who has the skills and experience which the governing board require. They will be appointed by the existing board, following an interview.

Foundation Governor – These are individuals whose appointment to the governing board is approved by the Diocese (Church) which is responsible for the school.

Local Authority (LA) Governor – On a maintained school governing board there should be one LA governor. They do not have to work for the LA but their appointment is always approved by the local authority. There are no LA governors in academies.

Parent Governor – An individual who has a child of legal school age (5 – 16) and is elected by the parent body to serve as a governor. They are usually parents who have a child on role at the school, but it is not a legal requirement. It is possible to be a parent governor because you have a child of legal school age, but not attending the school at which you govern.

Staff Governor – Just what it sounds. An individual who is a member of staff, usually elected by the staff, to ensure that staff views are represented on the governing body.