

Governance Professionals Newsletter

For School Clerks and Governance Professionals | Edition 5 | June 2026

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

The consultation on the draft KCSIE 2026 closed on 22 April 2026 and schools are currently awaiting the final statutory version, which is expected before September implementation.



Take Action! All Governors / Trustees must confirm that they have read and understood KCSIE 2026 as part of their annual confirmations & declarations - send the draft version (once released) to your Board for summer reading.

SEND Reform and Schools White Paper

The DfE has continued to clarify SEND reform proposals - noting no changes to EHCP support are expected before September 2030, with reform backed by increased SEND funding.

Boards should continue asking how leaders are strengthening mainstream inclusion, early support and use of SEND funding.

NEW!

Inclusive Education and SEND Governance
Training: Understanding your role

2 October 2026 - 09:30 - 11:00
3 Feb 2027 - 19:00 - 20:30

Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

Further DfE communications have set out the wider children's wellbeing reforms, including children's social care, safeguarding, home education and school reform. Boards should keep a watching brief on statutory changes and any policy implications.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education

The DfE updated its statutory guidance on 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education' effective from September 2026.



GUIDANCE
UPDATES

School Food Standards Consultation

The [DfE consultation](#) on updating School Food Standards closed on 12 June 2026. Proposals include healthier standards, possible publication of menus/food policies and a named lead Governor for school food.

Governance impact: Boards may need to review catering oversight, website compliance and Lead Governor roles.

Getting Children Ready for Reception

DfE guidance and NGA updates highlight stronger [early years transition practice](#), including joined-up working between schools and early years providers. Relevant Boards should ask how transition, inclusion and family engagement are being monitored.

Primary PE and Sport Premium

The current funding model is being phased out and replaced from 2026/27 onwards. The DfE has announced a new PE and School Sport Partnerships Network, backed by over £1 billion of investment over three years. The new model aims to provide targeted support to both primary and secondary schools through local partnerships rather than direct grants to individual schools. The network is expected to be fully operational from Spring 2027.

Suspensions & Exclusions Guidance

The Department for Education has published updated statutory guidance on suspensions and permanent exclusions which becomes statutory effective from 26 July 2026.

Key changes include:

- Guidance is now statutory for academies
- New "Safeguarding Separation" provision
- Permanent exclusion reinforced as a last resort
- Managed moves cannot be "trial" arrangements
- Stronger pupil voice expectations
- Enhanced off-rolling guidance
- Increased governing board oversight



Take Action! Keep your Board up to date by circulating this summary of updated guidance.

Monitoring

The new Ofsted framework emphasises the Governing Board's central role in providing effective support and constructive challenge to school leaders and seeking assurance.

This simple triangulation methodology provides a clear, structured and proportionate approach to Governor monitoring to ensure that Governors gain assurance and insight and that monitoring activity directly supports school improvement priorities.

The model is cyclical and evidence-based, consisting of three connected stages:



Spotlight on..... Governance Systems



In any line of work consistency is essential. By identifying what happens regularly and documenting how it should be done, you create predictable systems that reduce stress, save time and increase reliability.

For example:

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Process maps
- Templates
- Checklists
- Routines
- Trackers
- Planners / calendar
- Operational documents
- Online platforms



Associate Members

What are Associate Members?

Associate Members are not Governors but can be invited to sit on the Governing Board. They are usually appointed by the Governing Board to serve on one or more committee but may also be invited to attend full Governing Board meetings at the Board's discretion.

What Benefit can they Bring to a Governing Body?

Associate members should be appointed because of the specific expertise and experience they can contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. This can help to address specific gaps identified in the skills of the Governing Board, and/or help respond to particular challenges that they may be facing.

Do Associate Members have Voting Rights?

Associate Members are not Governors and therefore do not have voting rights in full Governing Board meeting decisions; however, they may be given a vote on decisions made by committees to which they are appointed at the discretion of the Board. This also means that Associate Members do not count towards quorum unless voting rights are given.

How is their Term of Office Set?

Associate Members are appointed for a period of between one and four years, as determined by the Governing Board and may be reappointed.

How and Where are Associate Members Recorded?

Associate Members should be included in your Register of Governors, Register of Interests and Single Central Record. They must also be published on your school's / Trust's Governance webpage, making it clear of their position and whether they have voting rights on any of the committees to which they have been appointed. Associate Members do **not** need to be published on GIAS (as per all other full Governors / Trustees) or Companies House (for Academy Trusts).

Spotlight on..... External Reviews of Governance

An External Review of Governance (ERG) is an independent, expert-led evaluation of your governing board's effectiveness, providing a clear, objective view of strengths and areas for development.

ERG reviews are recommended every 3 years as part of a strong governance cycle.



Spotlight on..... AI

Used effectively, AI has the ability to quickly become the assistant you never knew you needed. Whilst AI cannot replace the role of a Governance Professional or Clerk, it can help save time, reduce admin pressure and help raise the standard of governance support already in place.

Examples of practical ways to start using AI to support your governance administration:

- Refine tone and grammar of minutes
- Review policies against model templates
- Draft wording for emails and letters
- Analyse and summarise information



REMEMBER: Always review accuracy before relying on and sharing information based on AI

Preparing for 2026-27

Here are some suggested tasks for the summer:

- Check and update all meeting actions
- File final signed minutes (NB: AGM (*Academy Trusts only*) and summer term minutes in draft)
- Ensure confidential minutes are filed securely
- Ensure all non-confidential minutes have been sent to key stakeholders (for example the Local Authority (*maintained schools*), Diocese or Central MAT (*Academy Trusts only*))
- Draft meeting dates and key agenda items for 2026-27
- Ensure your Register of Governance and website are up to date
- Check for any Terms of Office coming to an end at the start of the new academic year
- Ensure meeting attendance for the last 12 months is up to date
- Check for any statutory updates, including the Academy Trust handbook (*Academy Trusts only*)
- Ensure GIAS and Companies House (*Academy Trusts only*) are up to date

ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!

Upcoming Training

22 October 2026	09:30 - 11:00 & 13:00 - 14:30	Training for New Governance Professionals (Parts 1 & 2)
16 March 2027	19:00-20:30	Training for New Governance Professionals (Part 1)
23 March 2027	19:00-20:30	Training for New Governance Professionals (Part 2)
02 November 2026	09:30 - 11:30	Head, Chair & Governance Professional

Find out more [here](#)

Schoolsnet

Find out more information on Schoolsnet [here](#) including Governor training courses, documents, forms and policies, previous editions of What's Up Gov, Headteacher recruitment, Clerk's Corner (previous Clerks' Briefings, Newsletters and job description) and Governor Welcome Pack.



Governor Services Helpline

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Please include the name of your school when contacting Governor Services and use your Clerk@ email address