

Glossary of terms for school trusts

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**Confederation
of School Trusts**

The voice of school trusts

Glossary of terms for school trusts

About this guidance

This glossary is intended primarily to help new trustees and academy committee members with some common terms used in education. It focuses on terms relevant to academies and trusts, rather than legacy terms for maintained schools.

Wherever possible we recommend using the online version on the CST website to ensure the most up to date content but we also provide a downloadable version as a ready reference guide.

Details in this guidance are correct as of March 2023.

Glossary

- A level: properly known as General Certificate of Education Advanced Level, an academic qualification usually studied over two years at sixth form, and often used for university entry. These are graded by letters, with a highest grade of A*.
- AS level: properly known as General Certification of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level, this qualification is at the same academic level as A level but covers a smaller curriculum. These can be used for university entry, where they are 'worth' 40% of an A level.
- academisation: the process of a school changing from being maintained by a local council to being part of an academy trust charity.
- academy: a publicly-funded and free to attend independent school, run by a charitable trust regulated by the Department for Education. Academies receive funding direct from the government rather than via a local council and have freedom to set their own curriculum and ways of operating.
- academy committee: a sub-committee of the trust board that oversees one or more academies; its exact responsibilities will depend on the scheme of delegation agreed by the trust board. May also be referred to as a local governing body or similar.
- Academy Trust Handbook (ATH): a set of regulations published by the Department for Education that academy trusts must follow as a condition of their funding agreement. This was previously called the Academies Financial Handbook (AFH).
- accounting officer: in an academy trust, the person who is formally accountable to Parliament for the public funds spent by the trust; this is usually the chief executive in a trust with more than one school, or the principal in a single academy trust.
- admissions authority: the body that sets the admissions policy for a school; for academies this is the school trust. Most academies take part in co-ordinated admissions arrangements organised by local councils so that parents can make a single application to multiple schools ranked in order of preference.
- admissions policy: a document that sets out the criteria for admitting pupils; for most state-funded schools this must comply with the requirements of the statutory School Admissions Code.
- advisory board: in relation to the Department for Education, a group of elected and appointed advisors to regional directors, who offer advice and challenge on decisions relating to academies. Formerly known as headteacher boards.

- age weighted pupil unit (AWPU): previously part of school funding calculations, this has been replaced by basic entitlement.
- alternative provision (AP): schools that teach children who are not able to attend a mainstream school. This could be because they have behavioural difficulties, a short or long-term illness or have been excluded.
- Analyse school performance (ASP): a website operated by the Department for Education aimed at schools that is intended to help them review performance data. It also allows access to Ofsted’s inspection data summary report (IDSR) that is used as part of school inspections. It is not publicly available.
- appropriate body: in relation to teacher training, organisations that have the main quality assurance role in statutory teacher induction. A phased transition up to September 2024 is seeing this responsibility transfer from local authorities and the national appropriate body (National Teacher Accreditation) to teaching school hubs.
- articles of association: the document that sets out the high-level governance arrangements for an academy trust, such as the appointment of members and trustees.
- Attainment 8: a measure of pupil’s achievements across eight qualifications (usually but not exclusively GCSEs), including English and maths (which are double weighted), three qualifications from the English Baccalaureate, and three further qualifications. Published at school and trust level.
- basic entitlement: in school funding, this is the rate local authorities set to allocate basic entitlement funding for pre-16 pupils in mainstream schools. Basic entitlement is a compulsory factor which must be used in the funding formula.
- BTEC: vocational qualifications overseen by the Business and Technology Education Council. These can range from broadly equivalent to a GCSE (levels 1 and 2) to A Level (level 4) to university degrees (level 6 and 7). Many of these courses are being replaced by T levels.
- Check School Performance: a website for the public operated by the Department for Education that includes attainment and performance data about schools and school trusts. Previously called Compare School Performance.
- chief executive: in an academy trust, the chief executive is the most senior member of operational staff, with overall responsibility for the organisation to the trustee board.
- child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS): support, assessment and treatment for children and young people covering wellbeing difficulties, or mental health problems, disorders and illnesses.
- children missing education (CME): children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school, such as home schooling.
- Children’s Commissioner: a statutory role with a remit to promote awareness of the views and interests of children. The Office of the Children’s Commissioner is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Education.
- community school: the most common type of maintained school, with school land owned by the local council
- Confederation of School Trusts (CST): national membership organisation and sector body for school trusts
- converter academy: a school that has voluntarily chosen to convert to academy status.

- Department for Education (DfE): the government department that oversees policy and funding for schools, and is the principal charity regulator for school trusts.
- designated safeguarding lead (DSL): the person in a school who is responsible at a strategic and day-to-day level for the safeguarding of children and young people.
- directed time: under the statutory School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (STPC) for maintained schools, a time limit of 1265 hours in a school year when a teacher must be available to carry out their duties. The limit does not apply to senior staff.
- EBacc: a secondary school combined measure of performance at GCSE. Schools are measured on how many pupils take, and their performance across: English language; English literature; maths; combined science equivalent to two GCSE, or three of biology, chemistry, physics or computer science; geography or history; any ancient or modern foreign language.
- early career teacher (ECT): a teacher in their initial two-year induction following initial teacher training (ITT). Previously known as a newly-qualified teacher (NQT).
- early years foundation stage (EYFS): the standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5.
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA): an executive agency of the Department for Education that oversees funding education and skills for children, young people and adults, including providing assurance on proper spending of public funds.
- Education Endowment Fund (EEF): a charity funded by the Department of Education to provide evidence-based resources to schools with a particular focus on reducing inequality.
- education, health, and care plan (EHCP): a detailed assessment of the needs of a child or young person aged up to 25 who needs more support than is available through special educational needs support. The assessment is carried out by the local authority, and can include a personal budget to help pay for additional support.
- elective home education: where a child is educated at home rather than in school.
- English as an Additional Language (EAL): where a pupil's first language is not English.
- Exclusion: the temporary (fixed term exclusion) or permanent (permanent exclusion) of a pupil from a school, usually for poor behaviour
- external review of governance: an objective review of the effectiveness of a school trust board by experienced governance expert who is independent of the board and the executive leaders. It will usually examine the governance structure, operations, and performance.
- fair access protocol: a process overseen by the local authority to ensure that vulnerable children and those who are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year are allocated a school place as quickly as possible.
- faith school: a school that can choose what it teaches in religious studies, and can apply additional staffing and pupil admissions criteria.
- federation: two or more maintained schools operating under the governance of a single governing body but with each school retaining its DfE number, any religious character, and budget allocation from the local authority. This approach has largely been replaced by school trusts.
- Find and Check School Performance: a website operated by the Department for Education that publishes performance measures about schools and trusts.
- form of entry: the number of classes a school admits each year.

- foundation school: a type of maintained school, where the land and buildings are owned by governing body or a linked charitable foundation.
- free school: a type of academy, usually a brand-new school. Originally these were often started by parents and community groups but are now more likely to be part of an existing school trust. There is a statutory presumption that all new schools, even when proposed by the local authority, will be free schools.
- free school meals: a government scheme to provide free school meals to disadvantaged pupils aged between 5 and 16 years. Pupils are eligible where parents receive certain benefits. In addition, the universal infant free school meals scheme provides funding for schools to offer free school meals to all pupils in reception, year 1, and year 2.
- FSM6: the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals in the last six years, used in funding calculations including pupil premium allocations.
- funding agreement: a contract between the Secretary of State for Education and an academy trust to operate a school. Single academy trusts will have one funding agreement. A multi academy trust will have a master funding agreement and a supplemental funding agreement for each school.
- general annual grant (GAG): the main element of funding for an academy, allocated through the national funding formula. Some school trusts choose to 'gag pool' - they combine funding centrally and then redistribute funds to academies based on trust priorities.
- Get Information About Schools (GIAS): a website operated by the Department for Education that publishes general information about schools along with school and trust governance details.
- GCSE: properly known as General Certificate of Secondary Education, an academic qualification usually studied over two years at the end of compulsory schooling aged around 16. These are graded by number, with a highest grade of 9.
- governance professional: someone who is employed to provide support and advice to a school trust board and its committees. This may include advice on financial and legal compliance, stakeholder engagement, and succession planning, and practical support in arranging meetings, papers and record keeping, and induction of new board and committee members. This type of role is often referred to as a clerk in a maintained school.
- governors: in maintained schools, governors hold the headteacher to account and oversee policy and resources; in academies the term may reflect a broad range of responsibilities depending on the scheme of delegation adopted by the trust.
- headteacher boards: now known as advisory boards.
- higher level teaching assistant (HLTA): a teaching assistant who has taken additional training and may teach classes on their own and cover planned absence.
- His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services, and Skills (HMCI): the head of Ofsted, currently Amanda Spielman.
- His Majesty's Inspector (HMI): a permanent Ofsted employee who carries out school inspections as their main job role, in contrast to contracted staff such as a headteacher or educational consultant who carries out occasional inspections in addition to their main employment.

- integrated curriculum and financial planning (ICFP): a management process used to plan the curriculum against the funding available by measuring the current curriculum, staffing structure and finances, and using the data to create a forward plan.
- initial teacher training (ITT): courses that build towards qualified teacher status (QTS), delivered either through a teaching school hub (known as school-centred or SCITT courses), or a university with the award of a post-graduate certificate in education (PGCE).
- inspection data summary report (IDSR): an online dashboard used by Ofsted as part of school inspections. Schools can access theirs via the Department for Education's Analyse School Performance website.
- in-service education and training (INSET): a term used for continuing professional development, traditionally delivered as five days across an academic year when the school is closed to pupils.
- interim executive board (IEB): a temporary governing body at a maintained school that has been placed in special measures or given notice to improve by Ofsted, appointed by a local authority or DfE regional director.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – statutory guidance produced by the Department of Education on safeguarding.
- key stage 1 (KS1): school years 1 and 2, ages 4 to 7
- key stage 2 (KS2): school years 3 to 6, ages 7 to 11
- key stage 3 (KS3): school years 7 to 9, ages 11 to 14
- key stage 4 (KS4): school years 10 and 11, ages 14 to 16
- key stage 5 (KS5): school years 12 and 13, ages 16 to 18, also known as post-16 or sixth form.
- local governing body (LGB): an alternative name for an academy committee.
- looked after children: children who are in the care of the local authority, or for some statistical measures children who have been in care in the past six years.
- local authority designated officer (LADO): a local authority employee or team that manages accusations of potential abuse against staff or volunteers working with children and young people.
- Local Government Association (LGA): a national organisation that represents local government.
- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS): a defined benefit pension scheme for staff working in local government and equivalent roles, including support staff in academies, with pension based on salary and service rather than investment performance.
- maintained school: a school that receives its funding via a local council, termed the local education authority. Maintained schools usually have a governing body that oversees the school, that must include at least the headteacher, two parent governors, a staff governor, a governor appointed by the council, and two other governors (for example co-opted governors or those appointed by a linked organisation). Maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum and various statutory requirements separate from those that apply to academies.
- multi academy trust (MAT): a school trust that runs multiple schools, or is anticipating doing so.

- multi agency safeguarding hub (MASH): a partnership, usually between local authorities, police, the NHS and other agencies working together to safeguard children, young people and adults.
- members: in school trusts, this is the upper tier of governance and can usually appoint and remove trustees. They are equivalent to shareholders in a company, except they cannot receive any dividends or other financial rewards.
- national funding formula (NFF): a national framework produced by the Department for Education that allocates funding to schools based on a range of pupil and school characteristics. The NFF is gradually replacing local funding formulae set at local authority level.
- newly-qualified teacher (NQT): now referred to as an early career teacher (ECT).
- National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales (NFER): charity that focuses on evidence-based research.
- National Leaders of Education (NLE): a designation for outstanding school leaders who work with schools in challenging circumstances to support school improvement.
- National Leaders of Governance (NLG): a designation for highly effective governors and trustees who support governance in other schools.
- National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services: a joint body between employers and trade unions that sets the pay and terms and conditions of local government workers. Many academy trusts choose to follow its decisions for support staff.
- National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) – a qualification for new and aspiring headteachers.
- NVQ: properly known as National Vocational Qualification.
- Ofqual: properly known as the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Register, responsible for regulating examinations and qualifications.
- Ofsted: properly known as the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills, inspects education and training and inspects and regulates care for children and young people.
- Parent View: an online survey hosted by Ofsted and targeted at parents of each school that is used as part of the inspection process. The survey can be completed at any time and results are displayed on the Ofsted website for each academic year.
- PE and sports premium: funding for primary schools to make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of the PE, sport and physical activity. Funding is automatic and based on pupil numbers.
- personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE): covers statutory education on relationship and sex education and health education applicable to all schools, and non-statutory topics such as economic wellbeing, careers and personal safety.
- planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA): for schools following School Teachers' Pay and Conditions, an allocation of at least 10% of a teacher’s directed time for planning and assessment tasks only.
- Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE): a university course that usually also leads to qualified teacher status (QTS).

- primary school: a school that provides education between around 5 and 11 years old; and may offer education between 2 and 5 years old.
- principal: an alternative job title for headteachers, often used in academies.
- Progress 8: a relative measure of pupil progress calculated for each pupil by comparing their Attainment 8 score with the average Attainment 8 scores of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (based on assessment results from the end of primary school). The greater the Progress 8 score, the greater the progress made by the pupil compared to the average for pupils with a similar starting point. A negative progress score does not mean pupils made no progress, but they made less progress than other pupils across England with similar results at the end of primary school. The measure is published as a collective score for each school and trust. Scores are published with a confidence interval or range, to reflect natural variation in pupil achievement and the statistical impact of the size of the cohort.
- published admissions number (PAN): the maximum number of pupils a school normally admits to each year group. Academies set their own PAN as part of their admissions policy, but must conduct a consultation in line with the School Admissions Code to reduce PAN.
- pupil premium: funding for primary and second schools to improve education outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in schools in England, based on numbers of pupils in low-income households or who are or have been looked after by the local authority.
- pupil referral unit (PRU): a unit funded by a local council to provide education for children who are excluded, sick, or otherwise unable to attend mainstream school. It is not a special or other type of school.
- pupil voice: a concept centred around listening to the views, wishes and experiences of children and young people.
- qualified teacher status (QTS): a qualification usually awarded at the end of initial teacher training.
- reception baseline assessment: a teacher assessment carried out during a pupil's first half-term in reception (the academic year in which they turn 5). This is used as a starting point to assess cohort-level progress at the end of primary school, known as key stage 2.
- regional directors: in relation to the Department for Education, nine senior servants who oversee schools, academies, children's social care and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) services in areas of England, including taking decisions on the creation of and changes to academies and trusts. Formerly known as regional schools commissioners. The regions are East Midlands, East of England, London, North East, North West, South East, South West, West Midlands, and Yorkshire and Humber.
- regional schools commissioners: now known as regional directors.
- scheme of delegation: a document that sets out who is responsible for different types of decisions, for example the appointment of particular roles or approval of different levels of spending. In a school trust, this sets out which powers are retained by the trust board and which are delegated to others, such as executive leaders or academy committees.
- School Admissions Code: guidance on pupil admissions issued by the Department for Education that academies are required to follow by their funding agreements. Admissions procedures, appeals, and consultations must comply with the code, which is overseen by the Schools Adjudicator.

- school census: the Department for Education’s termly collection of data on pupils at state-funded schools, including background details, educational history, and attendance. The information collected is used to calculate funding.
- School Financial Benchmarking: a website operated by the Department for Education that publishes financial information about schools and trusts.
- school on a page (SOAP): a dashboard or summary showing key school performance metrics.
- school trust: CST’s preferred term for a single or multi-academy trust.
- School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (STPC): statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education that sets out the terms and conditions for teachers in maintained schools. It does not automatically apply to academies, but many trusts choose to follow its provisions.
- School Teachers’ Review Body: the advisory body for School Teachers' Pay and Conditions that advises on pay and conditions for teachers.
- school workforce census: the Department for Education’s yearly collection of data on school staff, carried out each autumn.
- Schools Forum: a local authority consultative made up of representatives from schools, including academies, diocesan bodies, and nursery and 16-19 education providers that makes some local funding decisions.
- secondary school: a school that provides education from around 11-years-old.
- Section 5 inspection: a full Ofsted inspection carried out under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005, usually taking place over two days with schools notified the day before the inspection. These are also known as graded inspections as they can result in a change to the school’s Ofsted grading.
- Section 8 inspection: a short, typically one day, Ofsted inspection carried out under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005. There are three types of these inspections: ungraded, for outstanding or good schools; urgent, where specific concerns have been identified between routine inspections; and monitoring, for schools with an inadequate or two consecutive requires improvement judgements.
- Section 48 inspection: an inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 of the ethos, collective worship, and religious education of a school with a designated religious character. These are not carried out by Ofsted, but by the relevant religious body for the school’s designation.
- self-evaluation form (SEF): a document previously used to help prepare a school for an Ofsted inspection, now sometimes used as a rolling internal evaluation tool.
- service pupil premium: additional funding for primary and secondary schools to provide additional pastoral care where a parent is or was serving in the regular armed forces, or the pupil receives a pension for death in service.
- single academy trust (SAT): a school trust that runs a single school.
- special educational needs (SEN): refers to pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. Pupils may have a “a statement of SEN” or a more detailed education, health and care plan (EHCP).
- special educational needs coordinator (SENCo): a member of staff who is a qualified teacher and (at least within twelve months of appointment) holds a National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination. They will usually be part of the school’s leadership team.

They have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those with EHCPs.

- special educational needs register: a register of children with special educational needs within a school and the type of support they require.
- special measures: a designation for a school that means Ofsted believes a school is failing, or likely to fail, to provide an acceptable standard of education. These schools are required to produce an improvement plan and have more frequent inspections from Ofsted.
- sponsor-led academy: a school that was required to become an academy, usually due to poor academic performance, and is now managed by an academy sponsor. In the past this may have been a business, university, or voluntary group but is now more likely to be a school trust.
- Standards and Testing Agency (STA): an executive agency of the Department for Education that develops and delivers assessments for children between reception and the end of primary school, known as key stage 2.
- standard assessment tests (SATs): tests conducted at the end of key stage 2 (year 6) in English grammar, punctuation, and spelling, English reading, and mathematics.
- T level: two-year courses which are taken after GCSEs and are broadly equivalent to three A Levels. T Levels include practical and knowledge-based learning at a school or college and on-the-job experience through an industry placement.
- Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS): a defined benefit pension scheme for teachers in state-funded schools, with pension based on salary and service rather than investment performance.
- teaching and learning responsibility (TLR): for schools that follow School Teachers' Pay and Conditions, additional salary payments to teachers for additional responsibilities.
- teaching assistant (TA): supports teachers with everyday tasks and helps children with reading, writing, and learning activities. There are no set qualifications for working as a teaching assistant, but formal qualifications and apprenticeship routes are available. Often employed on term-time only contracts.
- teaching school hub: one of a network of schools or trusts providing teacher training and development, including initial teacher training, support for early career teachers, and national professional qualifications.
- top slicing: the practice of taking either a fixed sum or percentage amount from a school's general annual grant (GAG) to pay for central trust services.
- trust: a charity; in an educational context, usually refers to a charity that runs one or more academy schools. School trusts must follow the same rules as usual charities, but are principally regulated by the Department for Education rather than the Charity Commission.
- trustee: in most academy trusts, trustee refers to someone on the trust board that fulfils the role of a charity trustee and company director. In an academy trust with a religious character, trustee is instead usually used to refer to the board members of a separate trust that owns land used by schools, with the school trust board members referred to as company directors.
- trust board: the group of people that set policy for the trust, and are usually responsible for appointing the chief executive or equivalent senior leader role. The trust board members are both charity trustees and company directors.



- university technical college (UTC): a type of academy, specialising in subjects like engineering and construction and with close links to universities, employers, and further education colleges. Most admit pupils at year 10 and year 12, rather than the usual year 7 used by most secondary schools.
- value added: a type of performance measure, such as Progress 8, that shows the difference made by one school relative to another.
- voluntary aided (VA) school: a type of maintained school where a charitable foundation, usually a religious organisation, owns some or all of a school's land and buildings, has a substantial input into the running of the school and is responsible for 90% of their capital costs
- voluntary controlled (VC) school: a type of maintained school where a charitable foundation, usually a religious organisation, owns some or all of the school's land and buildings and has a substantial input into the running of the school.





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