

## Acronym buster for governors

One of the most challenging aspects of governance for those who are not experienced in the education sector is getting to grips with the numerous acronyms used within meetings and reports. This can be particularly challenging and overwhelming for new governors.

The acronym buster is divided into the following sections to enable governors to quickly identify the acronym they are looking for:

- [School information](#)
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As well as the longform of common acronyms being explained, a description of each acronym is also given to provide context to the discussion or information reported. The acronym buster can be used to support the induction of new governors and to act as a reference and refresher for established governors.

Included at the end of the document is a table for governors to record any local acronyms used in their individual schools.

Our acronym buster can be printed to have to hand during a meeting and when reading reports, or it can be accessed on digital devices.



Acronym	Long form	Description
<b>School information</b>		
AEO	Area education officer	<b>[Maintained schools]</b> A role provided by the LA providing education and school improvement support to school leaders.
APS	Alternative provision school	Provision of education for pupils who do not attend mainstream schools for a number of complex reasons such as exclusion, behavioural issues or refusal to attend.
EAL	English as an additional language	A term used to identify pupils for whom English is not the primary language spoken in their home.
ECM	Every Child Matters	A green paper which identified five outcomes that are most important to children: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution.
EHE	Elective home education	Refers to pupils who are removed from the school register to be educated at home.
ESW	Education social worker	An external professional who provides support to parents, pupils and school staff to identify needs that act as barriers to learning and signpost them to additional services.
EWO	Education welfare officer	An external professional who supports pupils and their families with attendance issues.
EYDP	Early years development plan	An action plan for improvement and development in the early years foundation stage.
EYFS	Early years foundation stage	Educational provision from birth to five years old. Includes a set of standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five years.
EYFSP	Early years foundation stage profile	A statutory development attainment summary for every pupil within the early years foundation stage. Completed at the end of Reception.
FE	Further education	FE refers to additional education beyond what has been received at a secondary school, also referred to as post-16 education.
FSM	Free school meals	Families can apply for their child to receive a free lunchtime meal if they are in receipt of any one of several income-related support payments.

GIAS	Get information about schools	A statutory on-line register for schools to upload information to, includes information about governors such as names of governors and schools where they govern.
H&S	Health and safety	Relates to all matters regarding the health and safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors to school.
HE	Higher education	An optional final stage of formal education that occurs after the completion of secondary education.
HSA	Home school agreement	A statement explaining the school's aims and values, its responsibilities towards its pupils, the responsibilities of pupils' parents and what is expected of pupils.
ICT	Information and communication technology	Information sharing and communication equipment available to pupils and staff.
INSET	In-service education and training	Training for teachers and school staff held during term time.
KS	Key stage	Relates to a period of time in a pupil's education in the state sector and sets out the educational knowledge expected during each stage. KS1 – Years 1 and 2 (Primary) KS2 – Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Primary) KS3 – Years 7, 8 and 9 (Secondary) KS4 – Years 10 and 11 (Secondary)
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer	Term relating to a community of people, protected by the Equalities Act (2010) who identify as a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
MER	Monitoring, evaluation and review	A process of measuring and assessing a programme of activities and the results to identify impact and determine whether any changes are required.
PAN	Published admission number	The maximum number of pupils that the admissions authority will admit to each year group in a school.
PPA	Planning, preparation and assessment	The statutory provision of non-teaching time allocated to teachers to plan and prepare their teaching and undertake pupil assessment.
PRP	Performance related pay	The term given to pay progression based on an employee's performance and meeting set targets.

PRU	Pupil referral unit	An education establishment for pupils who do not attend mainstream schools for a number of complex reasons such as exclusion, behavioural issues or refusal to attend.
PTA	Parent teacher association	A charitable group, separate to the management of the school, set up by parents who organise events to raise additional funds to benefit pupils' learning and enrichment.
PTR	Pupil teacher ratio	The legal number of adults needed to look after a group of pupils, dependent on the age of the pupils.
RAP	Rapid action plan	A short-term plan intended to support rapid and sustainable school improvement.
QT	Qualified teacher	The term given to a person who has achieved the required qualifications to teach.
QTS	Qualified teacher status	A requirement in England to work as a teacher of children in state schools and special schools.
SDP	School development plan	The school's strategic plan for development which includes identified priorities, actions, resources needed and the outcomes and impact it intends to achieve.
SEF	School evaluation form	A recommended but non-statutory self-review process used to inform the SDP.
SIMS	School information management system	An information system which stores all information relating to pupils.
SLT	Senior leadership team	Staff members who have been delegated leadership responsibilities in a school.
UIFSM	Universal infant free school meals	The provision of a free lunchtime meal for all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
ULN	Unique learner number	A reference number which is used to access the personal learning record for any pupil over the age of 13 who is accessing education or training.
UPN	Unique pupil number	A number allocated to identify individual pupils within all state-funded schools.
URN	Unique reference number	A unique identification number given to all schools.
VA	Voluntary aided	A state funded school in which a foundation or trust contribute to the building costs and may own the school land or buildings. The foundation or trust has

		a substantial influence on the governance of the school. The governing board is the employer and sets the admission criteria. Usually, but not always, the foundation or trust is a religious organisation.
VC	Voluntarily controlled	A state funded school in which a foundation or trust may own the school land or buildings. Representatives from the foundation or trust are appointed to the governing board. Usually, but not always, the foundation or trust is a religious organisation. The LA – or in the case of an academy, the trust – employs the staff and determines the admissions criteria.
<b>Teaching and learning</b>		
D&T	Design and technology	A core, practical national curriculum subject designed to develop pupils' creativity, technical and problem-solving skills.
EBACC	English baccalaureate	A set of core subjects to be taught at secondary school as part of the GCSE curriculum. Includes: English language and literature, maths, chemistry, physics and biology, geography or history and a language.
FBV	Fundamental British values	A set of values which must be taught in all British schools. The values are: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.
MA&T	More-able and talented	Pupils identified as demonstrating consistently high performance in specific academic, creative, sporting, artistic or leadership areas.
MFL	Modern foreign languages	Relates to the teaching of languages within the national curriculum framework which are spoken in the modern world.
NC	National curriculum	<b>[Maintained schools]</b> The statutory programme of study and attainment targets for all subjects for all four key stages in maintained schools. <b>[Academies]</b> Academy schools may choose to follow the national curriculum but are not required to.
PE	Physical education	A core statutory national curriculum subject which provides pupils the opportunity to participate in physical exercise and competitive sports.
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	A non-statutory subject in which pupils learn about themselves, other people, rights and responsibilities and relationships.
RE	Religious education	The statutory teaching of religions and their individual and varied aspects, including: beliefs, doctrines, rituals, customs, rites and personal roles. A statutory teaching requirement but parents are permitted to withdraw their

		child for all or part of the lesson. Faith schools and academies are able to set their own RE syllabus.
RSE	Relationships and sex education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all pupils. Includes the teaching of sexual health, reproduction and sexuality as well as promoting positive relationships.
SMSC	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural	The non-statutory teaching of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues to pupils.
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics	The teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics as an inter-disciplinary approach.
UCAS	University and colleges admissions service	<b>[Secondary schools]</b> An organisation whose main role is to operate the application process for universities.
<b>School data and national tests</b>		
AfL	Assessment for learning	An assessment approach used by teaching staff to engage with pupils to assess their stage of learning, identify any gaps in learning and establish the next steps.
ASP	Analyse school performance	A summary of individual school's pupil performance data provided by the DfE. Progress measures are reported to enable schools to compare their performance against national averages.
AT	Attainment target	A target given to individual pupils usually linked to the end of a key stage to identify their age-related attainment score.
EXS	Expected standard	The attainment standard which pupils are expected to meet at each assessment point during the academic year.
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education	<b>[Secondary schools]</b> National academic qualifications spanning a range of subjects, typically achieved at the end of secondary education.
GDS	Greater depth standard	The age-related attainment standard given to pupils who are working beyond their age-related expected standard.
GLD	Good level of development	The expected standard for pupils in the prime areas of development at the end of the early years foundation stage of their education.
IDSR	Inspection data summary report	A report produced by Ofsted from the Department for Education's performance data for each school. This data, which is available to schools, is used by inspectors during an inspection and includes historic data for the school to evidence performance improvement or decline.

KPI	Key performance indicator	A quantifiable measure used to evaluate success in meeting objectives for performance.
SATs	Standard assessment tests	National statutory assessment tests which pupils take at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in maths, reading and SPaG (spelling, punctuation and grammar).
SPaG	Spelling, punctuation and grammar	A national standard assessment test focussing on spelling, punctuation and grammar taken by pupils at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
STA	Standards and testing agency	The organisation responsible for developing and delivering the national statutory assessment tests (SATs).
<b>Safeguarding and child protection</b>		
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services	A service provided by the NHS to assess and provide treatment for pupils experiencing mental health issues.
CP	Child protection	The protection of children from violence, exploitation, physical and sexual abuse and neglect.
CME	Children missing education	Refers to any school-aged pupil who is not registered with a school or formal education provider e.g. elected home education or has been absent from education provision for four weeks.
CSE	Child sexual exploitation	Refers to the abusive exploitation of children within familial or non-familial relationships.
DBS	Disclosure and barring service	The service that performs the statutory check of criminal records for anyone working or volunteering in a school.
DDSL	Deputy designated safeguarding lead	A member of staff who deputises in the absence of the designated safeguarding lead.
DSL	Designated safeguarding lead	A member of the senior leadership team who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout the school.
FGM	Female genital mutilation	The illegal ritual of cutting or removing some or all of the external female genitalia.
KCSiE	Keeping children safe in education	Statutory guidance setting out schools and colleges' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
LAC	Looked after children	A child who has been placed in local authority care or where children's services have looked after a child for more than a period of 24 hours.
MARF	Multi-agency referral form	The form completed by schools when referring a pupil to social care.

SCR	Single central record	A statutory secure record of recruitment and identity checks for all permanent and temporary staff, proprietors, contractors, external coaches and instructors and volunteers who attend the school in a non-visitor capacity.
<b>Special educational needs and disability and additional learning needs</b>		
ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	A condition characterised by difficulty in paying attention, being excessively active or having difficulty controlling behaviour. Symptoms may impact on a pupil's learning and social and emotional development.
ASD	Autistic spectrum disorder	A range of similar conditions that affect social interaction, communication, interests and behaviour. Symptoms may impact on a pupil's learning and social and emotional development.
CAF	Common assessment framework	A standardised assessment used by all children's services to identify additional needs that pupils and their families may have. Outcomes of the assessment are used to promote a coordinated multi-agency support response.
EBD	Emotional and behavioural difficulties	A term referring to the behavioural or emotional responses of a pupil which are different from the expected norm of a child of that age and which adversely affect the pupil's access to education.
EHCP	Education, health and care plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and social needs for pupils who have significant needs that impact on their learning and access to education. The plan identifies any additional support needs or interventions and the intended impact they will have for the pupil.
EP	Educational psychologist	An EP will work in partnership with families and other agencies to help pupils achieve their full potential using psychology practice and theory.
IEP	Individual education plan	A plan or programme designed for individual pupils with special educational needs to plan the interventions needed to support their learning.
PEP	Personal education plan	A plan produced by the LA setting out the educational needs of looked after children.
PMLD	Profound and multiple learning difficulties	Where a pupil has more than one disability, the most significant being a profound learning disability that impacts on their progress and attainment or behaviour and their social and emotional development.



PSP	Pastoral support plan	A school-based plan to support a pupil's social, emotional and behavioural skills or to offer nurture support in the event of a significant life event or during difficult family circumstances.
SEMH	Social, emotional and mental health	An overarching term for pupils who experience difficulties with regulating their emotional responses and/or social interaction or who are experiencing mental health challenges.
SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator	A statutory role within all schools maintaining oversight and coordinating the implementation of the school's special educational needs policy and provision of education to pupils with special educational needs.
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities	A pupil is assessed to have SEND if they have a learning problem or disability that makes it more difficult for them to learn than most pupils their age.
<b>Finance and resource management</b>		
AFH	Academies financial handbook	<b>[Academies]</b> Statutory guidance for academy trusts which sets out the financial reporting requirements for trusts – also includes financial management and control guidance.
AFO	Area finance officer	<b>[Maintained schools]</b> A member of staff employed by the local authority who provides financial planning, audit and management support to schools.
AWPU	Age-weighted pupil unit	A rate set by LAs when allocating pre-16 funding entitlement to schools.
CFR	Consistent financial reporting	A framework to collect information about income and expenditure by financial years.
CIF	Condition improvement fund	<b>[Academies]</b> An annual bidding round for eligible academies and sixth-form colleges to apply for capital funding from the Department of Education capital funds budget to support school building improvement work.
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	An agency sponsored by the Department for Education with accountability for funding education and skills training for children, young people and adults.
FMS	Financial management system	Software used by schools to manage and maintain oversight of income, expenses and assets.
GAG	General annual grant	<b>[Academies]</b> Annual funding allocated to academies for the provision of education.

PAYE	Pay as you earn	A tax collection system process between the employee, the employer and HM Revenue and Customs.
PE&SFG	PE and sports funding grant	<b>[Primary schools]</b> Additional funding allocated to primary schools to improve the provision of physical education, access to sports and promotion of a healthy lifestyle.
PPG	Pupil premium grant	Additional funding for schools which is allocated to fund additional support for disadvantaged pupils of all abilities and to close attainment gaps between them and their peers.
SFVS	School financial value standard	<b>[Maintained schools]</b> A self-evaluation audit required by the LA to help schools manage their finances and to review financial management systems and processes.
VAT	Value added tax	A tax applied to the purchase of goods or services.
<b>Staffing and pay</b>		
AHT	Assistant headteacher	A member of the senior leadership team who provides support to the headteacher in the management of the school.
CEO	Chief executive officer	<b>[Academies]</b> The most senior member of the executive leadership team, responsible for the day-to-day management of an organisation.
COO	Chief operating officer	<b>[Academies]</b> A senior member of the executive leadership team responsible for the operational and administrative management of an organisation.
CPD	Continuing professional development	The skills, knowledge and experience that staff and volunteers gain both formally and informally to support them in their role and develop in a professional capacity.
DHT	Deputy headteacher	A member of the senior leadership team who supports the headteacher in the strategic development and day-to-day management of the school. Will deputise in the absence of the headteacher.
EHT	Executive headteacher	The strategic leader of a group, federation or collaboration of schools.
FSW	Family support worker	A member of staff employed either by the school or accessed through an external organisation to provide practical and emotional support to families experiencing short or long-term difficulties.
FTE	Full time equivalent	The number of hours worked by an employee on a full-time basis.

HLTA	Higher level teaching assistant	A member of staff who performs all the normal duties of a teaching assistant but with an increased level of responsibility, or who possesses specialised knowledge or experience.
HoD	Head of department	A member of staff who has leadership responsibility for the practice and performance in a specific subject department or key stage.
HT	Headteacher	The lead teacher in a school with ultimate responsibility for the standards of the school and day-to-day management of staff. Responsible for implementing the school vision, values and development plan. In an academy may be referred to as the 'principal'.
HTPM	Headteacher performance management	The performance management process of the headteacher undertaken by an appointed panel of the governing board.
ITT	Initial teacher training	A programme of training to achieve qualified teacher status.
LSA	Learning support advisor	Someone who works closely with teachers and may have responsibility for delivering learning and providing support to individual or groups of children. May be employed by the school or accessed via an external organisation.
LSW	Learning support worker	An employee of the school who works under the direction of the class teacher to deliver learning and provide support to individual or groups of pupils.
MPR/MPS	Main pay range or main pay scale	<b>[Maintained schools]</b> The statutory pay range for teaching staff.
NPQH	National professional qualification for headship	A non-statutory qualification which supports the professional development of serving and aspiring headteachers.
NPQSL	National professional qualification for senior leaders	A non-statutory qualification which supports the professional development of serving and aspiring senior leaders.
NQT	Newly qualified teacher	Teachers who have gained qualified teacher status but have not yet completed the required 12-month induction period.
PIP	Performance improvement plan	A support and development plan implemented to help staff members achieve their potential and improve their practice.
PM	Performance management	A formal process implemented to plan and monitor the actions required to secure and sustain performance or improve employees' performance.
SBM	School business manager	A senior member of staff responsible for managing non-teaching aspects of the school.

STPCD	School teachers' pay and conditions document	<b>[Maintained schools]</b> Statutory guidance for the pay and conditions for teachers in England and Wales.
TA	Teaching assistant	A non-teaching member of staff employed to support pupils within the classroom environment or to facilitate interventions for individual or groups of pupils.
TLR	Teaching and learning responsibility	An additional payment for teachers who take on an extra responsibility in school linked to the provision of teaching and pupils' learning.
UPR/UPS	Upper pay range/Upper pay scale	The incremental pay range open to experienced teachers to apply for when they have successfully reached the top of the main pay scale for teachers.
<b>Governance</b>		
AoA	Articles of association	<b>[Academies]</b> A statutory document that sets out the role and responsibilities of trustees, how the trustees must conduct the business and administration of the trust and governance requirements.
CoG	Chair of governors	The person responsible for chairing and leadership of the governing board.
CtG	Clerk to Governors	The professional and legal advisor to governing boards.
IEB	Interim executive board	<b>[Maintained schools]</b> An interim executive board can be put in place if the local authority or regional school's commissioner has concerns about a school's governance. A request to implement an IEB has to be submitted to the Secretary of State for education.
LGB	Local governing board	<b>[Maintained school]</b> The governing board of a maintained school responsible for ensuring compliance with statutory responsibilities and oversight of the school's strategic plan. <b>[Academies]</b> In an academy, an LGB may be constituted by the board of trustees and can only operate within the delegated powers assigned by the board of trustees.
MAT	Multi academy trust	<b>[Academies]</b> A trust established to undertake strategic collaboration and provide education across a number of schools.
SAT	Single academy trust	<b>[Academies]</b> A trust established to undertake strategic collaboration and provide education within a single school.
ToR	Terms of reference	A document that outlines the structure and purpose of the governing board or its appointed panels or committees.
<b>External agencies and inspection</b>		

ASCL	Association of school and college leaders	A professional, representative organisation for school leaders.
DfE	Department for Education	The national government body with responsibility for children's services, policy and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector	The person appointed to have statutory responsibility for the inspection and regulatory work of Ofsted and its management. Responsible to Parliament.
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector	Individuals appointed to undertake the inspection of education settings under the Ofsted inspection framework.
HSE	Health and safety executive	The government agency responsible for the regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare.
LA	Local authority	A local government agency responsible for the provision of a range of services in a specified local area, including education.
LGA	Local government association	An organisation that comprises all local authorities and seeks to promote improved local government.
NAHT	National association of headteachers	A trade union and professional membership association representing headteachers in all schools.
NASEN	National association of special educational needs	A national organisation which aims to promote equality and fair access in the education, training and development of pupils with additional needs.
NGA	National governance association	A membership organisation representing school governors and trustees throughout England.
Ofsted	Office for standards in education	An independent inspection and regulatory body responsible for inspecting services that provide education or care to young people. Required to report directly to Parliament.
<b>Data protection</b>		
DPA	Data Protection Act	Legislative provision for the protection of personal data.
DPO	Data protection officer	The appointed person with responsibility for overseeing data protection strategy and implementation to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act.
FOI	Freedom of information	Legislative provision providing the right to public access to information held by public authorities, either by publication or by request.

GDPR	General data protection regulation	Legislative provision designed to strengthen the safety and security of all data held within an organisation and ensure that procedures relating to personal data are fair and consistent.
ICO	Information commissioner's office	An independent regulatory body responsible for upholding information rights.
SAR	Subject access request	A request made by an individual to access the personal data which may be held about them.