

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; and
- entitlement to time off work to undertake governance duties.

Background

1. 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.
2. For information on courses provided contact your local governor support officer. Subject to local arrangements, most LAs offer a package of governor and clerk training to schools (this may be at a charge to the governing body).
3. Training may also be arranged in organised sessions for groups of governors, individual governing body sessions or cluster sessions of governing bodies.
4. Training for governors and clerks is not compulsory but it is strongly encouraged. It will help individual governors and ultimately the governing body, to become more effective. All governors, **however experienced**, need training to keep abreast of change. New governors should take advantage of training, especially induction training on the role of governors.
5. There is a wide range of training and support available and each governing body should regularly self-evaluate its performance, consider its developmental needs and identify training, for both the GB and individual governors, to meet those needs.
6. The school's delegated budget is the primary source of funding for other governor training, however provided. 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.

Other Sources of Training and Advice

7. The WAG provides funding to support Governors Wales and The All Wales Centre for Governor Training and Research. See Para 22 for contact details.

8. Governors Wales offers a source of independent information, advice and guidance, including:

- confidential telephone helpline (0845 60 20 100 – local rate) supported by independent legal opinion;
- website at www.governorswales.org.uk;
- A Handbook for Governors of Schools in Wales, updated 2007 and 2009 - copies of which are available from the Governors Wales website, as above; and
- guidance, including Fact Files and Governors' Guides on various topics.

9. The All Wales Centre for Governor Training and Research undertakes research into various aspects of governor training and research and publishes Cadwyn, a regular newsletter for governors as well as training materials to support the training of clerks and chairpersons. Copies of this information are also accessible from the Governors Wales website.

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

11. In addition to these, there are many independent sources of advice and support for governors, in both printed and web based formats, including many based in England. If you are accessing such information, it is strongly recommended you ensure that any advice being given is relevant to legislation and regulations in force in Wales.

Time off from work

12. Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 employers must give employees who are school governors, reasonable time off 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 may 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; and
- the likely effect which the employee's absence may have on it.

Payment for time off

13. 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

14. If the employee and employer cannot agree on any of these questions, either of them can ask for help from the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), which will try to settle any differences informally. An employee who is still not satisfied may complain to an employment tribunal.

Allowances for expenses

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

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

17. 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.

18. Travel and subsistence may be paid but the rate paid can not exceed that specified by the WAG.

19. 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 him or her 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 (for example translations); and
- telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, etc.

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

21. The Regulations also make provision for an LA to make provision for allowances to be paid by them to members of a governing body of maintained schools without a delegated budget.

Further Information

22. You can obtain information about the training and support available to governors from LA governor training co-ordinators. Further information is also available from the following organisations:

Governors Wales
Ground Floor
3 Oaktree Court
Mulberry Drive
Cardiff Gate Business Park
Cardiff
CF23 8RS

Tel: Helpline 0845 60 20 100
E-mail: contact@governorswales.org.uk
www.governorswales.org.uk

Catholic Education Service
39 Ecclestone Square
London
SW1 1BX

Tel: 020 7901 4880
E-mail: general@cesew.org.uk
<http://www.cesew.org.uk>

Diocesan Schools Commission
41-43 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF1 9HD

Tel: 029 20233838
E-mail: publications@rcadc.org
www.rcadc.org/index.htm

All Wales Centre of Excellence for Governor Training and Research,
Swansea School of Education,
Swansea Metropolitan University,
Townhill Road,
SWANSEA,
SA2 0UT

Tel: 01792 518609
E-mail: s.e.gullick@sihe.ac.uk
www.smu.ac.uk/schoolgovernor

The Law

Employment Rights Act 1996, sections 50 and 51
Education Act 2002 Part 3, Chapter 1, Section 22
The Governors Allowances (Wales) Regulations 2005 SI 2005/2915

Guidance

Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) 'Time Off for Public Duties' available from the BERR Publications Orderline on Tel: 020 7215 5000 or 020 7215 6740 (Minicom)

Address: Ministerial Correspondence Unit, Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET
www.berr.gov.uk/employment/employment-legislation

