

PaJeS: Ten Commandments for Good Governance

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Ten commandments for good governance

This session will look at how the ten commandments for good governance can be put into practice so that those governing your schools and trusts are more effective in carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

We will:

1. Set the scene
2. Discuss the commandments
3. Share our thinking
4. Reflect on next steps

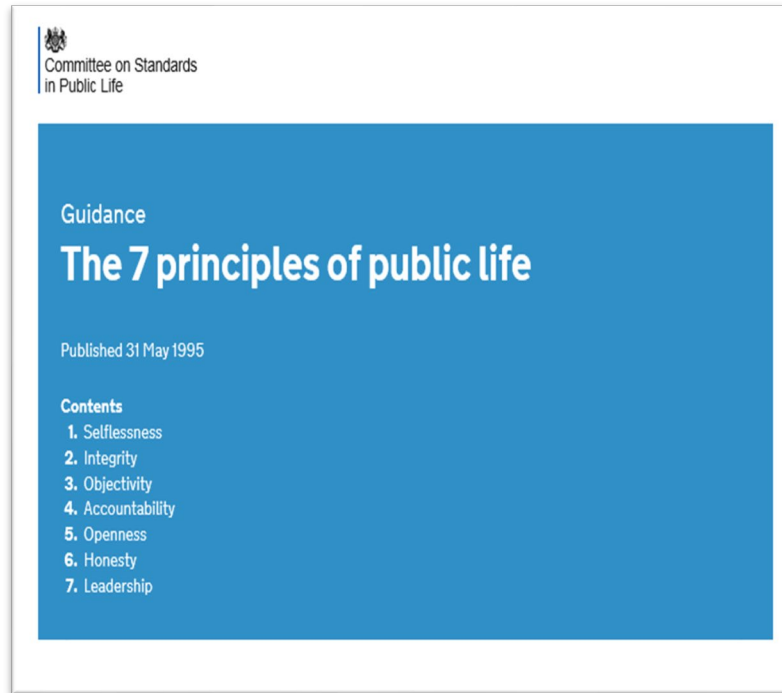
1. Setting the scene

Core governance functions

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent



Governance standards

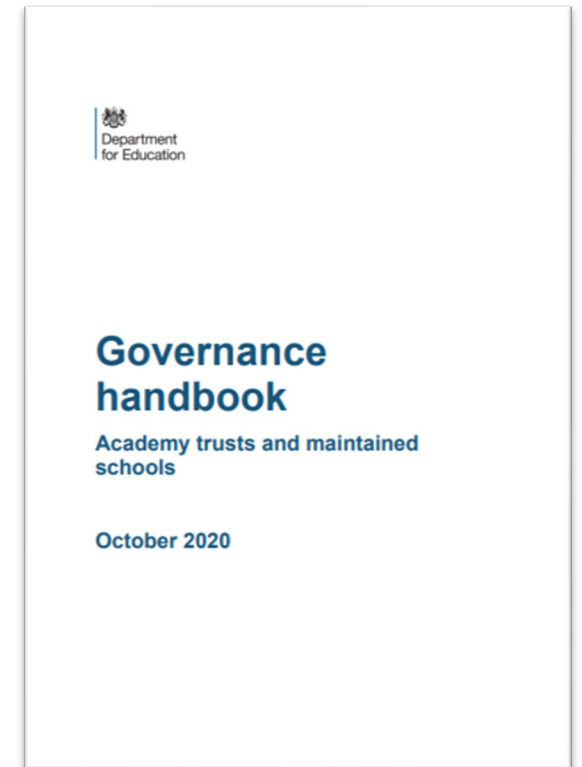


Core functions



1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

Plus:

Ensuring decisions take into account the views and experiences of stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff and the community)



Clarifying expectations

Model code of conduct

For governing boards

Governing boards should use a code of conduct alongside individual [role descriptions](#) to ensure all members understand what is expected of them.

The NGA model code of conduct is anchored in the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life. The code is also aligned with the [Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education](#) which outlines principles that support ethical decision-making and challenge unethical behaviour in schools and trusts.

The model code has been updated for 2021. The content of the code is largely unchanged; however, the Nolan Principles are now included. Three new statements have also been added to the code. These are marked (*) to help you review the updated code.

How to use the model code

The NGA model code of conduct is suitable for boards in all types of school or trust. However, it is designed to act as a template and should be adapted to reflect:

- your specific governing board and organisation
- your board's delegated responsibilities
- specific policies that you must follow (such as your [policy for school monitoring visits](#))
- constitutional documents (such as your [articles of association](#) or instrument of government)

Reviewing your code of conduct

Boards should review and approve their code of conduct annually, ideally at the first meeting of the autumn term. When reviewing your code, reflect on the events of the previous year and consider if any changes are required as a result.

Boards should also review their code of conduct upon any significant changes to the law or school/trust policy. NGA recommends that boards publish their code of conduct on their school/trust website.

Using your code to support induction and development

When [recruiting new volunteers](#), we recommend that boards refer candidates to their code of conduct (and role description). This will help ensure new members have a good understanding of expectations before being appointed. New members should agree to the board's code of conduct on being appointed as part of their [induction programme](#).

August 2021

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What governing boards and headteachers should expect from each other

updated 2022

Getting governance right is important because of the significant impact it has on the quality of educational provision and the opportunity and life chances of children. This joint guidance aims to help governing boards and headteachers to get governance right by working together, being mutually supportive and respecting each other's roles and responsibilities.

A parallel version of this guidance is available for multi academy trust boards and CEOs.


Terminology

We use 'governing board' in this document to mean governing bodies in local authority (LA) maintained schools and federations, trust boards in a single academy trust (SAT) and regional or academy level committees, sometimes called the local governing body.

We use 'headteacher' to mean those responsible for the overall management of a school, a federation of schools or an academy. This includes the headteacher of a single school and executive leader of a federation.

Those governing on academy committees should read this guidance alongside the scheme of delegation for the multi academy trust their school is part of. This is important as the scheme of delegation defines the committee's responsibility.

The eight elements of effective governance



- 1. Respecting the respective roles**

A key aspect of an effective working relationship is respecting the difference between strategic governance and operational management.

 - The governing board is expected to concentrate on delivering its core strategic functions.
 - The headteacher is expected to implement the strategic priorities of the governing board through their day-to-day management of the school.






Those governing are not asked to, and should not try to, involve themselves in day-to-day management, or carry out staff roles on an unpaid basis.
- 2. Working together to set a strategy**

The governing board and headteacher have a shared responsibility for setting a future strategy that reflects the values of their school. In practice, this means:

 - Articulating a clear vision of where they want their school(s) to be in three to five years' time, reflecting their values and ethos.
 - Using self-evaluation to identify priorities that reflect the current context and challenges.
 - Agreeing priorities that will achieve that vision and align with available resources.
 - The governing board monitoring progress within an annual cycle, which provides a focus for their meetings.

Further guidance on developing a strategy is available for boards and school leaders.

► Visit www.nga.org.uk/BeingStrategic

What multi academy trust boards and CEOs should expect from each other

updated 2022

Getting governance right is important because of the significant impact it has on the quality of educational provision and the opportunity and life chances of children. This joint guidance aims to help multi academy trust boards and CEOs to get governance right by working together, being mutually supportive and respecting each other's roles and responsibilities.

A parallel version of this guidance is available for governing boards and headteachers in single schools.

Terminology

We refer to 'the trust board' as the accountable body, responsible for the education of children and young people across a number of schools. The trust board determines the functions it delegates to academy level committees, sometimes called local governing bodies.

We use 'CEO' to mean the senior executive leader in a multi academy trust (MAT) who acts as the accounting officer and is held to account by the trust board.

The CEO leads the executive team in the MAT (see section 4) and in some trusts the headteachers of academies in the MAT. In some MATs the role of CEO is part-time and combined with being headteacher in one of the schools in the MAT.

The eight elements of effective governance



- 1. Respecting the respective roles**

A key aspect of an effective working relationship is respecting the difference between strategic governance and operational management.

 - The trust board is expected to concentrate on delivering its core strategic functions and fulfilling the requirements of its funding agreement (the legal contract between a MAT and the DfE).
 - The CEO is expected to implement the strategic priorities of the trust board and oversee all operations of the MAT and fulfil their role as the accounting officer.

To retain clear lines of accountability:


 - Those governing are not asked to, and should not try to, involve themselves in the daily operation of the MAT.
 - Those governing should not carry out staff roles on an unpaid basis.
 - Members should avoid appointing the CEO as a trustee of the MAT.
- 2. Working together to set a strategy**

The trust board and CEO have shared responsibility for setting a future strategy that reflects the values of their MAT. In practice, this means:

 - Articulating where they want the MAT to be in three to five years' time, reflecting their values and ethos.
 - Using self-evaluation to identify priorities that reflect the current context and challenges.
 - Agreeing priorities that will achieve the vision and align with available resources.
 - The trust board monitors progress within an annual cycle, which provides a focus for its meetings.

Further guidance on developing a strategy is available for boards and school leaders.

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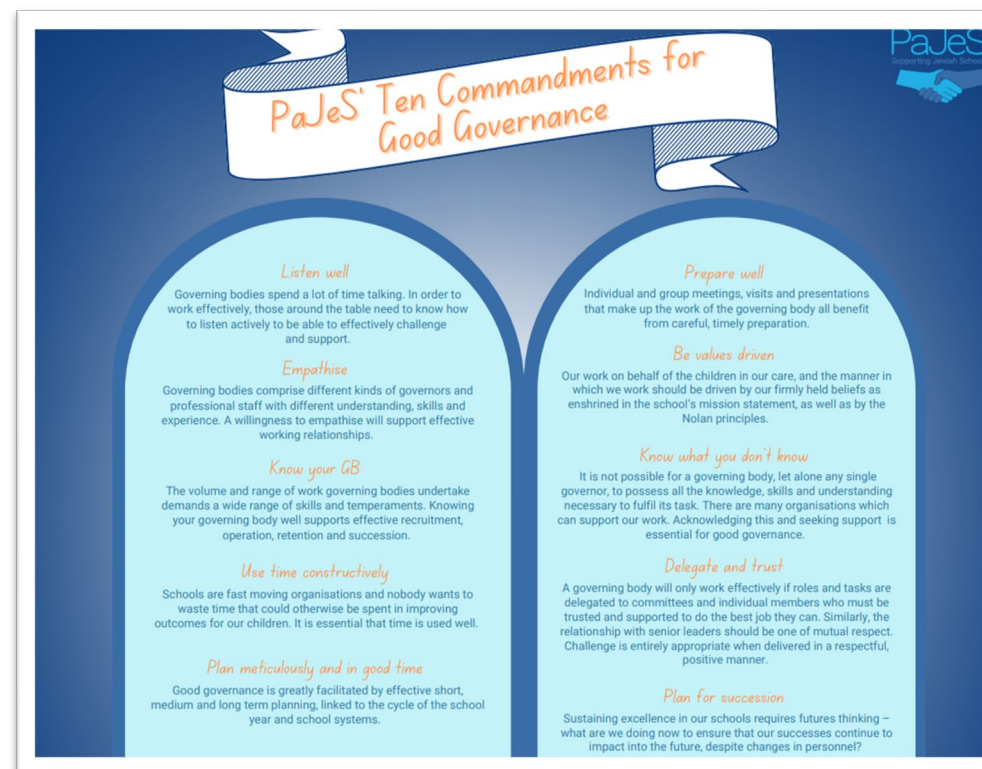




2. The ten commandments

The ten commandments

1. Listen well
2. Empathise
3. Know your GB
4. Use time constructively
5. Plan meticulously and in good time
6. Prepare well
7. Be values driven
8. Know what you don't know
9. Delegate and trust
10. Plan for succession



Key behaviours

Personal attributes

1. Listen well
2. Empathise
7. Be values driven

Knowledge

3. Know your GB
6. Prepare well
8. Know what you don't know

Skills

4. Use time constructively
5. Plan meticulously and in good time
9. Delegate and trust
10. Plan for succession

Group discussions

Four questions:

1. What the commandments mean in practice
2. Is there practice you would like to share
3. Is there any training or guidance you would recommend
4. Is there any training or guidance you would like

PaleS Ten Commandments for Good Governance			
	Commandment	What does this look like in practice	Thoughts to share / helpful guidance
1	Listen well Governing bodies spend a lot of time talking. In order to work effectively those around the table need to know how to listen actively to be able to effectively challenge and support.		
2	Empathise Governing bodies comprise different kinds of governors and professional staff with different understanding, skills and experience. A willingness to empathise will support effective working relationships.		
7	Be values driven Our work on behalf of the children in our care and the manner in which we work should be driven by our firmly held beliefs as enshrined in the school's mission statement, as well as by the Nolan principles.		



3. Sharing our thinking

Personal attributes

Personal attributes

1. Listen well
2. Empathise
7. Be values driven

Personal attributes

Knowledge

- 3. Know your GB
- 6. Prepare well
- 8. Know what you don't know

Personal attributes

Skills

- 4. Use time constructively
- 5. Plan meticulously and in good time
- 9. Delegate and trust
- 10. Plan for succession

Questions to ask and guidance

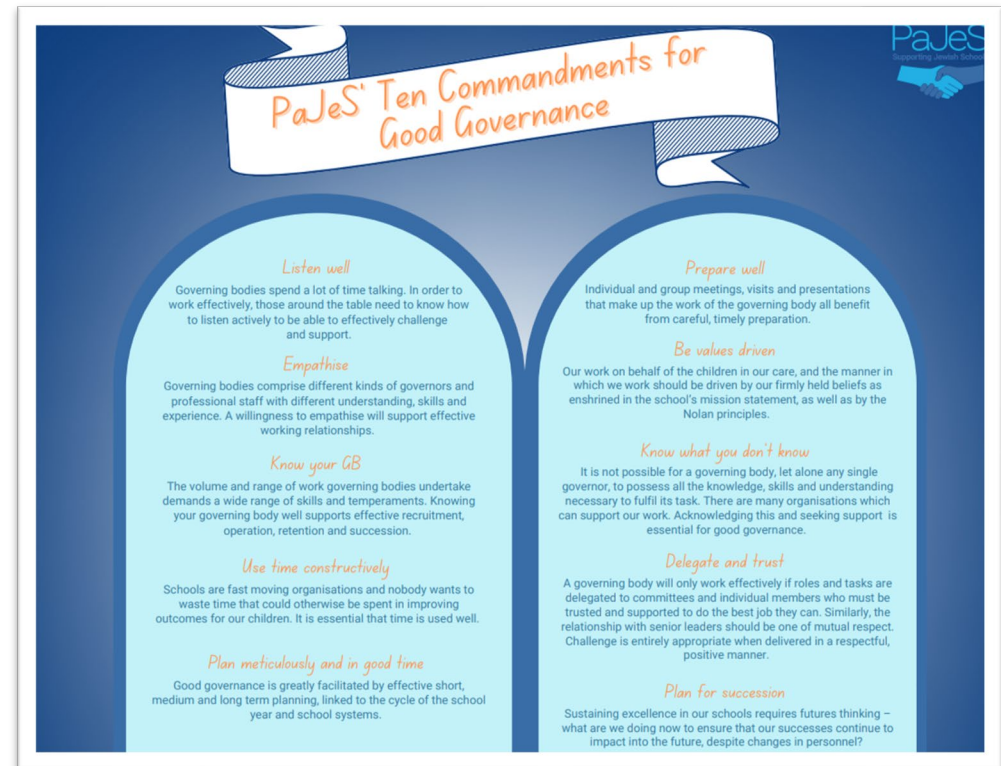
PaJeS Ten Commandments for Good Governance			
	Commandment	In practice	Guidance and support
1	Listen well Governing bodies spend a lot of time talking. <u>In order to work effectively</u> those around the table need to know how to listen actively to be able to effectively challenge and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is active listening Who talks most Role of the chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Conduct
2	Empathise Governing bodies comprise different kinds of governors and professional staff with different understanding, <u>skills</u> and experience. A willingness to empathise will support effective working relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not aligning with a specific group Being objective – thinking beyond your own circumstances and experiences Remembering the role means thinking about ALL the pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nolan Principles
3	Know your GB The volume and range of work governing bodies undertake demands a wide range of skills and temperaments. Knowing your governing body well supports effective recruitment, operation, <u>retention</u> and succession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role descriptions Induction / buddying Team building Communication pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role Descriptions Planning Induction
4	Use time constructively Schools are fast moving <u>organisations</u> and nobody wants to waste time that could otherwise be spent in improving outcomes for our children. It is essential that time is used well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Meetings' schedules</u> planned well ahead Time limited meetings GB meeting papers ready a week in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual governance planner Exemplar agenda Guidance on school visits
5	Plan meticulously and in good time Good governance is greatly facilitated by effective <u>short, medium and long term</u> planning, linked to the cycle of the school year and school systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans align with the vision and key priorities/strategic aims Governor/trustee monitoring links to key development areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual governance planner Governance visits
6	Prepare well Individual and group meetings, visits and presentations that make up the work of the governing body all benefit from careful, timely preparation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepping for meetings and visits Completing reports on time SLT/middle leaders know what's expected of them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance visits HT / CEO Reports

7	<p>Be values driven</p> <p>Our work on behalf of the children in our care and the <u>manner in which</u> we work should be driven by our firmly held beliefs as enshrined in the school's mission statement, as well as by the Nolan principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing your values, <u>mission</u> and ethos • Ensuring policies drive these: securing assurance and GB monitoring • If in doubt, ask questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring your values • Being Strategic • Nolan Principles
8	<p>Know what you don't know</p> <p>It is not possible for a governing body, let alone any single governor, to possess all the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to fulfil its task. There are many organisations which can support our work. Acknowledging this and seeking support is essential for good governance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing training and development • Governance support organisations • Engaging with the media • Attending events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGA Training Offer • Learning Link e-learning • Schools Week • TES • PaJeS • Schools and Academies Show
9	<p>Delegate and trust</p> <p>A governing body will only work effectively if roles and tasks are delegated to committees and individual members who must be trusted and supported to enable them to do the best job they can. Similarly, the relationship with senior leaders should be one of mutual respect. Challenge is entirely appropriate when delivered in an acceptable way, and senior leaders are then trusted to deliver.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being clear about what is expected • Code of conduct • Scheme of delegation • Committee terms of reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we expect from each other • Model Code of Conduct • Academy trust scheme of delegation guidance • Maintained school delegation planner • Model Committee Terms of Reference
10	<p>Plan for succession</p> <p>Sustaining excellence in our schools requires futures thinking – what are we doing now to ensure that our successes continue to impact into the future despite changes in personnel?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/governors/trustees • Good governance practice • Attitudes to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession Planning

4. Next steps

Reflection

1. How can you use the commandments to make your governance stronger?
2. How will you introduce the commandments to your GB?



We are school and trust governance experts

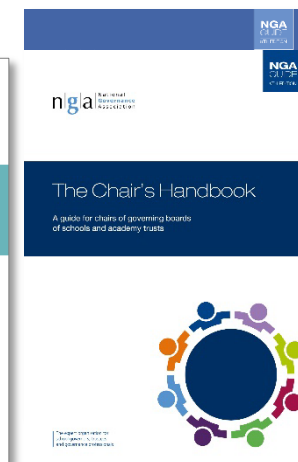
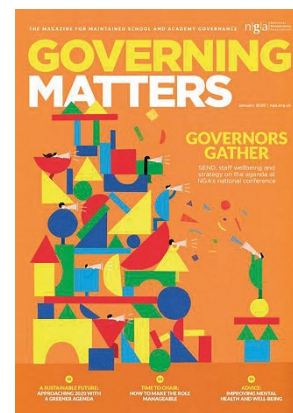
- NGA is an independent, not-for-profit charity representing and supporting governors, trustees, clerks and other of state schools in England
- Our aim is to improve the educational standards and wellbeing of young people by increasing the effectiveness of governing boards and promoting high standards
- We are expert leaders in school and trust governance, providing information, advice and guidance, professional development and e-learning



Governing board membership

- **STANDARD** governing board £101
- **GOLD** governing board £280
- MATs on a sliding scale

www.nga.org.uk/membership



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NGA membership	Learning Link price
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GOLD	£90
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