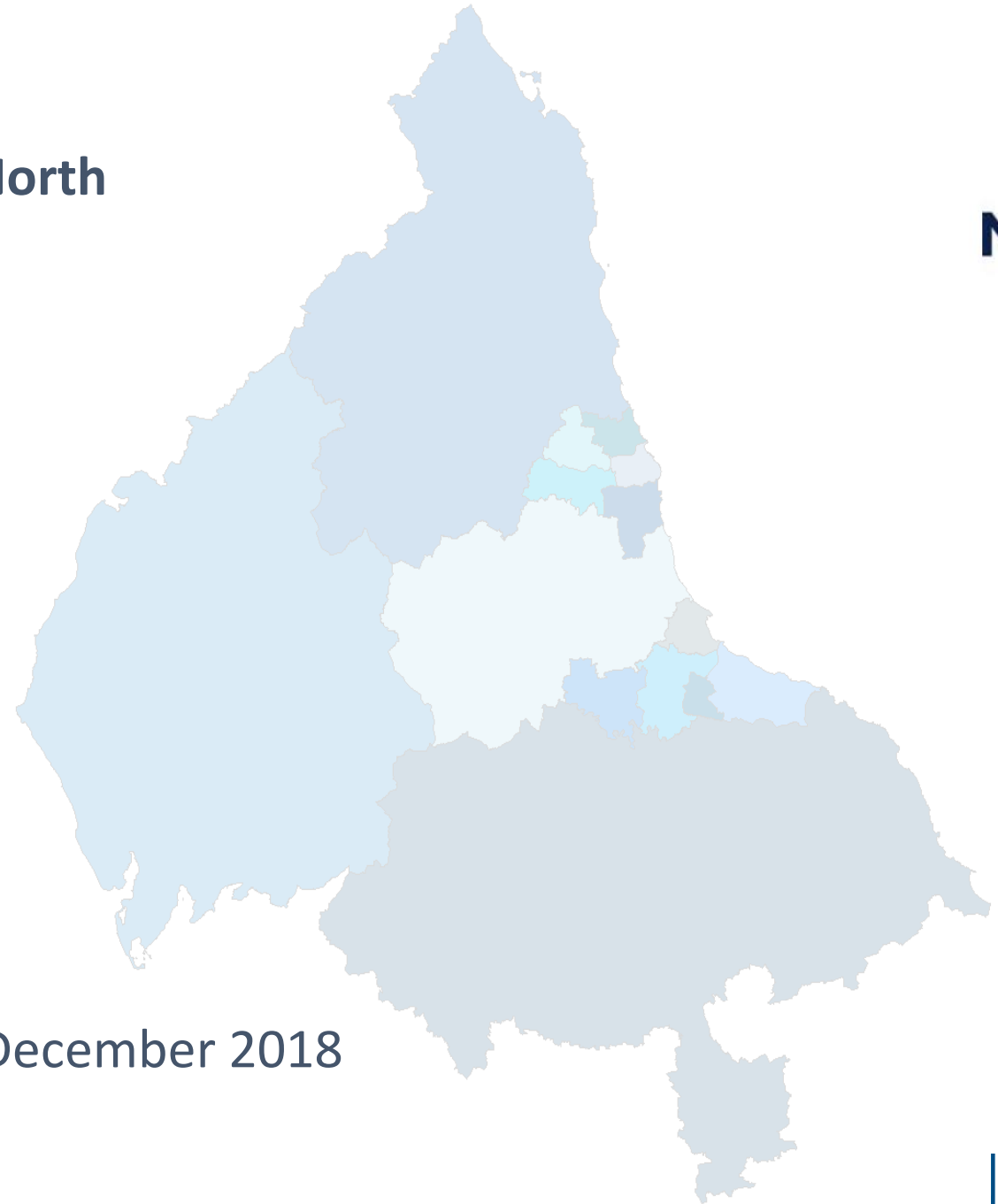


**Jan Renou RSC North**

**Schools  
North East**



**Chair's Conference** December 2018

# Effective governance

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Effective governance in all schools is vital to the success of an increasingly school-led system.

All governing boards should be focused on their core functions:

- Setting the vision and ethos for the school/trust
- Holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the school/trust
- Ensuring the school/trust finances are spent appropriately



# State school governance

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## Academies and free schools

- **DfE: funding agreement with academy trust. Regulates academies via RSCs/ESFA.**
- **Academy trust: legally accountable to DfE. Set own curriculum and pay, and is the employer. Trustees / directors are responsible for governance.**
- **Local Governing Body: operate for individual schools, or small groups of schools. Not legal accountability to DfE. Typically responsible for operational matters.**
- **School: Headteacher responsible for day-to-day operations, and accountable to trust board/LGB.**

## LA maintained schools

- **DfE: provides funding to LAs, issues statutory guidance, and intervenes in inadequate schools**
- **Local Authority: owns the premises, employs staff and is usually admissions authority. Locally accountable for school performance, and have the power to intervene in governing bodies.**
- **Governing Body: freedoms and power vary by school type (e.g. foundation, voluntary controlled). Two or more schools can form a federation, with one governing body.**
- **School: Headteacher responsible for day-to-day operations.**



# How effective governance raises standards

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- Confident and strategic leadership
- Leads the transition from vision to plan to delivery
- Holds itself and the leadership to account
- Uses data to anticipate challenges related to performance, financial sustainability and risk
- Committed to self evaluation and recognises the benefit of peer challenge



# 10 features of effective governance

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- 1. Skills required for governance are identified explicitly** and set out in a role specification, which informs the recruitment and appointment of people to the board and any LGBs for their skills.
- 2. Trustees/governors take their own professional development seriously.** They are inducted properly, and continue to undertake training and development activity as necessary to continue to develop their skills.
- 3. Chair of the board plays a vital leading role in setting the direction and structures.** They support the development of positive working relationships between the board, the executive leaders and staff.
- 4. Board evaluates their own effectiveness.** Including commissioning periodic external reviews of their effectiveness to gain an independent external perspective of their strengths and areas for development.
- 5. Board receive management information in a standardised and easily accessible format**



## Academy specific

6. **Governance structures are designed for the context of the organisation and the schools being governed**
7. **As the MAT grows, trustees recognise the need to review governance structures and delegations** including the option of a regional or sub-regional layer of governance that spans groups of schools.
8. **Board and executive leaders are transparent with any school looking to join the MAT about the level of delegated power** that will be vested at a local level and the circumstances in which this may vary over time.
9. **No duplication between the roles of executive trust leaders and LGBs** in holding school leadership to account.
10. **There are effective and meaningful arrangements in place to engage with parents and the wider community** to seek their views and feedback, which informs the scrutiny provided by trustees & supports greater accountability.



# Resources for governors

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## **Governance handbook**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

*Guidance on the roles and duties of governing boards, and advice on the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be effective.*

## **'Understanding your data' (updated October 2018)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-your-data-a-guide-for-school-governors-and-academy-trustees>

*How to collect and analyse data, and what your collected data can tell you about your school's performance.*

## **Schools Resource Management**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency>

*Information, tools, training and guidance to help schools and multi-academy trusts with financial planning and resource management.*