

Outstanding Governance Awards 2025



Outstanding governance in a single school: information sheet

About the award

This award is to recognise a governing board that has demonstrated effective governance and outstanding strategic leadership to create positive outcomes in their school.

Who can be nominated in this category?

Governing boards of a single state-funded school in England, including both local authority-maintained schools and single academy trusts (including special, pupil referral units, alternate provision etc.).

Local governing boards/academy committees within a multi academy trust are not eligible.

Who can make the nomination?

Boards can self-nominate in this category.

Any governor/trustee or governance professional can make the nomination including the chair/co-chair, vice chair or headteacher/chief executive (ex-officio).

Other individuals or organisations may nominate a board providing that they have a detailed enough knowledge of the board's practices and achievements to complete the form. These include:

- Senior executive leader, local authority governor services, local association, diocese, a former governor/trustee/governance professional, governance consultant, school including the senior leadership team or school business professional, Members (in a SAT)

Anyone making a nomination must have the full backing of the governing board (particularly chair) and leadership team.

How to apply

Complete the [nomination form](#) and return this document via email to awards@nga.org.uk by 12pm Monday 14 April 2025.

What are the criteria?

The nominated board must meet basic good governance practices, and we will look for demonstration of this within the nomination, supporting evidence and checks undertaken as part of the awards process. This includes:

- Terms of office (published on website) within the limits suggested in the Governance Handbook, unless in exceptional circumstances
- An outward looking approach and seeking an external view on practice
- School visits and the board being visible in the school
- Triangulation of information, and support and challenge (minutes of meetings)
- Evidence of a clear vision and strategy

What makes a successful nomination?

- A clear and accurate understanding of the strategic role and responsibilities of the governing board
- A clear vision and strategy which is properly implemented
- Good governance (effective, ethical, and accountable)
- That the board embodies the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life, which summarises the ethical standards expected of public office holders
- An understanding of the board's role in shaping and developing the school/setting's culture and using this to drive school improvement
- An ability to self-review and drive improvement to address issues identified
- Evidence of continued journey of improvement – the judges are not looking for perfection but a commitment to improvement

Nomination process

To nominate a board for this award, you will need to complete the nomination form below and return it via email. You will also need to provide the following supporting information:

- The agenda and minutes from two previous board meetings
- Link to the governors' page on the school website to include list of governors, terms of office and conflicts of interest.
- Links to vision and values page(s).

If your application is longlisted, we may request any of the following documents to support the shortlisting process:

- Strategy document (but not full SDP/SIP), evidence of any self or peer review, governance training plan/record, and evidence of school visits/monitoring reports