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Department
for Education

Guidance

Pre-election guidance for schools and multi-academy trusts

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Promotion of political views in teaching

The law prohibits promotion of partisan political views in teaching. Schools must take reasonable steps to ensure that, where political issues are brought to pupils' attention at school or school extra-curricular activities, there is a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Use of budgets and annual grants

Local-authority-maintained schools' delegated budgets are only for any purposes of the school or such purposes as prescribed in regulations. Schools should not use their budget for other purposes.

The model funding agreement for academies requires that you only use the general annual grant for maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing your academy.

Restrictions on political activity

Local-authority-maintained schools should take note of the restrictions set out in [Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986](). These prohibit local authorities from publishing material which appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.

The [Code of recommended practice on local authority publicity]() has further guidance.

Restrictions on political activity also apply to the use of school information and communication technology (ICT) facilities. You should not use school ICT facilities for the distribution of political material, including that produced by third parties, either within the area of the school site or beyond.

Multi-academy trusts, foundation schools and voluntary schools as charities are also subject to the restrictions in place on political activity by charities. The [Campaigning and political activity guidance for charities]() has further advice.

During this period of heightened political activity and sensitivity, you should ensure your school and staff avoid activity that could be construed as partisan or favouring a particular political party.

Activities to promote political awareness to pupils

The restrictions set out above should not be seen as preventing schools and teachers from using the pre-election period to raise pupils' awareness and understanding of the political process.

Activities could include hustings events and visits by local candidates or political party representatives. Where these events take place, you should be careful to ensure that reasonable steps are taken by the school to ensure that pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Schools are also able to run events such as mock elections involving pupils and overseen by school staff. You should ensure these are conducted using set rules and provide scope for all registered political parties to engage where children wish.

Use of school premises for election meetings

The use of school premises for election meetings of candidates is allowed in certain circumstances as set out in [section 95 of the Representation of the People Act 1983](#).

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