

Subject:**Annual Parents Meetings****Circular Number:**
2006/19**Date of Issue:**
30 August 2006**Governor Awareness:**
Essential**Audience:**

- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education;
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta;
- Association of Governing Bodies (GBA); and
- Teachers' Organisations.

Summary of Contents:

Notification about the removal of the requirement for School Boards of Governors to hold Annual Parents' Meetings (APMs).

Status of Contents:
Advice
Information for Schools**Related Documents:**
Information & Prospectus
Circular 2003/15**Superseded Documents:**
None**Expiry Date:**
None**DENI Website:**
<http://www.deni.gov.uk>**Enquiries:**

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1. Article 126 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 placed a duty on Boards of Governors in Northern Ireland to hold Annual Parents' Meetings in a school. The need for this statutory provision has been questioned by schools over the years particularly because of the low attendance by parents at most annual meetings. The Government recognises that formal annual meetings have not been generally popular with parents both here and elsewhere in the UK. Accordingly, Article 41 of the Education (NI) Order 2006 repeals with immediate effect the requirement on Boards of Governors in Northern Ireland to hold Annual Parents' Meetings. This requirement has already been repealed in England and Wales.

2. It remains open to Boards of Governors to hold less formal meetings with parents on a voluntary basis or in response to requests for such meetings from parents. The arrangements for these meetings are for each school Board of Governors to decide. For example, Parents Councils, which operate in the integrated school sector, may be an alternative and effective way of achieving increased parental involvement in schools.

3. Generally the Department considers that all schools should have arrangements in place for parents to raise issues relating to both the management and operation of the school plus personal issues affecting their children as pupils. These arrangements should include procedures for dealing with complaints.

4. School Boards of Governors are reminded that they are still required by law to publish an Annual Report for parents as outlined in the approved scheme of management for each school.

BRIAN HILL