

The role of our Local Governing Boards – March 2022

The role of our Members

Our Members are guardians of the governance of the Trust and as such have a different status to Trustees. Members' roles and responsibilities are in line with the DfE requirements and guidance. Initial Members were the signatories to the Memorandum of Association and agreed our Articles of Association (the legal document which outlines our governance structure and how our Trust operates). Our Articles of Association also describe how our Members are recruited and replaced, and how many Trustees are appointed to the Trust Board. Our Members appoint Trustees to ensure that our charitable objectives are carried out and so are able to remove Trustees if they fail to fulfil this responsibility. Accordingly, our Trustees submit an Annual Report on the performance of the Trust to our Members.

In line with DfE expectations, only one of our Members is also a Trustee (the Chair of Trust Board – by virtue of office). None of our Members or Trustees are employees of the schools within our Trust, with the exception of the CEO who is a Trustee by virtue of the role.

The role of our Trustees

As a charitable company Trustees are both charity Trustees and company directors as well as school governors. Our Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of our Trust, and in accordance with the provisions set out in our Memorandum and Articles of Association and Master Funding Agreement, they are legally responsible and accountable for all statutory functions and for the performance of all schools within the Trust. They approve a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains our robust internal control arrangements. In addition, they must carry out the three core governance functions:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Hold the executive to account for the educational performance of the Trust's schools and their pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Oversee the financial performance of the Trust and make sure its money is well spent.

Our Trust Board has the right to review and adapt the governance structure at any time which includes removing delegations based on assessment of competencies and risks.

The role of our Trust Board committees

Our Trustees establish committees to carry out some governance functions. The Scheme of Delegations and associated Terms of Reference and portfolio holder Role Descriptors set out responsibilities, which include making decisions, although any decisions made are deemed decisions of the Trust Board. There are at least three Trustees on each committee and the responsibilities of each committee are set out in the committee's terms of reference. The Trust Board appoint Board committee chairs and committee members according to their skills. We have two committees, Achievement and Improvement and Finance Business and Audit.

The Academy Trust Handbook makes it clear that the Trust Board 'should have a finance committee to which the Board delegates financial scrutiny and oversight'. Our Trust has a Finance, Business and Audit committee.

The role of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Our CEO has the delegated responsibility for the operation of the Trust including the performance of our Trust schools and the CEO performance manages the school Headteachers.

Our CEO is our Accounting Officer so has overall responsibility for the operation of the Trust's financial responsibilities and ensures that the organisation is run with financial effectiveness and stability; avoiding waste and securing value for money.

The role of our Local Governing Boards

Our Trust Board has established Local Governing Boards at each school with significant delegated responsibilities. Our LGBs include elected parent governors, staff governors and governors from the local community. Our preferred model for LGB composition suggests nine local governors but this is not proscribed and current LGBs differ in size and organisation relative to their individual needs reflecting the uniqueness of each individual school. Our LGBs responsibilities are determined by our Trust's Scheme of Delegation and the LGB Terms of Reference. A summary of the key LGB delegation includes:

- **Strategy**
 - Determining their individual academy's vision, ethos and strategic direction (set in the context of the Trust vision and ethos).
- **Leadership**
 - The Chair of each LGB is appointed by Trustees for a full term of office.
 - The Headteacher is appointed by the CEO in consultation with the LGB Chair.
 - The Chair and Vice Chair of the LGBs are invited to join the Chair of Trustees termly networking events.
 - The Chair and Vice Chair of the LGBs are invited to join the COO /Trust Governance Support termly operation update briefing meetings.
 - The LGB can inform the CEO of any recommendations for proposed changes to local admissions arrangements for CEO approval.
 - Ensuring that risks are adequately assessed and addressed.
- **Standards and Curriculum**
 - Holding the leadership to account for academic performance and quality of teaching and learning.
 - Ensuring that the legal requirements for SEND are met in terms of the curriculum and quality of provision.
- **Safeguarding**
 - Safeguarding of children in school is specifically delegated to the LGB.
 - Each LGB must have a named Safeguarding and SEND Governor/s.
- **Finance**
 - Trustees will approve the school budget annually and with reference to a three-year plan.
 - Schools must retain cumulative surplus levels equivalent to 5% of annual income.
 - School leadership teams works directly with the CFO to allocate balanced financial resources.
 - Any expenditure <=£20k is for school/Local Governing Board/Executive team to approve.
 - Any expenditure >£20k requires Trustee approval.
- **Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher Appointment/Dismissal**
 - Responsibility for appointment / dismissal of a Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher is delegated by the Trust Board to the CEO – who ensures appropriate consultation with the relevant LGB.
- **Headteacher Performance Management**
 - The CEO, LGB Chair and designated panels at each LGB will review Headteacher performance, pay recommendations.
 - Objective-setting is delegated by our Trust Board to the CEO – who ensures appropriate consultation with the relevant LGB Chair.
 - Trustees review and approve Headteacher pay recommendations.
 - The CEO is responsible for delivery of Headteacher performance management including interim reviews – ensuring appropriate consultation with the relevant LGB Chair.
 - The CEO will oversee and sign off any leave of absence for Headteachers and all other staff in school.
- **Local Governing Body**
 - Trustees may disband an ineffective LGB and impose any model of local governance deemed appropriate including if necessary an Interim Executive Committee.