

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Governing Committees

1 Overview and purpose

- 1.1 The Board of Trustees is legally responsible for the performance of each academy but to do this the Board requires the active support of Governing Committees (GC) to ensure effective governance across each school.
- 1.2 The GCs assist the Board of Trustees to exercise its duties and powers as set out in the Articles of Association and Funding Agreements. The GC's remit is to support the Board by:
- providing support and challenge to academy leaders for performance and attainment
 - scrutinising academy budget monitoring information
 - to provide a vehicle for Board of Trustee engagement with the academy, its parents, pupils and local community
 - to help to ensure that the Trust works as one entity, in the interests of all its academies equally
 - undertaking link visits and feeding back participation, engagement and visibility in the school community
 - to undertake responsibility for any of the decision-making powers delegated by the Board of Trustees, including
 - inputting to senior school leaders' performance reviews
 - supporting senior school staff recruitment
 - considering pupil exclusions.

2 Link governors

- 2.1 There shall be link governors for the following areas:
- Safeguarding (including health and safety)
 - Curriculum and achievement (including personal development and extra-curricular)
 - Vulnerable students (including SEND, pupil premium and young carers)
 - Partnerships / community links (including careers).
- 2.2 Link governors will be expected to arrange two link visits in the academic year, in school hours, and to produce a report following a standardised template.
- 2.3 It is permissible for two governors to undertake one link role. This is to be encouraged if a staff governor wishes to fulfil a link role, given the potential for a real or perceived conflict of interest.
- 2.4 GC chairs may be but would not usually be a link governor.
- 2.5 Governors who hold a link role can expect to attend an annual meeting with the equivalent links from the other academies and the Board of Trustees in which learning, celebrations and challenges can be shared.

3 Membership and constitution

3.1 The composition of the Governing Committee shall be as follows:

3.1.1 Up to nine (9) members comprising of:

- i. Two to five (2-5) community members
- ii. Two (2) staff representatives (one teaching and one support)
- iii. Two (2) parent representatives

3.1.2 Ex officio members will include the Chief Executive Officer, or their nominee, and the Principal or Executive Headteacher, or their nominee.

3.1.3 Trustees may from time to time choose to appoint Associate members to the GC, in addition to those members listed at 3.1.1. Associate members may contribute to discussions but may not vote on any matters or hold chair, vice chair or link roles.

3.1.4 For the avoidance of doubt, trustees may serve on and chair a GC, but they must not make up a majority of members.

3.1.5 If a Trustee is appointed under provision 3.1.3, provision 3.1.4 does not apply.

3.2 One member from within the committee shall be elected as committee chair and another as vice chair at the first meeting of each academic year.

3.3 In the event of non-attendance at two consecutive meetings, the Chair will initiate a conversation with the individual concerned. In the event of non-attendance over a period of six months and/or continued non-engagement with the work and requirements of the committee, an individual's standing on the committee will be reviewed. Following recommendation to the Board of Trustees, the individual may be required to stand down.

4 Recruitment

4.1 Community governors shall be appointed from within the community on the basis of relevant skills/experience and on recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

4.2 Staff governors shall be appointed from and elected by the staff body. For this purpose, 'staff' is defined as an individual who is on payroll at the school at the point of their election/appointment. Any term of office shall automatically end at the point employment ceases.

4.3 Parent governors shall be appointed from and elected by the parent cohort. For this purpose, 'parent' is defined as the parent of a registered child on roll at the school at the point of their election/appointment.

5 Frequency of meetings

5.1 Meetings shall be held at least four times a year. Attendance shall usually be in person. Should matters be for approval, quorum shall be three members.

5.2 Matters may be considered by electronic means in between meetings.

6. Conflict of interest

- 6.1 A governor or attendee who becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest relating to matters being discussed by the committee should give prior notification to the Chair or, if this is not possible, declare this at the meeting and – where necessary – withdraw during discussion of the relevant agenda item.

7. Reporting

- 7.1 Draft minutes of each meeting shall be produced by the Clerk and circulated to the Chair of the committee for review.
- 7.2 The Chair will produce a short 'highlights report' after each meeting to be submitted to the Board of Trustees. Matters will be escalated and recommendations made to the Board of Trustees as required.
- 7.3 The GCs' activities and attendance will be disclosed in the company's Annual Report and Accounts as required.