

**EDUCATION SOUTHWEST  
TRUST BOARD, TRUST COMMITTEES  
AND LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Please read in conjunction with the Scheme of Delegation.

**Definitions :**

Members : the founders of the company  
Trustees : constitute the Board  
Governors : constitute Local Governing Bodies

Trustees and Governors may participate in any meeting through teleconferencing which is deemed to be in attendance at that meeting.

**EXPENSES**

It is not the policy of ESW to pay expenses to governors or Trustees whilst they carry out their normal duties. However, when a Trustee or governor wishes to submit a claim for an extraordinary expense arising from their duties (such as extended travel or accommodation), then he/she should do so using the standard staff claim form. This needs to be authorised for payment by the Chair of LGB (where appropriate) and the Chair of Board in all cases.

**ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF TRUST BOARD, TRUST COMMITTEES, LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES AND THEIR COMMITTEES (IF APPROPRIATE)**

The Clerk chairs the meeting for duration of the election of Chair and conducts the election. The newly elected Chair conducts the election of the Vice Chair. All appointments to LGBs are subject to ratification by the Board.

- Trustees/Governors are asked for nominations prior to the meeting.
- Trustees/Governors are able to self-nominate
- Trustees/Governors may be proposed by another Trustee/Governor
- Nominations may be made by email
- Nominations are not accepted at the meeting
- Nominations are accepted by Trustees/Governors who are unable to be present at the meeting
- The candidate(s) is asked to leave the meeting
- The election is conducted by a show of hands where there is one candidate
- The election is conducted by secret ballot when there is more than one candidate
- The candidate(s) returns to the meeting
- The clerk announces the result with the candidate polling the majority of vote being duly elected.
- In the event of a tie, each candidate is given the opportunity to speak to the Trustees/Governors about their nomination and a further vote will be taken.
- In the event of a second tie the decision will be taken by the Board, in the case of an LGB, or the Members in the case of the Board.

## **MEMBERS**

### **Core purpose**

1. Responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust's charitable objective, 'advancing education for the public benefit', is being met.
2. Appoint up to eight Trustees with the aim of creating a Board that;
  - a. Has wide experience of the strategy and management of complex organisations
  - b. Has expertise of the range of schools in the Trust
  - c. Is balanced in terms of the geography of the Trust
  - d. Is balanced in terms of the gender of Board Trustees
3. Appoint and remove auditors
4. Amend the Articles

## **TRUST BOARD**

### **Core Purpose**

To further the objects and vision of the Trust by:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

A well-informed, supportive and challenging Board is an essential prerequisite for a successful Trust. Ultimate responsibility lies with the Trust Board which delegates responsibility to executives and committees as detailed in the Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation. Committees may refer any other matter to the Trust Board at their discretion.

In fulfilling its duties, the Board holds ultimate accountability for all activities of its schools and in doing so it respects and acknowledges the importance of local self-government and contexts in accordance with the principle of earned autonomy. The Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer recommend to the Board any variation to this Scheme of Delegation when it is reviewed annually with regard to individual academies, depending on their situation.

### **1. Membership**

- 1.1 Trustees as appointed by Members and those co-opted CEO, if not appointed as a Trustee, Chief Operating Officer and Trustee of School Improvement in attendance if required.
- 1.2. The Chair and Vice Chair are elected annually

### **2. Quorum**

The quorum is 50% of the total number of non-executive Trustees.

### **3. Meetings**

The Board meets as required but at least six times per annum.

### **4. Terms of Reference**

- 4.1 To agree the strategic aims and vision of the Trust; to monitor and evaluate progress towards their achievement.

- 4.2 To hold overall accountability for the educational achievement of all students in all schools in the Trust.
- 4.3 To hold overall accountability for the financial affairs of the Trust.
- 4.4 To ensure that the Trust and its schools are well-led and managed.
- 4.5 The Board remains accountable but delegates authority to take decisions and responsibility to Committees and LGBs in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation. This is reviewed annually. The Board receives regular reports from the Committees in order to fulfil its own responsibilities.
- 4.6 To appoint the members of Committees
- 4.7 To propose the appointment of Auditors

## **FINANCE AND INTERNAL ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Core Purpose**

The Board exercises its role of financial scrutiny and challenge through the Finance and Internal Assurance Committee.

### **1. Membership**

- 1.1 The membership is appointed by the Trust Board and comprises:

3 Trustees of the Trust Board	1 year term
Up to 3 LGB members	1 year term
Chief Executive Officer	
- 1.2 The Chair is appointed by the Board and must be a Trustee.
- 1.3 The Committee may recommend co-option of additional members by the Trust Board.
- 1.4 The Chief Operating Officer is in attendance at this committee.

### **2. Quorum**

The quorum is at least 50% of the members of the Committee provided that the majority of those present are Trust Board Trustees.

### **3. Meetings**

The Committee meets as required but at least four times per annum. Employees should not participate as members when audit matters are discussed.

Decisions are taken by majority vote with at least two Trustees voting in favour.

All decisions must be ratified by the Board.

### **4. Terms of Reference**

- 4.1. Scrutiny of quarterly accounts produced by the Chief Operating Officer and presented at the appropriate Finance Committee meeting.
- 4.2. Perform the functions of an audit and risks committee, in accordance with the Academies Financial Handbook 2020 (para. 3.6) reviewing risks to internal control through an agreed programme of work. (The committee may delegate this work to one or more of its members or to others suitably qualified.)

In its audit and risk role the committee must:

  - direct the trust's programme of internal scrutiny
  - ensure that risks are being addressed appropriately through internal scrutiny
  - report to the board on the adequacy of the trust's internal control framework, including financial and non-financial controls and management of risks.

- 4.3. Receive the monthly management accounts produced for each school and engage with the CEO and/or Chief Operating Officer on any matters arising. (The committee may delegate this work to one or more of its members)
- 4.4. Annual review, update and monitoring of the Risk Register.
- 4.5. Scrutiny of external audit plans and reports and ensure that appropriate actions are taken.
- 4.6. Review of annual budgets for each school for recommendation and approval by the Board.
- 4.7. To authorise unbudgeted revenue and capital expenditure in accordance with this policy.
- 4.8. Review and approval of internal proposals for the application of the EFA capital building and maintenance grants.
- 4.9. Act as remuneration committee for all schools in the Trust, setting Trust pay scales, ensuring all schools carry out performance management, and approving recommendations for progression.
- 4.10. Review benchmarking data at the appropriate time.

## **THE PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

### **Introduction**

The Performance and Standards Committee is a committee of the Trust established under the terms of Clauses 100 to 106 of the Articles of Association of 2016.

### **Key Purpose of the Committee**

- To challenge, agree and publish targets for Quality of Education, Personal Development and Behaviour and Attitudes.
- To monitor the impact of Pupil Premium on achievement and attainment along with other additional funding.
- To monitor pupil/student/staff/parental views and attitudes.
- To consider and recommend the draft Trust Development Plan to The Board for approval.
- To keep under review the academies' self-evaluation process, and detail of the completed self-evaluation form (SEF).
- To determine such targets as an academy is required to set.
- To ensure that as far as possible school is a place of safety and positive experience and enjoyment for pupils. This will include due regard to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural development; safeguarding in the curriculum and effective policy implementation for bullying and racist incidents.

### **Focus Areas**

#### **A. Quality of Education**

- i. To review and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum, teaching and learning; pupils' standards and progress; and teachers' CPD. In doing so, the committee should take account of the performance of the full range of different groups represented in the Trust's academies, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, looked after children and pupils in different ethnic, social and ability groups.
- ii. To understand how leaders are maximising expertise and potential within the Trust to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum including scope and purpose.
- iii. To receive reports on pupil performance and to submit reports and recommendations to The Board as necessary.

iv. Monitor and review curriculum-related policies.

**B. Behaviour and Attitudes**

- i. To receive reports on pupils' attendance and behaviour and make recommendations to the Board as appropriate.
- ii. To challenge the effectiveness of policies and interventions to improve behaviour and safeguarding.
- iii. To ensure that pupils develop their understanding of their rights and responsibilities and have appropriate opportunities to make a positive contribution to the local community and each other.
- iv. To prohibit political indoctrination and ensure the balanced treatment of political issues.

**C. Personal Development**

- i. To keep under review the curriculum for the academies to ensure that all our academies apply the principles of equal opportunity and meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and relevant legislation including sufficient lessons and teaching time of in-school or remote lessons.
- ii. To ensure pupils have opportunities to help them achieve future economic wellbeing, understand career options and acquire appropriate workplace skills.
- iii. To monitor student performance and to keep under review student destinations.
- iv. To review strategies and consider impact relating to extra-curricular activities

**I. Membership and Operation**

- I. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of three Trustees appointed by the Trust. The Trust may appoint additional Trustees to increase the size of the Committee's membership. Membership of the Committee may also include additional persons who are not Trustees to add to the skills and expertise available. Such additional members (i.e. non-Trustees) will not be entitled to vote.
- II. The quorum shall be two Trustees appointed by the Trust. The quorum is the minimum number of members of the Committee necessary to conduct the business of the Committee.
- III. The Committee shall be served by a Trust Clerk.
- IV. The Chair will be appointed by the full Trust Board.
- V. The Committee may appoint a Vice/Deputy Chair if it so wishes.
- VI. In the event of the Chair or Vice/Deputy Chair (if one exists) of the Committee being unable to attend, the remaining members shall elect one of their members as Chair for the meeting.
- VII. The Chair shall have the power to invite other individuals to attend any meeting if deemed appropriate to the business. Lead members of the Senior Leadership Team whose area of responsibility includes matters relative to the Detailed Responsibilities of the Committee listed below, shall be expected to attend meetings of the Committee.
- VIII. The Committee is entitled, wherever it is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so, to go into a confidential session and (subject to the rules of quoracy) to exclude any, or all, participants and observers, except the Clerk.
- IX. The Committee shall undertake an annual review of these terms of reference, and recommend any changes needed to the Trust Board for approval.

## 2. Meetings

- I. Committee meetings will be held on an as-required basis but at least three times per year. These will follow Trust 'data drops'.
- II. The Clerk will make a record of all proceedings at each meeting. Minutes will be circulated to members within 14 days of the meeting, and presented with the agenda for the next Full Trust meeting.
- III. The minutes of Committee meetings shall be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Where requests are made, the Clerk shall, with legal advice where necessary, release such information as is not subject to exemption under the terms of the Act.
- IV. The committee will liaise with such other committees and invite members of other committees to attend its meeting as should be deemed appropriate.
- V. Any matters which may be in conflict with the work of another committee must be referred to the Trustees.

## 3. Delegated Functions

- I. Subject to the detailed requirements of the Trust's Scheme of Delegated Authority, the Committee:
  - a. has the authority of the Trust to investigate any activity within its Terms of Reference; and
  - b. may be requested to investigate anything by the Trust within the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- II. The Committee may obtain independent professional advice in accordance with the Trust's procedures.

## THE APPEALS COMMITTEE

### **Core Purpose**

To hear appeals resulting from the decision of any Trust Committees or LGBs.

### 1. **Membership**

The membership comprises:

- I.1. A minimum of three and maximum of six Trustees/Governors who have not taken part in relevant meetings
- I.2. A Chair is elected from those present at the meeting
- I.3. Members of staff or others with an interest may not be members of the Committee
- I.4. The Executive Principals and Chair of Board are not members and may be invited to attend to give advice, but may not vote.

### 2. **Quorum**

The quorum shall be three, provided the majority are Trust Board Trustees.

### 3. **Meetings**

The committee meets as required and a Chair selected from those present.

#### **4. Terms of Reference**

- 4.1. To consider and to make decisions on any appeals relating to staff issues including pay, redundancy, dismissal or staff grievances, in accordance with relevant Trust policies and scheme of delegation.
- 4.2. To consider appeals relating to cases of exclusion of a student from a school, in accordance with relevant Trust policies and scheme of delegation.

### **CHAIRS' FORUM**

#### ***Core purpose***

To provide a platform for:

- a. exchanges of views and information between the Trust Board and the Local Governing Bodies of the Trust's schools; and
- b. sharing of ideas and experience between LGB Chairs with the aim of supporting and improving governance across the Trust.

#### **1. Membership**

The membership comprises:

- 1.1. All Chairs of Local Governing Bodies or their representative;  
Chair of Trust;  
Two other Trustees;  
The Chief Executive Officer or their representative;  
The Director of School Improvement or their representative.
- 1.2. At the first meeting of the Forum in every academic year, a Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed who are not Trustees. Any member may be appointed other than the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of School Improvement.
- 1.3. The Forum will be supported by the Clerk to the Board who will minute recommendations made by the Forum and who will schedule meetings and prepare agendas in consultation with the Chair of the Forum.

#### **2. Terms of Reference**

Within the overall framework and policies of the Trust:

- 2.1. To provide an environment for open and honest communication and discussion on matters of celebration or challenges;
- 2.2. To receive information updates from the Board of Trustees;
- 2.3. To ensure that the information from the Board is disseminated to the Local Governing Bodies;
- 2.4. To provide feedback on areas of consultation requested by the Board;
- 2.5. To contribute to and be advised of strategic developments of the Trust and individual academies.
- 2.6. To agree relevant items to be taken to the Full Board;
- 2.7. To provide an opportunity to discuss and agree initiatives and actions that improve consistency and effectiveness of governance across the Trust;
- 2.8. To provide input to the Governor Training Programme to ensure that the programme meets the training needs of the LGBs;
- 2.9. To contribute to the effectiveness of the Trust and adding value to Trust schools;

## **LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB)**

### **Core Purpose**

It is accepted that a well-informed, supportive and challenging LGB is an essential prerequisite for a successful school. Ultimate responsibility lies with the Trust Board which delegates responsibility to each LGB as detailed in the Scheme of Delegation. This is reviewed annually or on the appointment of a new CEO. LGBs may decide to delegate responsibility to a committee with its own terms of reference.

### **1. Membership**

The membership comprises:

- 1.1. The Head of the school
  - a maximum of 2 staff governors appointed or elected as decided by the LGB
  - 2 parent governors appointed or elected as decided by the LGB
  - At least 4 other governors
  - Trust Board Members, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer and Trustee of School Improvement in attendance if required
- 1.2. All governor appointments are subject to ratification by the Trust Board.
- 1.3. There is no mandated upper limit on the number of governors.
- 1.4. Trustees of the Trust may not be governors.

### **2. Quorum**

The quorum is 50% of the membership.

### **3. Meetings**

The LGB meets as required but at least three times per annum.

### **4. Terms of Reference**

Within the overall framework and policies of the Trust:

- 4.1 To agree the strategic aims and vision of the school and approve its annual Improvement Plan; to hold the Head to account for progress towards their achievement.
- 4.2 To monitor, challenge and support:
  - the educational achievement of all students in the school including progress and attainment of all groups of students
  - the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum
  - standards of personal development, and welfare, behaviour and attendance
  - Leadership and management: performance management; staff development; safeguarding.
- 4.3 To recommend a budget to the Board;
- 4.4 To provide regular reports to the Board in order to fulfil its own responsibilities.
- 4.5 To understand the views of pupils, parents and carers, staff, and the wider community and to ensure that these views are used to inform decision making.