



# Mowbray Education Trust

## Governor and Trustee Handbook

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| Document Type      | Governance document - Published online |
| Last Revision Date | Sept 2025                              |
| Next Revision Date | Sept 2027                              |
| Owner              | Director of Governance and Compliance  |
| Author             | Director of Governance and Compliance  |
| Version            | 1.3                                    |
| Status             | Approved by Trust Board                |

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## 1. Welcome!

Welcome to governance at Mowbray Education Trust! Whether you are a member, trustee, or governor we are delighted you are giving your time to help provide the very best education for our children and supporting our communities.

This Handbook is designed to you with key information to help you to be effective in your role and it will complement your induction training.

## 2. About Mowbray Education Trust

We are a Multi-Academy Trust operating in Leicestershire supporting over 3,000 young people in 8 diverse schools and a nursery, with a dedicated team of more than 500 staff. Together, we believe that education should be not only accessible but also meaningful and relatable. This belief underpins our strong sense of community and our deep-rooted commitment to the local areas in which our schools operate.

As a Multi Academy Trust MET operates as a charitable company, limited by guarantee and regulated by the Department for Education. We recognise the importance of equipping everyone within our Trust — pupils, staff, and stakeholders alike — with the skills, knowledge, and character needed to remain resilient and ambitious in the face of the significant challenges currently affecting education, our communities, and young people nationally. Our vision and values place children at the heart of everything we do. We are an inclusive community where every child is supported to thrive, every voice is valued, and together we shape a future that is kind, ambitious, and resilient. Our values of Inclusivity, Aspiration, and Collaboration underpin all aspects of our educational work, guide our decisions, inform our practice, and unite our schools in a shared commitment to excellence for every learner.

## 3. Trust strategy, vision and values

**Our mission:**

***Children First: Educating today, inspiring tomorrow***

**Our Strategic Ambitions for 2026 to 2028**

**Priority 1: Improving Attainment, Attendance, Consistency and Inspection Outcomes**

Over the next three years, the Trust will secure sustained improvements in attainment outcomes and educational quality across all schools, underpinned by a clear, graduated school improvement model aligned to the new Ofsted five-point grading scale. Focus will be given to ensuring that the Trust's two current Requires Improvement (RI) schools - one primary and one secondary - demonstrate clear, measurable improvement at their next inspection. Improved attainment and progress outcomes across all Trust schools. An increasing proportion of schools judged as Strong Standard or Exceptional during their next inspections.

**Priority 2: Planned Growth, Inclusion and Alternative Provision**

Over the next three years, the Trust will deliver sustainable growth in pupil numbers while strengthening inclusive practice and expanding targeted provision for

vulnerable learners. This priority aligns with the Department for Education's inclusion agenda, SEND and AP Improvement Plan, and expectations for early intervention, inclusive mainstream practice, and high-quality alternative provision. Establish a comprehensive community and civic engagement programme focused on career development, volunteering opportunities, and charitable activity across the Trust.

### **Priority 3: Future Proofing MET's Financial Sustainability**

Over the next three years, the Trust will strengthen its financial sustainability and resilience to ensure it can continue to deliver high-quality education, inclusive provision, and long-term value for money. This priority aligns with Department for Education expectations for strong financial governance, effective trust leadership, and efficient use of public funds.

### **Priority 4: Developing Professional Capital and Talent Density**

Over the next three years, the Trust will invest deliberately in its professional capital to ensure that all staff, leaders, and trustees are supported to fulfil their potential. This priority aligns with DfE and Ofsted expectations for strong leadership, high-quality professional development, and effective governance, while recognising the Trust's wider civic and community responsibilities.

This priority will build a highly skilled, motivated, and values-driven workforce and governance structure across the Trust. By investing in professional capital, strengthening partnerships, and embedding a strong coaching culture, the Trust will enhance leadership capacity, improve educational outcomes, and secure long-term sustainability and impact within its communities.



We are an inclusive community where every child thrives, every voice matters, and together we shape a kind, ambitious, and resilient future.

## **Our values:**



### **Inclusivity**

We are an inclusive and inspiring community where every child thrives, ambitions are nurtured, and resilience is celebrated.



### **Aspiration**

Educating today, empowering tomorrow – a community where every voice matters and every child reaches their full potential.



### **Collaboration**

Together, we build a kind, ambitious, and resilient community where every learner is valued and supported.

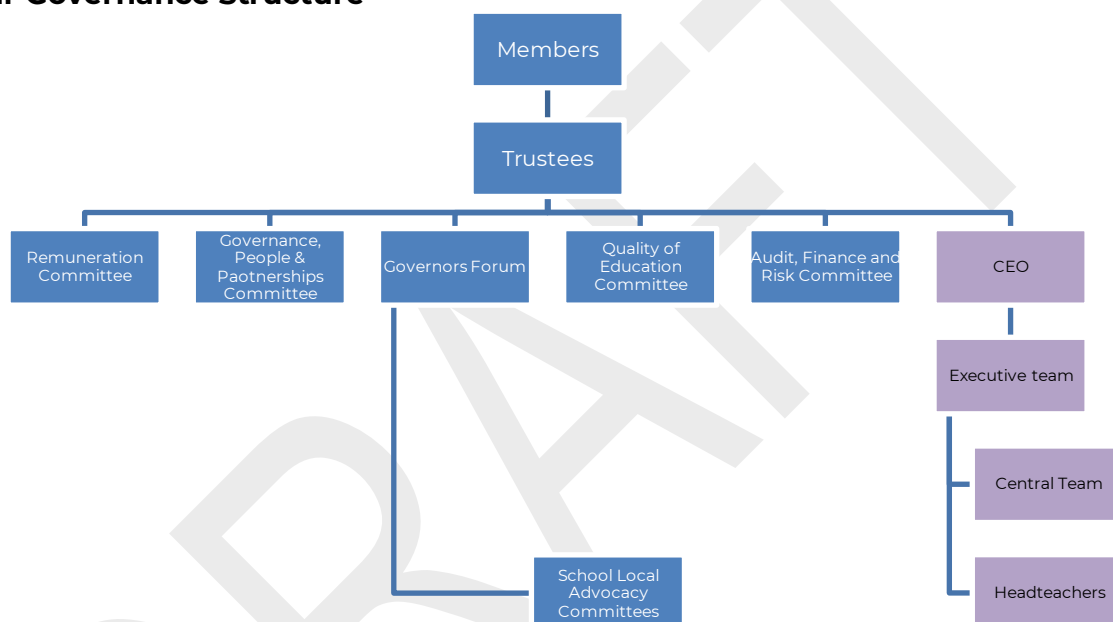
*Children First: Educating today. Inspiring tomorrow.*

## 4. Code of conduct

All members, trustees, and governors are bound by a code of conduct. This code of conduct is shown in appendix 1 and is built around The **Nolan Principles of Public Life**, which all staff and volunteers are obliged to follow:

1. Selflessness
2. Integrity
3. Objectivity
4. Accountability
5. Openness
6. Honesty
7. Leadership

## 5. Our Governance Structure



### Members

Members are volunteers who are the guardians of the trust. They form and dissolve the trust, approve the articles of association of the trust which set out its charitable objects and governance, they appoint and dismiss the trustees and appoint the external auditors.

### Board of Trustees

Trustees are volunteers with overall accountability and legal responsibility for the trust. They are both charity trustees and company directors, so are subject to complying with requirements set by Companies House (where they are registered), the Charity Commission and the Department for Education.

They are responsible for:

- Providing strategic leadership
- Holding the executive leaders to account
- Ensuring that the trust delivers an excellent education to pupils
- Maintaining effective financial management

Trustees must ensure compliance with:

- The trust's charitable objects
- Regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements

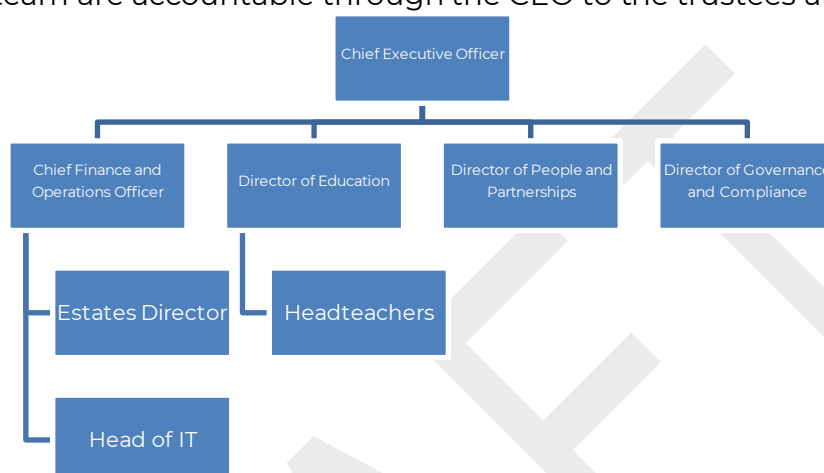
- All funding agreements

The board of trustees delegate authority and responsibility to:

- Board Committees
- The CEO and their executive team
- Local advocacy committees
- Headteachers

### Trust Leaders

The Executive team are accountable through the CEO to the trustees and comprises:



### Headteachers

Lead our schools and are accountable to the CEO via the Director of Education.

### Local advocacy committees

Effective local governance is an important factor in the success of a school, and each school will have a local advocacy committee (or share with a local school for our smallest schools). They are accountable to the trustees and are responsible for the following broad areas:

- Stakeholder engagement (students, parents, staff, the wider community)
- Vulnerable pupils (monitoring the education of our most vulnerable pupil groups, with a particular focus on SEND and Safeguarding)
- Standards of education through monitoring high level information
- Headteacher and student wellbeing

Role profiles for members, trustees and local governors are included in Appendix 2 of this document. The terms of reference for each of the committees are included in Appendix 3.

## 6. Scheme of Delegation

The board maintained a scheme of delegation which describes the decision-making responsibilities in the trust. This document sets out who is responsible for decisions at different levels across the trust and it is updated annually.

The board also oversees the operations of a separate limited company – Mowbray Education Trust Services Ltd. The scope of the limited company is specifically in relation to the Trust's pre-school SEND provision called The Retreat, and its pre-school called the Oasis Family Centre. Whilst directors of the limited company are legally and financially responsible for the operation of the limited company, they

defer strategic decision-making to the MET Board of trustees.

## **7. Meetings**

All meetings (whether trust board, its committees, or advocacy committees) will be supported by a clerk. The Director of Governance and Compliance is the Clerk to the Board, Company Secretary and responsible for ensuring all governance meetings are effective and well run.

The Director of Governance and Compliance and the clerks will offer advice and guidance to the Trust Board and its committees to ensure compliance and to ensure the meeting runs smoothly and effectively. They will also schedule and organise meetings, and liaise with executive, school and central teams to deliver high quality, timely, accurate information for governance volunteers.

Trust board will typically meet every half term (6 times per year), and committees typically meet every term (3 times per year). Trust board meetings and local advocacy meetings are usually held in person, whilst committee meetings are typically held online.

## **8. Recruitment**

The trust welcomes governance volunteers from all backgrounds and values volunteers with a diverse range of skills, backgrounds, and experiences. We have established a process for appointing governors and trustees which follow safer recruitment principles.

In addition to the requirements of the role which are described in the person specification in appendix 1, all volunteers must complete a declaration of interest and understand that a Disclosure and Barred Services check will be carried out prior to official appointment. All appointments are at the discretion of the trust or the members.

## **9. Induction**

All volunteers are expected to participate in an induction programme to help them get the most out of their time volunteering and to ensure they are able to carry out this important role effectively.

Induction will be tailored to each volunteer however all will benefit from:

- Initial 1:1 meetings with the Director of Governance and Compliance. This is to outline the role in more detail, the expectations, and commitments involved, the vision, aims and values of the trust and how governance works in this trust
- This handbook
- The offer of a governor or trustee mentor
- Face to face induction training
- 1:1 meeting with the chair of the trust or the advocacy committee

All governance volunteers are given access to

- our governance administration platform – Governor Hub. This is a secure platform for governance documents.
- our subscription to the National Association of Governors, for governance advice, guidance and training
- our trust online learning platform for statutory and governance training



- A trust email account (this **must** be used for all trust business)
- Copies of the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education

Regular updates, briefings, and presentations are embedded in the governance calendar throughout the academic year

## 10. Chairs of Committees

All committee must have a chair and vice chair. The chair (or the vice chair in their absence) runs each meeting and is responsible for leading their committee.

- At the first meeting of each year the Trust Board and each committee elect members to act as chair and vice chair and they are subject to annual re-election.
- No person may act as Chair of the Trust Board, its committees, or an advocacy committee if they are an employee of the Trust.
- The Board or committee will elect a temporary replacement from among the attendees present at any meeting where the chair and vice chair is absent.
- The chair of the trust board will be subject to an annual performance review by the Members of the Trust
- The Committee Chair of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee will hold recognised financial or accountancy qualifications.
- The chair of trustees may not be permitted to chair the Audit, Finance and Risk committee to ensure separation for auditing purposes.
- Chairs must take accountability, in collaboration with the Governance and Compliance Director for the appropriate succession planning for their role

## 11. Proceedings of meetings

- The Board will typically meet every half term - 6 meetings per year. Committees will typically meet 3 or 4 times per year.
- Any three Board or Committee members can request in writing to the Director of Governance and Compliance that the Chair convene a meeting by giving no less than 14 days prior notice.
- Agendas for all meetings will be set collaboratively by the appropriate senior leader, the chair of each committee, and the clerk.
- Agendas and meeting papers will be distributed to committee members at least 7 days prior to the meeting via Governor Hub
- The quorum for meetings will be:
  - Trust Board – 3 trustees or 1/3 or sitting members (whichever is greater)
  - Trust Board Committee and Local Advocacy committees - 50% +1 of sitting membership
- If a governance professional and the clerk are not available a member of the committee can take the minutes.
- Each trustee or governor who as member of a committee and in attendance at a meeting will be entitled to one vote.
- Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- Proxy votes will not be accepted at any meetings.
- No individual member, trustee, or local advocacy committee member (including chairs) is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Trust outside any specific authority set out in this Scheme of Delegation. However, as an exception, the Chair of trustees can make a decision by 'Chairs Action' when a delay in doing so would be:
  - Seriously detrimental to the interest of the Trust or and of its schools



- it would not be possible to postpone the decision to a meeting of the Trust Board or delegated committee

The following types of decision cannot be made by 'chair's action':

- decisions related to admissions.
- approval of financial spend above any delegated limit decisions on executive or senior leaders pay.

Any actions taken above must be minuted and approved retrospectively at the next meeting with a record of why 'chair's action' was appropriate.

- A register of attendance shall be kept for each board, committee and local advocacy committee meeting and published on the Trust or school website annually
- A committee may invite any persons who are not usual attendees at these meetings to assist or advise on a particular matter or range of issues.
- References to the "Chair" shall in the absence of the Chair be whoever chairs the relevant meeting.
- All present should have due regard for conflicts of interest during discussions and / or decisions at meetings and any conflicted party should absent themselves from relevant parts of said discussions.

## **12. Pecuniary Interests**

All governance volunteers are required to declare their associated interests. These include:

- Business interests in which the governance volunteer could benefit, or be perceived to benefit from their position.
- Familial interest in which the governance volunteer or their family could benefit or be perceived to benefit from their position.

The register of interests is updated annually and published on the trust website. Governance volunteers are required to report any changes to their circumstances throughout the year.

## Appendix 1

### Code of Conduct

This code of conduct is built around the **Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life**. We also commit to following the [charity governance code](#)

### Selflessness

We will act solely in the best interests of children and young people

### Integrity

We must avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work.

Before acting and taking decisions, we must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.

We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends

### Objectivity

We should act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. We should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people

### Accountability

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### Openness

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### Honesty

We will be truthful at all times

### Leadership

We should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. We should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them. We will apply the highest standards and will:

- act within our powers
- promote the success of the trust
- exercise independent judgement
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence

### As individuals we:

1. Accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core purpose rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management. Understand and respect the distinction between the role and responsibilities of the committee and those of the executive and school leaders.
2. Will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our scheme of delegation
3. Will develop, share, and live the ethos and values of our trust.
4. Will set and maintain an ethos of high expectations for everyone in our school communities, including in the conduct and the professionalism of the committee itself.

5. Will not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
6. Agree to adhere to trust policies and procedures.
7. Will fully cooperate with requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, including identify, rights to work, and disclosure and barring checks
8. Will work collectively for the benefit of the trust.
9. Ensure that we have a good understanding of our safeguarding responsibilities and remain informed of updates to the DfE's Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children documents.
10. Will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
11. Will consider how our decisions may affect the trust and local community.
12. Will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
13. Ensure that where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
14. Will only speak or act on behalf of the trust board if we have the specific, delegated authority to do so.
15. Will fulfil their responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
16. Will follow the established procedures when making or responding to complaints
17. Will strive to uphold the trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
18. Will have regard to our responsibilities under [The Equality Act](#) and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.
19. Will act as local ambassadors for our trust.
20. Will involve ourselves actively in the work and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
21. Will make every effort to attend all meetings and, where we cannot attend, explain in advance why we are unable to.
22. Will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
23. Will get to know the school/s well and welcome opportunities to be involved in school activities.
24. Will visit the school/s and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
25. Will ensure that when visiting a school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
26. Will participate in induction training, prioritise training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
27. Will develop effective working relationships with leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local communities.
28. Will champion the voices of our school community and stakeholders.
29. Will establish effective working relationships with others who govern and lead in the trust
30. Will respect the remit of, and engage constructively with, relevant authorities, sector bodies and other trusts.
31. Will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
32. Will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
33. Will support the chair in their role of leading the committee and ensuring appropriate conduct.
34. Will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of the trust when

matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families

35. Will not reveal the details of any governor or trustee vote.
36. Will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
37. Will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.
38. Will practice good ICT security, utilize only our Mowbray Education Trust email addresses for trust or school business, keep personal data safe and support GDPR compliance. Confidential information will never be:
  - Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority.
  - Used to humiliate, embarrass, or blackmail others.
  - Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for.Our commitment to confidentiality does **not** overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm. We will continue to observe confidentiality after we have left office.
39. Will inform the Director of Governance and Compliance as soon as possible in the event of a breach of confidentiality, who will investigate the matter further. Governance volunteers understand that if they breach confidentiality, they may be suspended.
40. Will abide by any requirements set out in our Trust's Online Safety Policy (including Social Media)  
We will not:
  - Accept friend requests from pupils and not join any private parent/carers groups associated with the Trust or any of its schools.
  - Disclose any information which is confidential or would breach data protection of GDPR principles.
  - Make comments online about any members of the trust or school communities.
  - Post any inappropriate/offensive language, images or comments on social media that may bring individuals, the trust or our schools into disrepute.
41. Will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business, and these will be recorded in the [register of business interests](#).
42. Will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
43. Ensure that if a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
44. Accept that the register of business interests will be published on the trust's website.
45. Will act as a trustee/local governor, not as a representative of any group.
46. Accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the trust board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor/trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the trust website.
47. Accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.
48. Understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions including removal from the board as a last resort.
49. Agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually and endorsed by the full governing board.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions including removal as a last resort.

We agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually and endorsed by the trustees.

## Appendix 2

### Role Profiles

#### Governance Volunteer Person Specification

Volunteering as a trustee or governor is a challenging but very rewarding role. Mowbray Education Trust welcomes governors and trustees from all backgrounds, and a detailed knowledge of schools or education is not a requirement of the role.

We want governors and trustees who show:

- Commitment to the ethos, values, and strategic ambitions of the Academy Trust, and to promoting equality and diversity
- Commitment to the education, safeguarding, and welfare of children and young people – especially vulnerable children and young people
- Ability to make difficult decisions where necessary and a willingness to make and stand by collective decisions
- Ability to work within a formal governance structure
- Willingness to devote time, enthusiasm, and effort to the duties and responsibilities of a governance volunteer
- Commitment to seeking and taking account of the views of stakeholders such as parents, staff, and pupils
- Respect for the work and views of other governors, trustees, and staff
- Independence of thought and sound judgment
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Eagerness to reflect and learn on an ongoing basis
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of being a governance volunteer
- A curious, open-minded approach to their role
- Ability to offer challenging questions in curious, constructive manner and in the best interests of the Trust
- Excellent listening skills
- Functional IT skills, including Microsoft Office and experience of, or willingness to learn how to use remote meeting software and online governance tools to access agendas, papers and minutes.

#### Staff Governor Role Profile

A staff governor plays an important role in helping the advocacy committee to support and shape the school's direction, ensuring effective governance on behalf of the trustees, and contributing to the school's success.

As well as the qualities outlined above, the following describes the role of staff governor in this trust.

You will bring invaluable insights from your professional experience and daily interactions within the school community. By serving as a staff governor, you can make a significant impact on the school's success and contribute to the well-being and development of the entire school community.

Staff governors contribute to the school by:

- Providing Insights and sharing professional perspectives gained from working within the school to help the governors gain better understand of the context, operations,

and dynamics of the school.

- Actively engaging in meetings and training sessions will support continued development as a governor and as an employee
- Maintaining Professional Boundaries: Directing staff concerns to line managers rather than canvassing opinions or serving as a spokesperson. It is not the role of staff governors to represent staff or act as a spokesperson. The advocacy committee will have processes in place to engage with staff.
- Acting Impartially: Making decisions based on the best interests of all pupils, ensuring objectivity free from personal or external influences
- Ensuring Confidentiality: Keeping matters private and refraining from discussing issues outside meetings and with non-governors. If you do ever hear something in your governor work that you want to discuss further, please approach the Headteacher to discuss this
- Mentoring: Supporting new governors by providing advice, sharing experiences, and guiding them through their responsibilities. This involves acting as a point of contact, encouraging participation and visits, and fostering their confidence as they settle into their role.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Terms of reference**

The Board of trustees sets and approves the terms of reference for its committees and any short-term working groups. All terms of reference are reviewed annually by the Board. The Trust Board retains overall accountability for governance functions, however it delegates some authority to the committees and the executive team as outlined in the Scheme of Delegation. The board reserves the right to alter the terms of reference and scheme of delegation at any time.

Unless otherwise stated below, committees will be quorate with 2 and the minimum number of members of will be 3.

Policies delegated to committees are shown in the policy review schedule

### **Quality of Education Committee**

#### **Curriculum matters**

1. The broad educational needs of the pupils attending the trust's academies.
2. The curriculum principles which apply to all academies in the trust.
3. How curriculum principles are being implemented by academies in the trust and their impact on all pupils.
4. Curriculum and quality of education issues for all academies in the trust.
5. Curriculum enrichment throughout the trust.
6. Other curriculum issues such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning.

#### **Pupil achievement**

7. Pupil achievement and standards throughout the trust, including specific groups: those with special educational needs and disability (SEND), disadvantaged, looked after children and pupils with English as an additional language.
8. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the trust, including performance and future performance trends and risks in relation to each academy.
9. Teaching capacity throughout the trust including the impact of continuing professional development on pupil achievement and standards.
10. How collaboration between academies in the trust and more widely is raising pupil achievement and wider outcomes.

#### **Wider outcomes**

11. The trust-wide approach towards ensuring all pupils are given the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to manage their lives now and in the future.
  12. The trust-wide approach to improving pupils' health, wellbeing and physical literacy.
  13. The trust-wide approach to building the cultural capital of pupils.
  14. The trust-wide approach to promoting British values and providing pupils with a global outlook.
  15. The trust-wide approach to providing pupils with effective careers education.
  16. Issues related to pupil discipline such as levels of exclusions across the trust.
  17. Current and emerging patterns, trends and risks relating to attendance and behaviour for all academies in the trust.
  18. Current and emerging patterns, trends and risks relating to pupil wellbeing for all academies in the trust.
  19. Engaging pupils, parents and the wider community in promoting and improving educational performance and wider outcomes for all pupils throughout the trust.
- Review, adopt and monitor all policies delegated by the trust board.



## Audit Finance and Risk Committee

### Financial Reporting

The Trust must take full responsibility for its financial affairs, stewardship of assets and use resources efficiently to maximise outcomes for pupils. The Committee monitors the integrity of the financial statements of the company, including its annual and interim reports and any other formal announcement relating to its financial performance, reviewing any significant financial reporting issues and judgements that they contain. The Committee also review summary financial statements, significant financial returns to regulators and any financial information contained in certain other documents, such as announcements of a price-sensitive nature.

- Review financial procedures (including compliance with the DfE Guidance);
- delegation of spending authority and virement policies
- Be responsible for policy and decisions regarding contracts and service level agreements
- Review and approve the Trustees' allowances and expenses policy
- Have oversight of preparation of the annual report and accounts (for presentation to trustees)
- Ensure compliance with statutory and other required procedures.
- Ensure good financial management and effective internal controls, including compliance with the DfE Academy Trust Handbook and the Charity Commission's guidance to charities and charity trustees.
- Contribute to the formulation of the Trust's improvement plans, through the consideration of financial priorities and proposals, in consultation with the Chief Executive, and within the stated and agreed aims and objectives of the Trust.
- Receive and make recommendations on the broad budget headings and areas of expenditure to be adopted each year, including the level and use of any contingency fund or balances, ensuring the compatibility of all such proposals with the development priorities set out in the Trust improvement plans.
- Liaise with and receive reports from the other committees of the Trust Board, as appropriate, and to make recommendations to those Committees about the financial aspects of matters being considered by them.
- Monitor and review expenditure on a regular basis and ensure compliance with the overall financial plan for the Trust, and with the financial regulations of the DfE, drawing any matters of concern to the attention of the Trust Board.
- Monitor future pupil rolls, provision requirements and income levels.
- Monitor appropriate procurement processes and the awarding of contracts in accordance with the Financial Regulations.
- Consider and recommend acceptance/non-acceptance of the Trust's budget, prior to the start of each financial year, and in line with DfE deadlines, and taking into account any benchmarking data.
- Consider the writing off of any debts and liabilities (except where the prior written consent of the Secretary of State is required) in accordance with the Trust Financial Regulations.
- Appoint bankers and approve banking arrangements including authorised signatories.
- Establish and agree an Investment Policy and procedure for managing and investing the Trust's cash deposits.
- Establish and agree a Charging and Remissions Policy.
- Ensure the Trust has adequate insurance cover to protect against its risks and to comply with statutory requirements including the provision of indemnity insurance to cover the liability of trustees.

- Approve disposal of write-off of assets, in accordance with the Trust Financial Regulations.
- Review the methods used to account for significant or unusual transactions where different approaches are possible
- Determine the clarity of disclosure in the company's financial reports and the context in which statements are made

### **Internal controls and risk management**

The Committee will:

- Keep under review the effectiveness of the company's internal controls and risk management systems
- Review and approve the statements to be included in the annual report concerning internal controls and risk management.
- Have oversight of risk management policy, review the risk register and will consider further scrutiny of selected risks as they feel necessary.
- Oversee and approve 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.
- Have oversight of the financial and non-financial controls and risks in all settings.

### **External audit**

- Consider and make recommendations to the Board and Members in relation to the appointment, re-appointment, and removal of the company's external auditor.
- Oversee the selection process for new auditors; and if an auditor resigns, investigates the issues leading to this and decides whether any action is required.
- Oversee the relationship with the external auditor, including its remuneration, approval of its terms of engagement, suitability and independence, the supply of non-audit services, the auditor's qualifications, resources and expertise
- Review and approve the annual audit plan and ensures that it is consistent with the scope of the audit engagement.
- Review the findings of the audit with the external auditor including any major issues that arose during the audit, any accounting and audit judgements, levels of errors identified during audit and the treatment of any item in the financial statements that differs from the views of the external auditors.
- Review any representation letter(s) requested by the external auditor before they are signed by management.
- Review the management letter and management's response to the auditor's findings and recommendations.
- Review the effectiveness of the audit and the treatment of any items in the financial statements that differ from the views of the company's external auditor.
- Consider the going concern assumption.
- Meet with the external auditor

### **Estates**

The Committee will:

- Monitor and review all revenue and capital expenditure above £40,000 in relation to school premises, maintenance, infrastructure and ICT and ensures value for money within the allocated budget.
- Oversee the condition of sites and potential risks associated with site management
- Oversee legal compliance in respect of site management and health and safety.

## **Operations**

- Oversee the risk register and critical areas of interest where risk has been identified and has significantly shifted during defined periods across the Trust
- Has oversight of any GDPR breaches, Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests
- Monitor and review all revenue and capital expenditure above £40,000 in relation to Trust activities, mainly trust-wide contracts, including tender processes and supplier due diligence.
- Review and approve the process of due diligence for potential converter schools

## **Resource Management**

- Work with the Quality of Education Committee to ensure that resources allocated to schools ensure the overall Trust Plans are adequately funded and supported.
- Review the budget to ensure that all schools have adequate staffing to deliver quality education.
- Ensure resources are managed well by school leaders

## **Governance, People and Partnerships Committee**

### **Governance**

- Shape and develop governance across the Trust in conjunction with the Director of Governance and Compliance
- Evaluate the effectiveness of governance, including that of the Board, its committees and local committees on a rolling basis.
- Determine whether Members have access to data they require in order to hold the Trust Board to account effectively.
- Develop a training and development programme for governance volunteers and professionals.
- Instigate succession planning and an active pipeline of potential professionals, especially for key Trust Board roles, whether internal to the current Board or external.
- Evaluate the performance of the Chair of the Trust Board
- Consider and approve governance related policies and procedures and make any recommendations to the Board
- In partnership with Director of Governance and Compliance bring into the Trust governance volunteers with relevant skills, experience and knowledge
- Ensure at least one member of the Committee has been trained in safer recruitment and ensure governance volunteers are recruited within safer recruitment procedures
- Develop a training and development programme for governance volunteers and professionals.
- Undertake a governance skills analysis on a rolling basis, identifying any knowledge and skills gaps, with a view to building capability within the existing membership and informing targeted recruitment
- Oversee the Trust's induction programme for governance volunteers
- Oversee the completion of the Trustees' Report, submitted alongside the annual report.

### **People**

- Monitor, approve and review implementation of all Trust People and Culture Policies within the constraints of national and local agreements
- Ensure staffing procedures follow equalities legislation and safer recruitment practices.
- Support the recruitment and appointment processes of Executive and senior school staff.
- Oversee any process leading to restructuring or staff reductions
- Review the gender pay gap and scrutinise any report to be published.
- Review work/life balance, working conditions and well-being.
- Ensure adequate succession planning for Executive and Leadership teams is in place.
- Review the workforce data for the Trust.
- Is aware of significant casework and associated risks from a reputational and financial perspective
- Oversee any processes requiring permissions from regulators
- Oversee induction processes for ECTs.
- Review the Trust professional development strategy and its impact.

### **Community Engagement**

- Ensure activities support the trust's strategic community engagement aims
- Uphold the highest standards of engagement with pupils, families and the wider communities of our schools.
- To ensure the trust promotes a culture where wellbeing is considered by all for all.
- To be satisfied that the trust provides extensive educational and enrichment opportunities for all pupils

## **Remuneration Committee**

- Recommend to the Board the remuneration, grading, pay and conditions of service for the holders of senior posts, having regard to regulatory guidance and the offer of fair pay to attract and keep appropriately qualified staff to lead, manage, support and deliver the Trust's aims.
- Monitor the development of Executive pay framework, including appraisal and development of senior staff.

## **Executive Performance Management Committee**

The CEO and appraisal panel will meet periodically throughout the year to discuss CEO performance against the job description and annual objectives as well as the CEO's development needs and wellbeing.

The committee will be advised by an independent external advisor who supports the process. Members should have experience of performance management and have received appropriate training.

The panel needs to evaluate relevant evidence to help build an accurate picture of the CEO's performance, using a range of sources. The external adviser will also be able to assist the panel with the interpretation of data.

The CEO should collate evidence throughout the year in the form of a self-review. The CEO will collate and provide relevant information, working in cooperation with any requests by the panel. The process of collecting evidence should be reasonable and proportionate and form part of daily operational procedures, to avoid unnecessary workload for the CEO.

The success criteria previously agreed within the objectives will set out the key performance indicators and relevant evidence needed to assess how well the CEO has met their objectives. Much of it will be information that the trust board analyses regularly at full board and committee meetings.

The panel will receive a written CEO report completed by the external advisor, and should make a written recommendation to the Remuneration Committee in relation to pay progression in line with the existing pay policy.

## **Governors Forum**

The trust will hold a governors forum once per term which is chaired by the Governance and Compliance Director. These forums will be attended by:

- A trustee
- Other senior leaders (as required)
- The chair and vice chair (or any 2 governors) from all local advocacy committees

The governor forum is not a decision-making body, and its purpose is to ensure good communications between all levels of governance in the trust - in particular between the board, the executive and local advocacy committees.

## **Local Advocacy Committees**

Are established to look at school level matters on behalf of the trust board and their responsibilities are set out in the trust scheme of delegation.

Local advocacy committees meet once per term and will be quorate with 3 members (no

more than 1 of which can be an employee) and the number of members of a Local Advocacy Committee shall be capped at 7 (or 8 for shared committees). Members will serve a tenure of 4 years, apart from the headteacher who is always a member by right of their position, and staff governors for shared committees who will rotate the position each year.

Advocacy committees will:

**Monitor stakeholder engagement:**

- Understand how schools communicate with stakeholders and review its effectiveness.
- Support the trust's strategy with particular regard for civic and community engagement
- Build strong relationships with school stakeholders (parents, pupils, staff, wider community)
- Welcome communication from stakeholders
- Participate in ad hoc panels (such as complaints or appeals) as required by the trust
- Create and support opportunities to market the school and trust in the wider community to help the headteacher to build its profile and reputation.
- Oversee school website content in terms of community engagement.
- Support student councils and parent forums.
- Engage effectively with learners and others in their community, including – where relevant – parents, carers, employers and local services
- Ensure that wellbeing is embedded within the culture of the school for the headteacher, staff, and pupils.
- Promote and celebrate events organised by the Trust and its schools.

**Monitor standards:**

- Receive and review high level information on pupil progress, attainment, behaviour and attendance
- Provide support and challenge to the headteacher through curiosity and in support of trust and school plans, but mindful that the CEO and Director of Education are responsible for standards and line management.
- Pay particular attention to the effectiveness of support and the quality of education of the most vulnerable pupils with a particular focus on SEND, Safeguarding, and any disadvantaged pupil groups.
- Appoint safeguarding, SEND, and careers (Secondary only) link governors
- Review the school risk register and manage risks appropriately

**Panels**

**Exclusion Review Panel**

A panel of at least 3 governance volunteers will be convened to hear decisions made around the exclusions of pupils. The membership of this committee will vary in accordance with availability at the time.

**Duties**

- To act in accordance with the internal and external regulation and policies regarding exclusion and behaviour. Guided by the Clerk to the Board.
- To review information in advance of the meeting, question all parties involved and will be asked to either reinstate the pupil or uphold the decision of the headteacher in excluding the pupil.
- Feedback on process and procedure to improve practice.

## **Complaints Panel**

A panel of at least 3 governance volunteers will be convened to hear information regarding formal complaints at Stage 3 of the Trust Complaints procedure.

### **Duties**

- To act in accordance with the internal and external regulation and policies regarding school complaints. Guided by the Clerk to the Board.
- To review information in advance of the meeting, question all parties involved and will be asked to reach a decision to uphold the complaint, uphold the complaint in part or dismiss the complaint in full or in part
- To consider recommendations to resolve the complaint
- To consider recommendations to facilitate changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

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## Appendix 4

### Glossary

| Abbreviation      | Explanation                                                                                                             |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>A8</b>         | Attainment 8 – DfE measure of average academic performance of secondary pupils                                          |
| <b>ABK</b>        | Ab Kettleby Primary School                                                                                              |
| <b>ADHD</b>       | Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder                                                                              |
| <b>AFR</b>        | Audit, Finance and Risk Committee                                                                                       |
| <b>ALPS</b>       | A student data assessment tool (for Key stager 4 and Key Stage 5)                                                       |
| <b>AP</b>         | Alternative Provision (education for students not able to attend a traditional setting)                                 |
| <b>ARE</b>        | Age-Related Expectations                                                                                                |
| <b>ASC</b>        | Autism Spectrum Condition                                                                                               |
| <b>ASP</b>        | Analyse School Performance (DfE portal)                                                                                 |
| <b>ATH</b>        | Academy Trust Handbook (DfE publication)                                                                                |
| <b>Bromcom</b>    | A school Management Information System                                                                                  |
| <b>BRW</b>        | Brownlow Primary School                                                                                                 |
| <b>BUC</b>        | Buckminster Primary School                                                                                              |
| <b>CAMHS</b>      | Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (NHS)                                                                       |
| <b>CFOO</b>       | Chief Finance and Operating Officer                                                                                     |
| <b>CIN</b>        | Child in Need (defined by Children Act 1989)                                                                            |
| <b>CLA / LAC</b>  | Children Looked After / Looked After Child                                                                              |
| <b>COA</b>        | Chart of Accounts                                                                                                       |
| <b>CP</b>         | Child Protection                                                                                                        |
| <b>CPOMS</b>      | Child Protection Online Monitoring System (system to record, manage, and track student and staff safeguarding concerns) |
| <b>CSE</b>        | Child Sexual Exploitation                                                                                               |
| <b>CST</b>        | Confederation of School Trusts                                                                                          |
| <b>DAP</b>        | Disadvantaged Pupil                                                                                                     |
| <b>DBS</b>        | Disclosure and Barring Service                                                                                          |
| <b>DE</b>         | Director of Education                                                                                                   |
| <b>DGC</b>        | Director of Governance and Compliance                                                                                   |
| <b>DPIA</b>       | Data Protection Impact Assessment                                                                                       |
| <b>DPP</b>        | Director of People and Partnerships                                                                                     |
| <b>DSL / DSO</b>  | Designated Safeguarding Lead / Officer (in each school)                                                                 |
| <b>EAL</b>        | English as an Additional Language                                                                                       |
| <b>ECF</b>        | Early Career Framework                                                                                                  |
| <b>ECT</b>        | Early Career Teacher (first 2 years of teaching)                                                                        |
| <b>EEF</b>        | Education Endowment Foundation                                                                                          |
| <b>EHCP</b>       | Education, Health and Care Plan                                                                                         |
| <b>EHE</b>        | Elective Home Education                                                                                                 |
| <b>EMTTP</b>      | East Midlands Teacher Training Partnership                                                                              |
| <b>EOTAS</b>      | Educated other than at school                                                                                           |
| <b>EP</b>         | Educational Psychologist (Ed Psych)                                                                                     |
| <b>ERG</b>        | External Review of Governance                                                                                           |
| <b>ESS</b>        | Employee Self Service                                                                                                   |
| <b>EWO</b>        | Education Welfare Officer                                                                                               |
| <b>Ever 6 FSM</b> | Ever 6 free school meals (calculator for PPG)                                                                           |
| <b>EYFS</b>       | Early Years Foundation Stage                                                                                            |
| <b>Flick</b>      | An online learning platform                                                                                             |
| <b>GAG</b>        | General Annual Grant                                                                                                    |
| <b>GDPR</b>       | General Data Protection Regulations                                                                                     |
| <b>GLD</b>        | Good Level of Development (Early Years Only)                                                                            |
| <b>GPP</b>        | Governance, People, and Partnerships Committee                                                                          |
| <b>GPS</b>        | Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling                                                                                      |
| <b>GRV</b>        | Grove Primary School                                                                                                    |

|                     |                                                                                     |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>HMI</b>          | His Majesty's Inspector / Inspectorate                                              |
| <b>HT</b>           | Headteacher                                                                         |
| <b>IDSR</b>         | Inspection Data Summary Report                                                      |
| <b>INSET</b>        | In service training                                                                 |
| <b>ITT</b>          | Initial Teacher Training                                                            |
| <b>IVE</b>          | Iveshead School                                                                     |
| <b>JCQ</b>          | Joint Council for Qualifications                                                    |
| <b>JFC</b>          | John Ferneley College                                                               |
| <b>KCSIE</b>        | Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE publication)                                |
| <b>KS 1/2/3/4/5</b> | Key stage 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5                                                         |
| <b>LAC</b>          | Local Advisory Committee                                                            |
| <b>LADO</b>         | Local Authority Designated Officer                                                  |
| <b>LCC</b>          | Leicestershire County Council                                                       |
| <b>LGPS</b>         | Local Government Pension Scheme                                                     |
| <b>LSA</b>          | Learning Support Assistant                                                          |
| <b>MAT / SAT</b>    | Multi Academy Trust / Single Academy Trust                                          |
| <b>My Concern</b>   | A system to record, manage, and track student and staff safeguarding concerns       |
| <b>NGA</b>          | National Governance Association                                                     |
| <b>NITE</b>         | National Institute of Teaching and Education                                        |
| <b>NLE</b>          | National Leader of Education                                                        |
| <b>NPQ</b>          | National Professional Qualification                                                 |
| <b>NQT / RQT</b>    | Newly Qualified Teacher / Recently Qualified Teacher (old term now replaced by ECT) |
| <b>Nti</b>          | Notice to Improve                                                                   |
| <b>OT</b>           | Occupational Therapist                                                              |
| <b>P8</b>           | P8 – DfE measure of pupil improvement of secondary pupils since year 6              |
| <b>PA</b>           | Persistently Absent                                                                 |
| <b>PGCE</b>         | Post graduate Certificate in Education                                              |
| <b>PiXL</b>         | Partners in Excellence (Education network and school-improvement partnership)       |
| <b>PM</b>           | Performance Management                                                              |
| <b>POAP</b>         | Post-Ofsted action plan                                                             |
| <b>PPG</b>          | Pupil premium grant                                                                 |
| <b>PTi</b>          | Professional Teaching Institute                                                     |
| <b>QEC</b>          | Quality of Education Committee                                                      |
| <b>QTS</b>          | Qualified Teacher Status                                                            |
| <b>RHSE</b>         | Religious, Health and Sex Education                                                 |
| <b>SA</b>           | Severely absent                                                                     |
| <b>SaLT</b>         | Speech and Language Therapist                                                       |
| <b>SAR</b>          | Subject Access Request                                                              |
| <b>SATs</b>         | Standard (Statutory) Assessment Tests                                               |
| <b>SBM</b>          | School Business Manager                                                             |
| <b>SCITT</b>        | School Centred Initial Teacher Training                                             |
| <b>SDP</b>          | School Development Plan                                                             |
| <b>SEMH</b>         | Social, Emotional, and Mental Health                                                |
| <b>SENDCO</b>       | Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator                               |
| <b>SES / SEF</b>    | Self-Evaluation Summary / Framework                                                 |
| <b>SIP</b>          | School Improvement Partner (and School Improvement Plan)                            |
| <b>SMB</b>          | Somerby Primary School                                                              |
| <b>SMSC</b>         | Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural                                              |
| <b>SMT / SLT</b>    | Senior Management Team / Senior Leadership Team                                     |
| <b>SOD</b>          | Scheme of Delegation                                                                |
| <b>SRD</b>          | Sherard Primary School                                                              |
| <b>TA / HLTA</b>    | Teaching Assistant / Higher Level Teaching Assistant                                |
| <b>TPS</b>          | Teaches Pension Scheme                                                              |
| <b>TSH</b>          | Teaching School Hubs                                                                |
| <b>V&amp;A</b>      | Validation and Assurance                                                            |

## **Regulation, Legislation, and abiding by the Trust's internal Policies**

The Trust is responsible for publicly funded independent schools, and must abide by relevant sections of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 [here](#)

This document should also be read alongside:

The Academies Trust Handbook - [here](#)

[The Academy trust governance guide - here](#)

Trustees are required to abide by the following:

The legal duties of charity trustees (Charity Commission) [here](#).

The legal duties of company directors, under the Companies Act of 2006 (Companies House) [here](#).

In addition all governance volunteers should be aware of and agree to abide by the following:

The Data Protection Act, 2018 [here](#).

The Equalities Act, 2010 [here](#).

The Education Act, 2011 [here](#).

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, revised annually) [here](#)